Spatio -Temporal Changes in Cropping Pattern of South Konkan of Maharashtra: A Geographical Analysis

Nalawade D.B.
Assit. Professor and HOD, Dept. of Geography,
Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu College, Kolhapur (MS).
dbdn999@rediffmail.com
Smt. Chavan Sunita Mohan
Assistant Professor, Department of Geography,
Mahila Mahavidhyalaya , Karad Dist- Satara (MS).
Pawar C.T.
Former Professor and Head, Dept. of Geography,
Shivaji University, Kolhapur (MS), ctpawar1@yahoo.co.in

Introduction

Cropping pattern means the proportion of area under various crops at a point of time. Cropping pattern is however, a dynamic concept as it changes over space and time. The cropping pattern of a region is closely influenced by the geo-climatic, socio-cultural, economic, historical and political factors (Hussain, 1996). During the last three decades there has been a considerable change in agricultural landuse in India. Hence landuse and cropping pattern studies are of particular significance in view of the rapidly rising population and consequent pressure on the existing land. These phenomenal changes are noticed more particularly in the cropping pattern and emphasis is given to various crops from time to time. In the particular various schemes related to horticulture are launched by state and central governments leading to increase the area under fruit crops. In the view of this present study aims to analyse such changes in South Konkan of Maharashtra a proposed California of the state.

Study Area

The region is southern part of littoral Maharashtra, located between 15^0 36' N to 18^0 50' N latitude, and 74^0 36'E to 75^0 50' E longitudes comprises Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg districts. Administratively it is divided into 17 tahsils, comprising 13295.5 sq km area and supporting 2558154 populations. Geographically the South Konkan has considerable variation in relief, climate and socio-economic environment .Over 85 per cent of the land surface is hilly (Maharashtra State Gazetteers, 1962). The region is narrow coastal strip with hilly and rugged topographic features along the sahydri hills, the valleys are more open and the hills are less rugged. Towards the coast it falls into nearly level plains. The region experiences moist and humid climate. The rainfall is heavy, especially in the hilly eastern part that is on high crestline of Sahyadri. The average temperature in the summer season is 33^0c and in winter season 18^0c. The average rainfall of South Konkan is about 250 cm. It is concentrated in four months from June to September in all over region.

Objective:

Present study aims to analyze the changes in cropping pattern in the study region for the period from 1980 -85 to 2000-05