Abstract

In the freedom movement of India many leaders come out from the people; who played the key role in the independence of India. After independence of India economic stability is very important for our country which comes from the overall development of rural region because most of the population live in Village and regional leaders played important role for the development of rural area through co-operative sector. In this scene Maharashtra particularly western region of Maharashtra Pune, Satara, Kolhapur, Solapur, Sangli and Ahmednagar districts are lucky in which mass leaders were born for serving their motherland. Co-operative movement in Maharashtra is playing very important role for overall economic development of rural area. This paper focused on the mass leaders of the co-operative movement in Maharashtra and their efforts for starting the co-operative sugar factories in their particular rural region. This paper analyzed the impact of co-operative sugar factories on the rural region and culture of the people live in factory area.

1. Introduction

In India most of the population near 70 percent live in rural area. Main income source is from the agriculture for farmers live in village. Progress of co-operative movement in the last five decade increased in the western Maharashtra. This movement is having political social and cultural background. It is particularly strong in Western Maharashtra as the most of leaders comes from the people (Mass leaders) for independence movement and they initiated co-operative movement in their region because they were the eye witness of the success of the first co-operative sugar factory started at Pravanagar in 1949 with the hard efforts of the late Padmashri V. Vikhe Patil and
Dhananjayrao Gadgil. Due to favourable climate conditions, soils and development of canal irrigation system in Western Maharashtra made good progress in sugarcane and sugar production through the help of co-operative sugar factories. Now a days Maharashtra is said to be a developed state in India particularly due to development of rural area with the help of co-operative sugar factories founded in the village area. But actually lot of efforts were taken by the leaders for establishment of co-operative sugar factories in their particular region. Only few names are known to the people who are the leader in the co-operative movement like Dhanangrao Gadgil, Late Padmashri Vithalrao Vikhe Patil, Yashwantrao Chavan, and Vasantdada Patil.

Most of the people in the Maharashtra failed to recognise the political power of the regional leaders in the Maharashtra those were coming from the masses from the establishment of Maharashtra in 1960. Politics of Maharashtra is depend on the those leaders coming from co-operative movement till today. The proposed paper attends to take a close look of the leaders from the co-operative movement who initialize actual development of rural region of Maharashtra by founding co-operative sugar factories. Many of them played vital role in shaping the political structure of Maharashtra.

This paper aims at examining the review of co-operative leaders in the establishment of co-operative sugar factories in the rural area of the Maharashtra. Section 2 below gives a brief account of how it all began; section 3 explain working of leaders in their particular region, section 4 analyze the impact of rural life and culture due to this co-operative movement; section 5 traces the why other region of Maharashtra failed to initialize co-operative movement and finally section 6 concluder.

2. Beginning Of Co-Operative Movement In Maharashtra

Repetitive draught in the rain-shadow region of Maharashtra was identified by British and then British government has decided to build dams and develop canal irrigation system in this draught-prone area. In the 1920’s Nira canal in Saswad area, Godavari canals in kopergaon area and Pravara canal in Shrirampur region was developed. Due to availability of water farmers started growing the sugarcane crop. Most of the sugar factories at that time from the private sector and price for sugarcane is not as much of the expectation of the farmers and sugarcane producer farmers having no other options than providing sugarcane to their factories.

This is all identified by the eminent economist of India Dr. D.R. Gadgil in 1945 and put forward the idea of co-operative sugar factory in the conference of irrigators in 1945 presided by him. Then under the guidance of Dr. D.R. Gadgil and Vaikuthbhai Mehta and with the dynamic leadership of Vitthalrao Vikhe-Patil first co-operative sugar factory was started at Pravanagar in 1949 in Pravara basin in the catchment area of Pravara canals.

This is the actual starting development of the rural area in Maharashtra and more important thing is leader from other area had started analysis of this first co-operative sugar factory and they are thinking about developing similar Pravara Pattern in their region. An important factor which contributed to the success of sugar co-operatives was the encouragement provided by the first chief Minister of Maharashtra and Congress leaders Yashwantrao Chavan to the formation of these co-operative sugar factories. Now the leaders from the masses came forward and started the initializing the co-operative sugar movement in Maharashtra; particularly in western part and actual success story of co-operative movement begins.
3. Leader of Masses

In the 1950 sugarcane production in the Kopergaon region was highly increased due to availability of abundance water in the catchment area of Godavari canals. There was no guarantee about sugarcane price by private sugar factories in this region. Then under the valuable guidance of Ganpatdada Autade and leadership of Shankarrao Kale second co-operative sugar factory in Asia after Pravara was started near Kolpewadi village named as ‘Kopergaon Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana’ in the 1954 in Ahmednagar distinct.

