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RESEARCH ARTICLE

A GEOGRAPHICAL STUDY OF SHEEP FARMING IN LATUR DISTRICT MAHARASHTRA

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ABSTRACT

The livestock sector plays a multi-faceted role in the socio-economic development of rural households. Livestock rearing has a significant positive impact on equity in terms of income and employment and poverty reduction in rural areas as the distribution of livestock is more egalitarian as compared to land. In India, over 70 percent of rural households own livestock and a majority of livestock-owning households are small, marginal and landless households. The sheep is an important economic livestock species contributing greatly to the agrarian Indian economy, especially in arid, semi-arid and hilly areas. They play an important role in the livelihood of a large number of small and marginal farmers and landless laborers engaged in sheep rearing. Sheep's are mostly reared to obtain meat and wool as commercial goods. Sheep skin and wool is used by a number of rural based industries as raw material. Sheep manure is an important source of organic fertilizer for increasing soil fertility. The entire investigation is based on field observation and secondary sources of data obtained from Socio-Economic review and District Statistical Abstract and livestock census hand book. The study concludes that from last a decade number of sheep population is decreased in throughout the district. The distribution of sheep population in Latur district is uneven. The district as a whole has a 100.15 density of sheep per 100-hectare land, but the spatial distribution varies from tehsil to tehsil. During period of investigation district as a whole has a -94.3 negative changes in the density of sheeps. The aim of present paper is to assess growth, distribution and changes in Latur district of Maharashtra (Dr.Kiran Khalangre, 2022).

INTRODUCTION

India being an agrarian country, agriculture represents the back bone of its economy. However, under Indian conditions, the success of agriculture production is dependent on the monsoon which adds an element of uncertainty to it. In order to cope up with such uncertainties and assured a year round income to the farmers, livestock production represents an important subsidiary occupation. About 73% of rural India owns livestock and this sector provides employment to 22.45 million people directly or indirectly. The livestock sector alone contributes nearly 25.6% of Value of output at current prices of total value of output in Agriculture, Fishing & Forestry sector. The overall contribution of livestock Sector in total GDP is nearly 4.11% at Current prices during 2012-13 (Anonymous, 2012). In the Latur district 75 percentage of people occupation is farming. In the 2001 census 68.17 percentage of people were living in villages and they depended upon the income gained by farming for their livelihood. But dimatically Latur district is located in a rain shadow area or drought-prone area. The soil of the district is comparatively of lesser quality, irrigation facilities are less, short and thorny forest patches etc. due to this reasons in the district less

development of agriculture is found. So the people in the district engaged in sheep farming for their livelihood (17th livestock census 2003). On the other hand, sheep possess a special ability to thrive on nature grasses and, except during certain physiological stages of life, do not need to be given any supplemental feed. There is no substitute for sheep as a class of livestock for utilizing wasteland or weeds from the field. As well as in the study region there are a large number of smallholder and landless laborers. Out of them, many have adopted sheep rearing occupation as a means of life and some are doing this occupation with their family members to get additional income from wool, manure and marketing by sheep. Here, I have attempted to take review of the sheep population and its present situation in the Latur district.

Study Area: Latur district is in the Marathwada region in Maharashtra in India, located between 17°52' to 18°50' latitudes North and between the 76°18' to 79°12' longitudes East in the Deccan plateau. The district is situated on the Maharashtra Karnataka boundary on the eastern side of the Latur is Bidder district of Karnataka, whereas Nanded is on the Northeast, Parbhani on the

