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Movement of Sellers in Periodic Markets- A Decision Making Approach-A Case Study of Uttar Dinajpur District, West Bengal, India

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ABSTRACT:

Uttar Dinajpur district in West Bengal is a rural agrarian district. The district is endowed with bi-weekly periodic markets. The identification of market cycles in the study area is actually a difficult problem as much of the market share in more than one cycle. It has been observed that most of the participant's sellers of market centers of the study area participate in market cycles in aggregate and individualistic way. Though there are a few market centers, which are isolated and don't participate in any market cycle. It is worth to mention that market cycles in the region are developed due to movement of sellers' rather than consumer'. It has been noted that most of the market cycles in the district at least one weekly-off or rest day on which sellers make preparation for the next week, i.e., either they prepare goods at their homes or purchase the same from the adjacent higher level market centers. The utility of a market cycle followed by itinerant sellers follow some sort of rout throughout the week in which space is integrated following marketing activities by these itinerant sellers. Not only itinerant sellers, but also service providers, buying and selling sellers involve in such aggregate circle and individualistic movement. It is the periodic markets, which are main nodes for clustering of services and commodities a marketing transaction of goods incurred by these sellers from long distance. So, it is the opportunity of those native consumers of the market centers in which the rural people are introduced with diversified goods and services. Itinerancy of sellers redistributes the items of products of specialization from the area of surplus to the area of deficiency. The study has focused its attention on the schedule of market days as followed by the sellers and their types as well as their nature of commodities and services they carry. All the above attributes has been taken to narrate the pattern of movement of sellers and their likelihood for adopting such type of pattern of journey. There are as many as 20 market cycles which have been identified in the region. Sequential meetings when some adjacent periodic market centers were taken into consideration have been observed.

KEY WORDS: Periodic; Commodities; Hierarchy; Market Cycle; Itinerant

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INTRODUCTION:

Periodic markets are the points of disposal of agricultural and non- agricultural products. These are the authorized public gatherings of buyers and sellers held in a fixed place at a certain or regular interval of time. Uttar Dinajpur district with its rural character periodic market centers held at regular interval of time in a weekly, biweekly and tri-weekly schedule. There are 205 periodic market centers in the district in number. These markets are as indigenous in character in rural environment and indeed a bulk of local perishable agricultural and horticultural items are exhibited in these markets in association with non-agricultural items. The exotic products are brought by the itinerant buying sellers who used to buy the items from the urban area and dispose the same in rural periodic market centers and vice versa. Most of the rural people are largely depends upon periodic markets for the sale transactions of agricultural and non agricultural commodities takes place in a retailing process at regular interval of time and place. These markets are responsible for establishing the links between its surrounding areas and paved the way for establishing the grass root level networking of trade systems throughout the developing world ¹. The behavior of periodic market-place sellers is a determining factor of spatial interaction, not only within the market but also in a particular region. Periodic markets in a region are inter-linked in a system which controls the movement of sellers as well as consumers. The integrated system of occurrence of periodic markets is commonly known as market cycle,' which denotes a regularity in transactions and movement of goods and people between producer and consumer. The decision-making on mobility or immobility of sellers for agglomeration of goods and services and their perceived profitability threshold depends largely on availability of developed transport technology. The choice of sellers to be part time or full-time stems from the density of profit, transport cost, overheads, and ability to snatch leisure from normal productive activities. The profit level accruing from the service area of a single periodic market centre to any entrepreneur can hardly help his survival, especially in case of a person solely dependent on vending of goods or services. By attending different periodic market places in individualistic way or in an aggregate manner it can ensure his survival method. Periodic market places create an economic landscape to the most disadvantageous villagers. Sellers are broadly categorized into two categories viz. part-time and full-time sellers. Producer seller dominates most of the periodic markets. The producer sellers produce their own produce and sell it to the market. They invest their time in rest days in a week to produce their own product and hence they treated as part-time sellers. The judicious and rational selection of market and market days at the cost of time and money has significance as they create a mental map for their travelling behavior. In this regard they need the schedule of market days and routes for travelling in their mind. Travel behavior of sellers

depends on the nature of product they carry. On the other hand all the sellers are the economic men whose basic essence is to enhance the profit level. Buying sellers who converge at periodic market places to procure the fresh and cheapest items and sell it subsequently in urban market centres. On the other hand selling traders either used to visit periodic markets to dispose urban manufactured exotic product. These types of salesman always move from one market to another and returns to his home base and intend to make business in one or more market in a week. Altogether the region may witness the complete or incomplete market cycle. Owing to the better advancement of transport system most of the seller used to prefer their home base journey to market centers. The study highlights the fact that every periodic market experiences some market shifting pattern depending on the nature, necessities, and commodities and services and types of seller. Some itinerant sellers visit several periodic market centers in a successive way within a week. Evidently the direction of movement and flow of goods are directed by market schedules.