Now Nira-Bhima basin was waiting for their leader and Shankarrao Mohite-Patil comes out. He saw the Pravara Pattern and decided to establish co-operative sugar factory. At that time he was M.L.A. of Malshiras Taluka. He travelled on cycle for spreading Pravara pattern in their Akluj region and at the end of 1960 with his efforts ‘Malshiras co-operative sugar factory’ was started in Solapur Distinct. Kolhapur District also having continually flowing rivers like Warna, Krishna, Kumbhi, Kasari, Dudhganga, Panchganga, Vedganga and basins of these rivers containing fertile soil which is suited for sugarcane crop. Warna Valley was a barren & hilly track famous for dacoity only. No one could dare to enter this region. Main reason behind this dacoity was no income source from the farms though sugarcane production is abundance in this region. This dark picture is totally changed due to only vision of great leader late Shree Tatyasheb Kore with his extreme efforts ‘Warne co-operative Sugar factory’ was started in 1969 in Panhala Taluka. Krishna, Panchaganga, Warna, Dudhganga, Vedganga is flowing through Shirol Taluka of Kolhapur offering natural irrigation to the farmers for growing the sugarcane crop. With the efforts of Late Shri Vishwasrao Ghorpade, Late Shri Dinkarrao Yadav, Late Shri Dattajirao Kadam and Dr.S.R.Patil started ‘Shri Datta Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd. Shirol’ in 1972. In Kolhapur basin of kubhi and Kasari rivers is very fertile due to presence of water flowing through these rivers throughout the year. Then the leader from these Karveer region known as D.C.Narke and his promoters established ‘Kumbhi Kasari Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana’ in 1962.

Krishna basin also having catchment area in Sangli district. In the year 1968, under the leadership of late Rajarambapu Patil, the minister in Maharashtra cabinet established the society under the name of “Walwa Taluka Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd” and started sugar factory in 1970. In Krishna-Venna sub basin in Satara district in the foot hills of Sahyadri range with the help of all social workers, farmers particularly sugar growers gathered and established "Sahyadri Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana" in 1969 after the "Krishna Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana" which was already established under the guidance of Yashvantrao Mohite. In 1983 under the leadership of Dr.Krantiveer Nag Nathanna Naikwadi “Hutatma Kisan Ahir Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana” was established in Walwa Taluka in Krishna basin.

In Ahmednagar district in the catchment area of Pravara canals first co-operative sugar factory was started. Upper Basin of Pravara River also having sugarcane production and it is difficult to crush all the sugarcane crop in one season by the Pravara Sugar factory. In Sangamner Taluka there is no flow irrigation and this area was a famine prone area. However with the constant effort, skillful handling and full devotion and active leadership of late Hon. Bhausaheb Thorat with the guidance of Late shri. Annasaheb Shinde he started the “Sangamner Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana” in 1962. At the end of 1963 sugarcane production tremendously increased in the catchment area of Godavari Canals and Kopargaon Co-operative sugar factory was unable to crush all the sugarcane in this region in one season. There was no option to the farmers than keeping sugarcane crop up to next crushing year. To avoid these economic losses of farmer there is need to establish one another sugar factory in the Kopergaon region. Then popular dynamic leader at that time in the
Pravin G. Autade :: Sugar Co-operative Leaders from River Basin in Maharashtra

Maharashtra Shri. Shankarrao Kolhe take initiative and with his efforts near Kopargaon city “Sanjivani Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana” was started in 1965.

In Ahmednagar district there was no sugar factory in the area of Shevgaon and Newasa Talukas since the Mula dam irrigation facilities made available in two talukas, the sugarcane production was increased and till increasing continuously the other sugar factories then existing were drawing cane from this area. But, the position of lifting the sugarcane by them was very worst and cane growers in this area were at the mercy of them. On the basis of this background the small holders of Newasa & Shevgaon Talukas came together under the dynamic leadership of late Marutrao Ghule-Patil and laid the foundation of “Dnyaneshwar Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana” in 1970.

Co-operative movement was continuously increasing in the Maharashtra. Many mass leaders continuously starting efforts for establishment of co-operative sugar factories in their region. In Nashik district in Kadwa-Godavari sub basin with the efforts of late Padmashri Kakasaheb Wagh Niphad and Ranwad co-operative sugar factories was started. Late Bhausaheb Hire started "Girna Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana" in Girna basin. In Ahmednagar district Yashvantrao Gadakh started “Mula Co-operative Sugar Factory” in Mula-Pravara basin. In Ghod-Bhima basin in Shrigonda Taluka Shri Shivajirao Nagwade established “Shrigonda Co-operative Sugar Factory”. Due to Kukadi project irrigation facilities made available in late 90's in Shrigonda region and then Shri Kunalikrao Jagtap established "Kukadi Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana". In Akole in Pravara-Mula-Adhala sub basin Shri Madhukarrao Pichad started the "Agasti Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana". In Pune district in Nira basin under the leadership Mukutrao Kakade "Someshwar Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana” was established 1960 and under the leadership of Shri Sharad Pawar “Malegaon sugar factory” was established in 1968 in Baramati Taluka. In Basin of Nira River in Indapur Taluka Shri Shankarrao Patil started "Indapur Taluka Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana” and at the confluence of Nira-Bhima river his nephew Shri Harshavardhan Patil started "Nira-Bhima Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana”