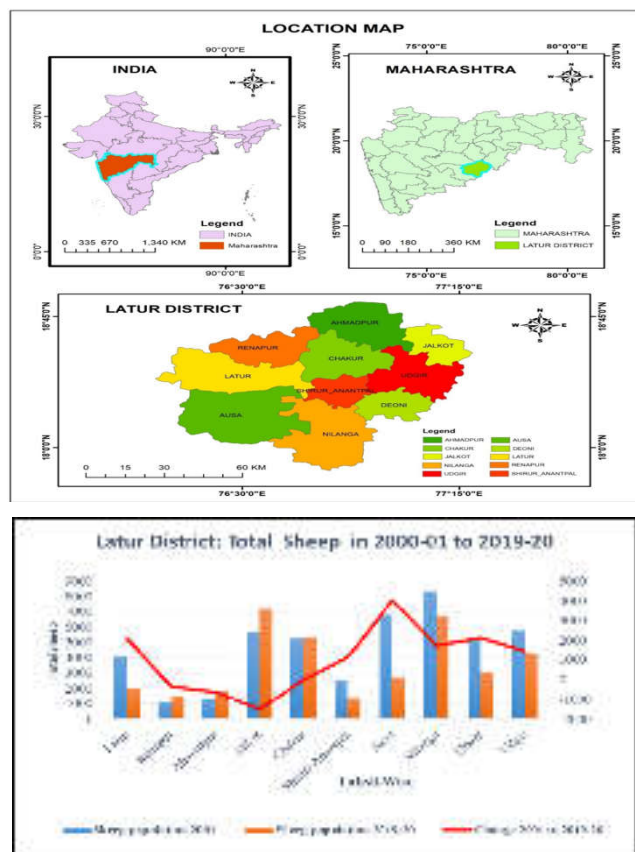


Fig.1

Northern side, and Beed on the Northwest and Osmanabad on the Western and Southern side. The entire district of Latur is situated on the Balaghat Plateau, 540 to 638mts from the mean sea level. 2011, Latur had population of 2,454,196 of which male and female were 1,273,140 and 1,181,056 respective & rural population 1829216 & urban population 624980 . There are around 945 villages & 786 Gram Panchayats in the district. There are six Vidhan Sabha constituencies in Latur District.

OBJECTIVES

Following are the specific objectives of the present investigation.

- To study the geographical determinants of Sheep in the study region.
- To take an account of Sheeps in the study region.
- To study the distribution and changes of Sheeps population in the study region.

Data source and Methodology: The present study is based on field observation and secondary sources of data. The secondary sources of data obtained from the Socio-Economic review and district Statistical abstract of Latur district. District census handbook and livestock census handbook. 2001 to 2019-20 sheeps population data obtained from the Zilla Parishad Pashu Sanvardhan Khate Z.P. Latur. Collected data is processed and presented in the forms of tabular and graphical. Tabular form using statistical techniques, such as the growth and changes in sheep population will be calculated with the help of the following formula. The density of sheep population is calculated with own idea, the formula given below.

$$D = \frac{T.S}{Area (100 hectare)}$$

Where,

D = Density of sheep population

T.S. = Total sheep population from 2000-01 to 2019-20

To calculate the tahsil-wise density of sheep we have considered land use categories of land. Because sheep are reared on these lands or fodder grass etc. are made available as sheep feeds from these land.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Spatio-Temporal changes of sheep population: Spatial and temporal factors have been found to cause a significant transformation. Because the geographical and socio-economic factors have an impact on them.

Table 1. Spatio-Temporal changes of sheep population

Sr. No.	Tehsil	Sheep population		Change
		2001	2019-20	2001 to 2019-20
1	Latur	4103	2014	2089
2	Renapur	1131	1488	-357
3	Ahmadpur	1233	1852	-619
4	Jalkot	5638	7129	-1491
5	Chakur	5265	5288	-23
6	Shirul-Anantpal	2515	1395	1120
7	AUSA	6768	2732	4036
8	Nilanga	8377	6651	1726
9	Deoni	5175	3044	2131
10	Udgir	5757	4308	1449
	Total	45962	35901	10061

Source : Compiled by researcher on the basis of Socio-Economic Review.

Table 2. Density of sheep per 100 Hectare area in Latur District during Period 2000-01& 2019-20

Sr. No.	Name of Tehsils	Density of Sheep in 2001 & 2019-20		
		Density of Sheep in Year 2000-01	Density of Sheep in Year 2019-20	Density of Sheep in changes 2000-01 & 2019-20
1	Latur	27.97	2.17	-25.8
2	Renapur	29.92	3.1	-26.82
3	Ahmadpur	70.41	3	-67.41
4	Jalkot	114.29	25.85	-88.44
5	Chakur	208.92	8.59	-200.33
6	Shirul-Anantpal	108.92	4.8	-104.12
7	AUSA	114.49	2.35	-112.14
8	Nilanga	105.73	6.61	-99.12
9	Deoni	294.53	9.61	-284.92
10	Udgir	313.56	6.59	-306.97