1. Objectives:

The study has focused on the seller's spatial movements around different periodic market centers and the related factors regulating the journey.

Hypothesis:

The following hypothesis has been framed to fulfill the objectives.

1. Commodities & services of transaction regulate the seller's patterns of journey to periodic market centers.
2. Priority to select the market centers based on the order basis.

2. Data sources & Methodology:

The study depends on both the primary and secondary data sources. In order to study the journey of sellers in different periodic market centre and the way to journey to different market centers the study has integrated the sample periodic market centers with the base map with the help of GPS. The choice of sample periodic market centers were based on the major days of the week basis. The secondary sources of data are procured from the West Bengal State Marketing Board. The GPS location and its integration with the GIS tools have enabled to prepare the base map of schedule of market days and market shifting pattern in the study area. Questionnaire and schedule survey has been carried out over 150 sellers from 10% sample periodic market centers. Perception study has been carried out to unearth the truth for individualistic movement and the related cause of likelihood of such movement. Central place theory considers market centers as a central place whose prime

function is the provision of a wide variety of goods and services to the dispersed populations within their respective ranges ². The range is the maximum spatial distance over which people are prepared to travel to obtain a particular good or service from the central place. To determine the hierarchy and centrality values of individual periodic market centers SODA (shop opening day's methodology) & Centrality index methodology devised by V.K. Shrivastava and Davis has been used. Quantitative techniques such as linear regression and coefficient of determination are applied in use to clarify the association between variables. The circumferences of average spheres of influences of sample market centers are drawn on the basis of mean distance (range) travelled by the sellers from their home to market centers.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

The periodic market centers in the district witness few aggregate movements' of sellers in different periodic market centers. Though they emphasizes on the individualistic way of journey which is solely home base in nature and the sellers use to return to their home at the end of the day. Prior to the visit of the market centers the day it held, order of markets and the location of the market centers are well studied by the sellers. Indeed they have a mental map in their mind regarding routs selection for journey to periodic markets. The proximity of individualistic movements indicates about the better transport development in the study area. In regional economic development context, periodic market centers play an immense role. Among the surveyed sellers 85.33% sellers try to return to their home after completion of marketing activities. Only 15% sellers follow the market cycle. So most of the movement of different periodic markets is home based. Though the movement is not circulatory but the area is integrating with the others area through this type of movement of sellers and the benefits goes to both sellers and consumers.

Table No: 1 Types of Movement of Different Types of Sellers

Type of part-time And full time Sellers	Nature of travel		Total
	Returning home After completing the marketing activity	Following market cycle	
Producer	80	3	83
Selling trader	23	7	30
Buying trader	9	4	13
Service provider	16	8	24
Total	128	22	150