Marathwada region of Maharashtra lies in Godavari basin.Beed, Parbhani, Latur, Hingoli, Osmanabad and Nanded districts represent marathwada division. In these districts also co-operative movement was observed from 70’s to 90’s.Near Parbhani-Nanded boundary region but in Hingoli district in Purna-Godavari sub-basin late Baburao Goregaonkar established “Purna Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana” in 1970 in Basmat Taluka.This sugar factory changed the life of people in this region. In Latur district in Manjara-Godavari sub-basin late Vilasrao Deshmukh started “Manjara Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana” in 1984 one of the best co-operative sugar factory in the Maharashtra. In Terna river basin in Osmanabad Arvind Gore started “Dr.Babasaheb Ambedkar Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana.” Ashok Chavan started “Bhaurao Chavan Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana” in Ardhapur Taluka of Nanded district.

5. Co-operative and Rural Life

Maharashtra is leading in industrial sector but most of the rural Maharashtra is depend on agriculture and the backbone of this rural economy is co-operative movement. Co-operative movement started in rural region cultivating development and socio-economical culture in these region. Certainly people from these region can say that co-operative movement has brought about miraculous changes in the social, political, economic and educational lifestyle of the people. The co-operatives have created job opportunities for thousands of rural people directly in their sugar factories and indirectly in such operations and services as harvesting and transportation of
sugarcane, construction and repair of roads, whole-sale and retailing, banking and so on. They have helped establish basic infrastructure in remote rural areas and thereby facilitated their development through improved access to education, extension services, irrigation facilities, improved seeds, fertilisers, and cross-bred cows. Above all, sugar co-operatives have given birth to and nurtured a new generation of entrepreneurs and politicians who now dominate the economic and political forums in the state.

Throughout the Maharashtra it is observed that workers working in co-operative sugar factory is from nearby village of the sugar factory handling their farm work and duty simultaneously developing their economic situation. Social culture is observed in the colonial area of the sugar factory. Worker can live in colonies of sugar factory those don't having their own house by providing educational facilities nearby colony. Rayat Shikshan Sanstha provides quality education to the students in rural area of their sugar factories.

6. Konkan and Vidarbha in Co-Operative Movement

Most of the co-operative sugar factories concentrated in the western Maharashtra. The main reason for this co-operative movement was availability of water and irrigation facilities developed more in the western Maharashtra. Therefore sugarcane production is increased and for this increased production of sugarcane there was need to establish sugar factories to crush this all sugarcane crop. That is why more sugar factories is concentrated before 90's in the region where irrigation facilities is made available and small rivers having flowing water throughout the year.

Another important reason is leaders came from the people and people having support to these leaders to establish sugar factories. In the another region of Maharashtra like konkan & Vidarbha was lagging in co-operative movement because leaders. Co-operative sugar factories are present in the vidarbha but today these factories are not in running condition. Wainganga is the largest river of all the Vidarbha rivers. Other major rivers that drain Vidarbha region are the Wardha and Kanhan rivers which are all tributaries of Godavari river. Basin of all these rivers is fertile and suitable for sugarcane production. But due to worst condition of co-operative sugar factories and lack of leadership; land holders in this region are not attracted towards sugarcane crop. Co-operative leaders in western Maharashtra retains the success of co-operative movement which is not observed in the Vidarbha.

In comparison with other region of the Maharashtra there is no initialization of co-operative movement in Konkan region. Main reason behind this fact was no evolution of any leader who understand the significance of co-operative movement and can spread this movement throughout the Konkan region. District co-operative banks are in good condition and running successfully in the Konkan. In Sindhudurg district Late Shivrambhau Jadhav; in Ratnagiri Late Govindrao Nikam; in Raigad Late Prabhakar Patil and now his son Jayant Patil gives lot of contribution in the co-operative movement in the another sector than co-operative sugar sector which one cannot neglect.

7. Conclusion

There are several factors for the success of sugar co-operatives in Maharashtra like installation of plants in shortest possible time, provision of irrigation facilities, bringing large areas under sugarcane cultivation, democratic functioning, provision of remunerative prices to the farmers, business-like approach, and diversification. But most important factor behind the success of sugar co-operatives is the evolution of the leaders from the masses who not only takes the
initiative for the establishment of co-operative sugar factories in the rural region but also convinced the importance of sugar industry to the people and collected share capital. This shows their view to look at the social and economical development. After consistent and perpectual efforts of the co-operative leaders sugar co-operatives of Maharashtra state retaining its success till today. However, the fact that not all the cooperative sugar factories in Maharashtra were successful. They suffered from political rivalries, poor management, irrational investment in by-product industries, inadequate finance, and recurrent drought conditions leading to reduced supply of sugarcane.

References