
INTRODUCTION

I. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study is to find out the distinctive & genetic character of the rural market centres of the region and at the same time to identify the service capacity of the markets forming the very base of the society today.

Bagerhat district, which has been chosen for this study is situated in the southern part of Bangladesh and represents the other districts of the country. In Bangladesh, the work of geographical researches is meagre and specially research on marketing geography is very scanty. As a geographical point of view, the region has varied of physical, cultural and economical of other portions of the country. Bagerhat district is very recently settled of the region and the level of urbanization is very poor in the country. The economy is predominantly agricultural based. The low degree urbanization has given rise to only two urban centres of the district, majority of people depends on rural market centres.

The present study focusses on rural markets and market consumers of the region. The basic occupation of rural people of the study area is agriculture and the basic problems are deeply rooted in the latter. Due to the demographic cultural and socio-economic problems, systematic growth & development faced a great challenge, accompanied by hapazard growth of market centres, lack of proper planning and defective implementation of earlier plans, all problems become acute and accentuate. so, it is necessary to study all those problems for developing the market centres. The remoteness of communication network and the non-homogeneous character of the people also cause of poor development of the command area of the market.

The region is economically backward and the rural market centres are poorly developed. The rural people are economically unhealthy but the region is rich in various natural resources. The depressed economic condition of the region has imposed severe influence on the pattern, morphology and functional character of the markets and also the size, types and distributional pattern of the region.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The over all objective of the present study is to analyse various functions of the market centres and its surrounding areas of Bagerhat district. The specific objectives are :

- i) To study the population character of the market centres.
- ii) To assess the agricultural potentialities of the study area.
- iii) To study the growth and development of market centres and their classifications on the basis of the certain parameters.
- iv) To determine the spatial distributional pattern and the service areas of the market centres.
- v) To assess the existing socio-economic functions of the market centres and their influence on the spatial or regional development.
- vi) To study the major problems, specially the problems of marketing of the local products in the area.
- vii) To study one of the influences of market centres and their interactions with the local inhabitants.
- viii) To find the role of market centres in the regional development as well as national development.
- ix) To suggest and recommend, steps and programmes for the economic development of the region in general and the people of the district in particular.

III. SELECTION OF THE STUDY AREA

Reasons for the selection of Bagerhat district in particular for this study are as follows :

- (i) The district adjoins the Bay of Bengal and is a tidal delta region, where flood is a regular phenomena & water is the only cheapest means of transport. The socio-economic conditions are mostly aggrarian.

(ii) Easy accessibility to different police station has made the field work easier and prompt.

(iii) Advantage of the researcher in term of personal knowledge and familiarity as a local inhabitant of the district.

(iv) Some markets enjoy modern facilities but most of them are remained backward with poor communication & infrastructure.

The study area has 156 market centres. But only 45 market centres are selected for detailed study of different police stations of the district.

IV. METHODOLOGY

This work is largely based on field investigation. Field survey was started in the middle of 1994 and it was continued till 1997. In this connection wide ranging enquires have been made in different offices of the police station.

The primary data are obtained through personal enquires of different parts of the region under study. The survey was made on the basis of selected samplings. The information of field investigation was available from different sources, depending on the nature of data necessary for particular purpose. For instance in the case of finding out the functional character of the market centres, the character of buyers & sellers, level of markets etc, man to man survey was made with the questionnaire. Moreover questionnaire had been sent to various organization like education office, Hospitals and statistical office etc. From collected data, the nature of attendances, standard of education, functional character of 'hats', income size of traders and attendance of male & female buyers have been worked out. Different market centres of nine police stations were surveyed for this purpose.

Analyses of the activities of the market places of different police stations widely distributed over the region were surveyed by field work. Besides, the nature of the marketing activity and information were gathered. Origins of the markets, growth trend, command area and specialisation of commodities have been studied.

Apart from primary data collected through personal investigations, secondary data have also been used for writing of different chapters. Among the government offices

and different organizations visited for the collection of secondary data, the most notable are the agricultural offices, the settlement offices, the 'thana' land offices the D.C. Offices and L.G.E.D. offices. The base map for the landuse survey was collected from the settlement office and other maps were available in the 'thana' land offices. A number of maps have, however, been prepared on the basis of collected data. All the collected data have been compiled in the thesis. The photographs have been taken by the author personally for representing some noted features of the area. Data processing and compilation have been performed with scientific calculator. The results have been mapped for analytical description and visual presentation.

The history of markets in the district is mainly based on old records available in public library in Khulna Division and Rajshali University Seminar Library in Bangladesh. Census data have been adopted vigorously for writing up different chapters but have been tactically avoided in the preparation of the maps.

Some of the data & results which cannot be tabulated in the chapters concerned have been appended at the end. It may be mentioned that some of the materials of this thesis have been published in various levels and journal in Bangladesh & India and abroad in different times.

I.V DESIGN OF THE THESIS

This research work commences with the identification of the location of Bagerhat district of Bangladesh, giving the purpose, objectives and methodology adopted for the study. Then the work has been divided into chapters dealing with different aspects as follows. :

The first chapter discusses physical background of the area. The second chapter deals with the details discussion of agriculture & landuse pattern. In chapter three the distribution of population and their characteristics have been discussed. The fourth chapter deals with level of socio-economic functions of the area. In chapter five, the distribution and characteristics of market centres of each police station has been analysed. The sixth chapter is entrusted with detailed discussion of functions and strategy for development of market centres in the district. The seventh chapter focuses of the identification & application of strategy of development of selected market centres. The chapter eight evokes the summary of result of market centre of the area. And finally, the