

CROP CONSTELLATIONS IN MAHARASHTRA

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1. *Introduction*

R. STONE² HAS used the concept of distance in respect of a number of different economic criteria for grouping regions into homogeneous groups with respect to those criteria. The same device (with a modification) has been used here to group districts in Maharashtra into homogeneous groups with respect to cropping patterns. Acreages under different crops have been used as indicators of the cropping pattern. As it is intended to arrive at groups with relatively stable cropping patterns, five-year averages of acreages under different crops, rather than single-year acreages, have been used. The data used are briefly explained in Section 2, the methodology used is described in Section 4, and the results are given in Sections 5 and 6. In Section 3, a preliminary grouping of the districts based on a few major crops is considered. In Section 7, three important allied characteristics of the districts in the groups, viz., per acre agricultural output, rainfall, and soil conditions, which may be regarded either as determinants or consequences of the crop constellations are given, and their intra- and inter-group variations are examined.

2. *The data*

It has been decided to choose the years 1958-59, 59-60, 60-61, 61-62 and 62-63 for the study (more recent data are not available). District-level data on acreage under crops for the years 1958-59, 59-60 and 60-61 have been taken from the Season and Crop Reports³ published by the Government of Maharashtra. The data for the other

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² STONE, R., 'A Comparison of the Economic Structure of Regions Based on the Concept of Distance', *Journal of Regional Science*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 1960, pp. 1-20.

³ *Season and Crop Report, Bombay State, 1958-59; Season and Crop Report, Bombay State, 1959-60; and Season and Crop Report, Maharashtra State, 1960-61; all published by the Govt. of Maharashtra, Bombay.*