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A study of nature interaction of influence area of central place Siwan

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Abstract

Trade has been the most important channel which promotes integration between a centre and its surrounding areas. Those settlements that perform trading activities, whether rural or urban, for their surrounding areas are known as central places. The need for provision of adequate facilities for marketing agricultural produce has been a major motivating force for central place development. Such centres provide goods and services for the farmers with a lot of facilities, such as storage, ware housing, credit and other services, besides marketing activities. Thereby, central places integrate themselves with the surrounding areas in a marketing system and promote developmental processes for their hinterland through various innovative diffusions.

Keywords: Marketing agricultural, influence dimensions, economic principles

Introduction

As the central places provide goods and services to their surrounding population, the consumers travel to the centre to obtain the needed goods and services. The distance travelled by the consumers determines the area of influence of the centre. Considering the influence dimensions of central places, the chapter includes nature of interaction, size variation in trade areas, trade areas and population, and factors influencing the consumers travel. It is expected that all these aspects will bring out the influence areas of selected central places in the study area Siwan.

Nature of Interaction

Innumerable human needs are satisfied by patronising various centres for which people travel from varied distances. To fulfill the needs consumers generally consider their buying of goods in terms of least cost and time spent over them. In this respect the consumer selects the centre on the basis of known functional complexity of the centre which can involve least cost and time. In this way, the consumer visits the centre about which he possesses the knowledge of goods and services available. The decision of consumer travel to patronize a centre bases on certain economic principles, i.e., "the consumer is assumed to follow a strategy that maximizes his utility function". The decision of movement by consumer to certain destination and the net gain obtained from these activities. All these give way to spatial behavior of the consumer and reflect into the movement of people, goods, messages and ideas. This takes place in a field of force and links individuals and areas of varying characteristics, and location in a system of potential interaction. This interaction is the base both for the satisfaction of individuals and for the firm to be located at the nearest possible distance from the consumer with maximum profit. Thus, spatial interaction is the functional interaction of spatial locations which is represented by flows, mobility of population, commodities and cultural indicators.

The notion of consumer which he possesses is reflected through his rural –urban interaction pattern that, "within any given spatial range, therefore, individuals have a finite number of feasible alternative markets at which they can satisfy their wants and needs". Thereby, a destination is chosen because it can provide something which is required by the investigator. The destination bears an attribute which is valued by the consumer, and which makes the destination attractive.

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The basic principle underlies that the individual takes decision to visit alternative markets when he is not satisfied with one centre. The search continues till the optimal satisfaction is reached, i.e. the least cost, minimum distance and maximum aesthetic value. There are certain factors that influence the decision of consumer or individual, such as effect of improved transportation as it minimizes the time, increasing circulation which helps to know the magnitude of functions, specialisation of center in terms of functions, supply feature of commodity and psychological, political and economic restrictions. Thus, the spatial interaction is concerned with the interchange of socio-economic phenomena in space.

As regards types of interaction it is mentionable that while studying spatial interaction one is concerned with secondary and tertiary linkages that play vital role. It is important that primary linkages, i.e. the production linkages are the primary force in agricultural environment, which the study area contains. In such environment there is abundance of agricultural products including food and non-food crops. These products are sent from one place to the other because of local variation in supply and demand. This condition creates inter-farm, inter-village, inter-block and even inter-district exchange and thereby, transportation becomes inevitable for such activities. They expand the patterns of exchange for basic commodities and ensure broader geographical access to goods and services. As the access agricultural products need some medium for its disposal, the urban centres prove to be ideal centre for such activities of disposal and distribution. Besides, urban centres, other central places including periodic markets, become important centres for marketing depending on the magnitude and nature of commodities.

The secondary linkage, i.e. the flow of manufactured goods also play important role to influence the pattern of regional interaction. The secondary linkage establishes the basic pattern of the contemporary space economy. These linkages account for most flows generated by economic activities together with the primary production linkages. Such manufactured goods are the product of handicraft or cottage industry which encompasses gur, ghee, ropes, baskets, indigenous tools (hoe, sickle, kitchen utensils), handloom clothes, earthenware, etc. The study area does not have metallurgical and engineering industries, except thresher, grill, gate, etc. It also observes other small scale industries.

The tertiary linkages are the major interactional element that link the complementary areas with central places. Such linkages include transport and communication, and service delivery linkages. As regards transport linkage, bus service, private vehicle services, private bus and truck operators provide such services in the more inaccessible areas. Since they connect remote areas, they are the most important linkages for integrating spatial systems. Better road linkage between an urban centre or central place and the surrounding region may bring agricultural goods from rural areas within easy reach of markets. The poor transport linkages hinder the spatial mobility and on the other hand, improved transport linkages broader the area of trade and commerce. The communication linkages, such as telephone/mobile network and newspaper circulation are also one of the best indices of socio-economic interaction.

Service delivery linkages are critical in understanding the urban or central place influence over the region. Urban centres/central places and rural areas are closely linked in

order to distribute social and commercial services more widely and to increase the access of rural population to urban amenities'. It is a fact that nearly all services require the support of a minimum number of people localized in a limited geographical area. This minimum population is known as threshold for the goods and service. Linkages among central places evolve because of inter-dependency of urban and rural areas which can be regarded as the most important indices of linkage studies.

It is fact that lower order central places Siwan possess lower number of shops and functions. Since, these lower order centres perform primarily the functions of convenience goods of lower range, the trade areas produced are limited. These centres attract people from very limited areas as such functions are distributed ubiquitously. These functions mostly include grocery, betel, vegetables, eatery, etc. which are of very common use in every family and can survive on very low threshold population. It implies that a pattern of increasing trade area emerges with increasing size of the centre. As size of trade area increases the number of consumers also increases.

Higher order goods (speciality goods) and services are provided by market town or service town. In this respect Siwan possesses the largest trade area on account of being the district headquarters and providing the higher order goods which are not provided by other towns or central places. Maharajanj and Mairwa are the urban centres, but have smaller trade area on account of being service towns where some functions lack. The larger central places like Andar, Raghunathpur, Darauli, Guthani, Tarwara, Basantpur, Barharia, Goriakothi etc. have comparatively larger trade area. Other central places have lower order central functions and hence have smaller trade areas.

Factors influencing consumer travel

There are some influencing factors that operate in the area to attract consumers from the surrounding areas of the central place. These factors are accessibility to the centre, income differences among consumers, variety of functions and specialization in function. Since the area comes under an isotropic plain, easy accessibility to centres is the prime factor. Due to such factor the area is well connected with the transport routes by bus and other service facilities. As observed, it is important that most of the central places along with urban centres of the Siwan district are well connected with road and transport facilities. Since the district headquarters, Siwan, holds the transport facilities which regularly draw population as daily commuters from the surrounding areas. Such facility has promoted large scale growth of central places in the study area Siwan.

The income differences among consumers play import role to decide the visit to Siwan. Income sets the limit to consume as the demand of a good is generated according to the income. The high income group families require higher order goods which include shopping and speciality goods in addition to convenience goods. It is revealed by the study that lower income group people generally require convenience goods, sometimes shopping goods. Such low income group people seldom travel longer distances because transport cost is added to the item in addition to price. As items to be purchased by the lower income group people are consumer goods of lower price, the additional cost of transport exceeds the cost of item. Therefore, lower income consumers patronize largely foot-reach central places to

obtain such goods. On the other hand, the higher income group consumers require shopping and speciality goods in addition to the convenience goods. The higher income group consumers travel longer distances generally on multi-purpose shopping trips depending on their capacity. The trip over high-cost items becomes

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