Source: Compiled by researcher on the basis of Socio-Economic Review

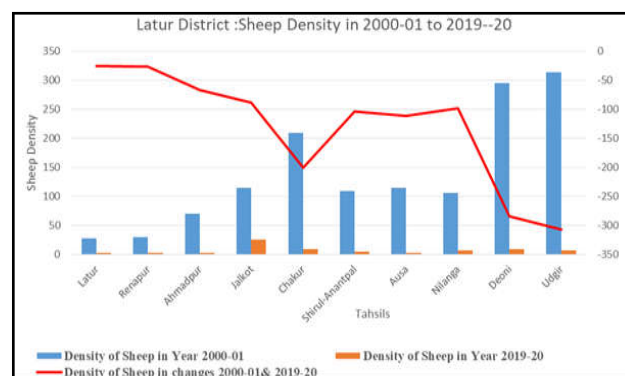


Fig. 2.

The total number of sheep population is increased where the above said factor is conducive and on the other hand we find decrease in number of sheep where such factors are in conducive. Shows the spatio-temporal change of sheep population in 4 tehsils in the Latur district. From table no.2, it is observed that there is effect of constant drought conditions from the tehsils Renapur, Ahmadpur, Jalkot and Chakur resulted in a decrease in the sheep population throughout the district as a whole. Through in-depth field work, it is found that shepherds have shifted their interest from sheep rearing to fruit farming with innovation and adoption of new Technology.

Tehsils like Latur, Ausa, Deoni, Nilanga, Udgir, and Shirul-Annatpal are well benefited from Majara & other irrigation projects resulting in noteworthy increase in irrigated areas and the remarkable growth in the area in under cash crops like sugarcane and fruit farming like soybean, tur etc.

Density of sheep per 100 Hectare area in Latur District during Period 2000-01 & 2019-20

Density of Sheep in Year 2000-01: Table 2, the district as a whole has a 100.15 density of sheep per 100-hectare land, but the spatial distribution varies from tehsil to tehsil. The highest density of sheep has been recorded in Udgir, Deoni and Chakur tehsils due to suitable physiography. Moderate sheep density is ranging from 105.73 to 208.92 is observed in Nilanga, Shirul-Anantpal, Ausa and Jalkot tehsils. While it is lowest in Latur, Renapur and Ahmadpur tehsils i.e., < 105.73 density per 100-hectare land.

Density of Sheep in Year 2019-20: In year 2019-20, the district as a whole has a 5.85 density of sheep per 100-hectare area. But the spatial distribution varies from tehsil to tehsil. Table 4 indicates, the highest density of sheep is observed in Jalkot tehsil again the causes are the same which are mentioned earlier. Moderate density ranging from 6.59 to 25.85 per 100-hectare land is recorded in Deoni, Chakur, Nilanga and Udgir tehsils. While it is lowest in Latur, Renapur, Ahmadpur, Ausa and Shirul-Anantpal tehsils i.e., below 6.59 per 100-hectare land.

Changes in Sheep Density: During period of investigation district as a whole has a -94.3 negative changes in the density of sheep's. Highest positive changes i.e., above -200.33 in the density of sheep's are found in Udgir, Deoni and Chakur tehsils. The moderate positive changes ranging from -99.12 to -200.33 density is found in Ausa, Shirul-Annatpal and Nilanga tehsils, while it is lowest in Jalkot, Ahmadpur, Renapur and Latur tehsils i.e., below -25.8 density per 100-hectares land, due to fertile soil farmers using their land for crops cultivation.

CONCLUSION

Sheep rearing occupation is mostly confined to arid, semi-arid and hilly areas of the District, wherever there is less development of irrigation facilities.

- Where Dhangers community is high in number engaged in this occupation, there sheep Distribution is also high in number.
- From the last decade number of sheep the population is decreased throughout the district.
- From the last decade number of sheep the population is decreased throughout the district.
- This decrease in sheep population is mostly confined to the tahsil where irrigation, agriculture technology adoption technology adoption of modern cash crops and fruit crops with modern technology and commercial attitudes have been practiced i.e. Latur, Ausa, Deoni, Nilanga, Udgir, and Shirul-Annatpal etc.

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