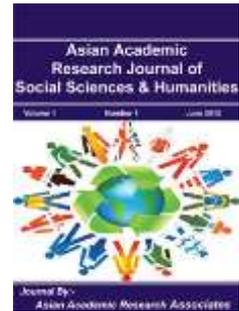




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DYNAMICS OF CROPPING PATTERN IN GUJARAT STATE: A MARKOV CHAIN APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

The assessment of shift in cropping pattern in different regions is crucial for a better insight into the agricultural development process. The present study was undertaken with a view to examine the dynamics of cropping pattern in Gujarat. The data on area of different crops for the period from 1990-91 to 2007-08 were collected from the Directorate of Agriculture, Government of Gujarat, Gandhinagar and analyzed for four different periods by using Markov chain. The major findings emerged from the study revealed that any single crop did not retain its area in Gujarat, but the acreage of the crops was continuously shifting from one crop to another crop throughout the period. However, other crops like cumin, tur, rape & mustard, onion, garlic etc. had more retention as compared to groundnut, cotton, bajra, jowar and wheat during the study period indicating its stability in the state. The groundnut remained more stable while the loss of area from major crops towards other crops like maize, castor sesamum, tur, etc. indicated that the cropping pattern of the region moves towards diversification in Saurashtra region. The paddy and maize lost more area to cotton, wheat and other crops like tur, cumin, potato, etc. in Middle Gujarat. The castor crop had more retention of its area as compared to other crops in North Gujarat. In South Gujarat, the decreasing trend of area under groundnut was observed. There is greater scope for decision making in the selection of crops to put the agriculture on the pedestal of sustainable growth which needs to be considered in research and extension programmes.