Source: Field Survey

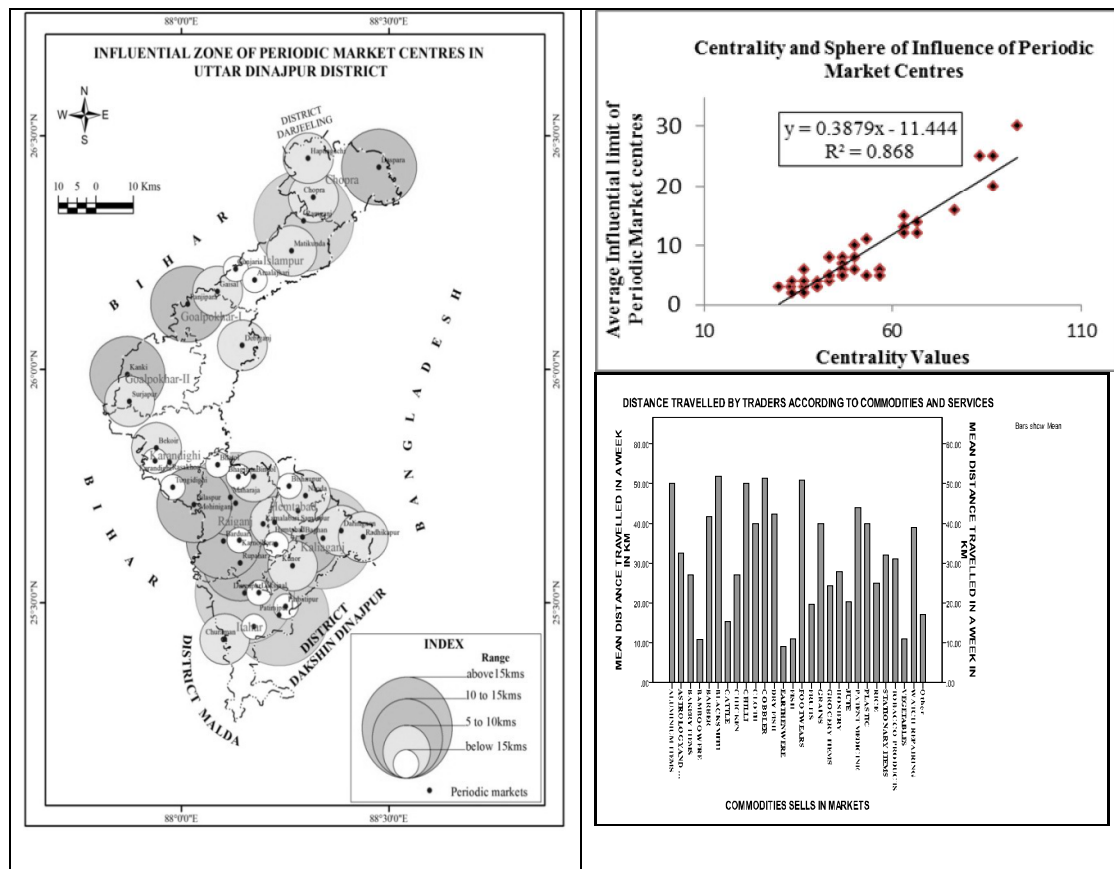


Figure: 1 Zone of Influence of Periodic Market Centers

3. MARKET CYCLES & TYPES OF SELLERS:

The concept of market cycle is really a self-contained idea. A market cycle has been defined as a group of market-places serving a specified area and unified by a known order of shifts of mobile sellers. Market-cycles may lend themselves to the following approaches. Those are aggregate approach and individual approach. Aggregate approach constitute the week long cycles of day to day changes in point patterns of active market sites in a given area or cyclical movements of market activity from market-centre during the week. In the individualistic approach market cycle may be as the spatiotemporal pattern of movements between home and the market places by a given seller once every week or longer time period. Though, it has been considered that sellers might attempt to travel longer distance if the profit made from sale exceeds the additional transport cost. It is considered that the distance travelled by sellers to reach the different periodic market places depends on perishable and durability of items and weight of product they carry and dispose at periodic market places. Demand of goods that is the reflection of centrality of the market also attracts the sellers to undertake journey for a particular market. So the spatial movement of sellers is also influenced by nature of goods in which they deal. Usually, the sellers with perishable commodities will travel a shorter

distance than those of service providers and sellers carry durable items. It is the common practice any traders to find the least-cost set of periodic market in terms of distance travelled ². Service providers such as blacksmith, cobbler and durable items sellers such as aluminums, footwear travel more than average 50 km distance in a week to attend various periodic market places. Usually, sellers with commodities like vegetables, earthen wares, and bamboo were etc. travel less distance in a week than those of the service providers and sellers with full time category with durable items. The producer seller's decision to make journey to periodic market centres differs significantly from selling and buying sellers whose intend to visit more periodic markets hence create a complex market cycle. Visiting more periodic market centres might enhance the profit level of selling and buying sellers. In addition all these sellers have the prior knowledge about the transaction and turn over in different periodic markets. In this regard they are willing to travel more distance to attend the larger periodic market centres.

Table No : 2 Types of Sellers in Periodic Market places in Uttar Dinajpur District

Type of Sellers		Type of Part-time and Fulltime Sellers				Total
		Producers	Selling Sellers	Buying sellers	Service providers	
Part-time	Count	89	2	3	13	107
	%	83.20%	1.90%	2.80%	12.10%	100.00%
Fulltime	Count	0	22	10	11	43
	%	0.00%	51.20%	23.30%	25.60%	100.00%
Total	Count	89	24	13	24	150
	%	59.30%	16.00%	8.70%	16.00%	100.00%

Source: Field survey

Factors Affecting the Movement of Sellers Itinerancy in Periodic Markets:

Periodic markets are not only the major outlets for retail goods; they are also means of aggregating rural surpluses³. Most of the sellers in periodic markets also engage in crop production, livestock herding, and collection of produce from growers for resale and processing of goods, & craft production which may directly complement their objectives in market places. The chief factors which are mainly regulating the mode and pattern of journey of sellers are the availability and complete information about the location, accessibility and timings of all markets which are within the range of visitation. Though the objectives of most of the sellers is to find out the least cost set of

periodic markets in terms of distance travelled and the benefits gained from the said market centers. Circulation of the people, goods and information amongst various nodes makes the society an organic whole and the region a spatial system⁴. It is well known that the interaction between people and places requires access and access is only possible if there are connecting links⁵. Few identified market cycles are drawn on the basis of the linear route selection of sellers and their visiting pattern in subsequent sequential scheduled market centers. Keeping in view of adjacent proximity of periodic market centers sellers usually follow the five day, four day and three day market cycle. Owing to the response of the sellers the producer sellers visit the short distance market where they can dispose their immediate produce and return to their home at the end of the day. On the other hand sellers who have the craft durable and bulky items and cattle used to visit some selected major market centers in their vicinity. Transport development and availability of mode of transport has enabled the sellers to follow in an individualistic way i.e. the home based journey to periodic market centers. The aggregate patterns are mainly followed by service sellers who used to visit the different market centers for the maximum sale of their services. In aggregating approach the sellers used to stay adjacent to the periodic market places overnight just for attending for the next day marketing activity. Such type of sellers are itinerant in nature. Their visiting pattern is previously scheduled by them as they return after a week or two days, three days or four days to their home. In this study, such type of visiting patterns is recognized as aggregating approach as such cyclic visiting pattern. The cycle either it is complete or incomplete in nature but it must integrate the region in terms of dispersing specialized items from one region to another and play as a stimulus for the trading activities in Uttar Dinajpur District. Spatial integration in between one space to another is promoted by such type of visiting pattern of itinerant sellers. On the other hand individualistic approach indicates trader's returning to their home from periodic market centers after completion of market activities at the end of the day. The study area witnessed that 85.33% of the surveyed sellers prefer to visit periodic market centers from their home base and return to home after completion of trading activities at the end of the day. The 14.67% of sellers are purely in itinerant category; prefer to follow the sequential journey to different periodic market centers. The inherent reason behind such type of proximity of individualistic journey tendencies to different periodic markets lies in lack of synchronization of periodic markets according to spatial and temporal context. Or in other words it can be said the irrational synchronization of periodic market centers has made such type of journey for different types of sellers as it is very much unnatural to them to follow some sort of sequential 'market cycle'. As most of the producer sellers do prefer to produce their own production in this regard they need rest days for their necessary production. Usually they prefer to visit periodic markets on one or two days

interval. So, it should be cautioned that the journey from home to periodic market and vice versa is more popular for sellers in Uttar Dinajpur District.

Table : 3 Some Common Market Shifting Pattern of traders

Sl No.	Name of the Rural Periodic market Centers
1	Patiraj(Sun), Kunore (wed), Durgapur, (Sat).
2	Dhankhoil(M), Bhagan(T), Kunor(W), Dalimgaon(Th), Kamalabari(F).
3	Ramganj (T), Chopra (M).
4	Panjipara (Sat), Debiganj (S), Kanki (W).
5	Radhikapur(S), Dalimgaon(Th), Dhankhoil(M).
6	Dhankhoil(M) Maharaja(T), Kamalabari (F).
7	Barduari(sat), Dhankhoil (M), Sitgram(W).
8	Bindal(sat), Mohiniganj (T), Bilaspur (Th).
9	Bikoir (W), Karandighi(Th), Rasakhoa(S).
10	Kanki(W), Chakulia(T), Panjipara(Sat).
11	Baghan(T), Dhankhoil(M), Kunor(W).
12	Durgapur(S), Rupahar(W), kamalabari(F).
13	Samaspur(Sat), Kamalabari(F), Hemtabad(W), Sasan(T).
14	Tungidighi(Th), Rasakhoa(S), Bekoir(W).
15	Gaisal(T), Panjipara(Sat).
16	Baghan(T), Samaspur(Sat), Dhankhoil(M).
17	Bilaspur(Th), Mohiniganj(T), Rasakhoa(S).
18	Chuaraman(W), Itahar(M), Patirajpur(S).
19	Naoda(S), Bhagan(T), Dhankhoil(M).
20	Haptiagachi(F), Chopra(M), Bhutijhari(T).

Source: Field Survey

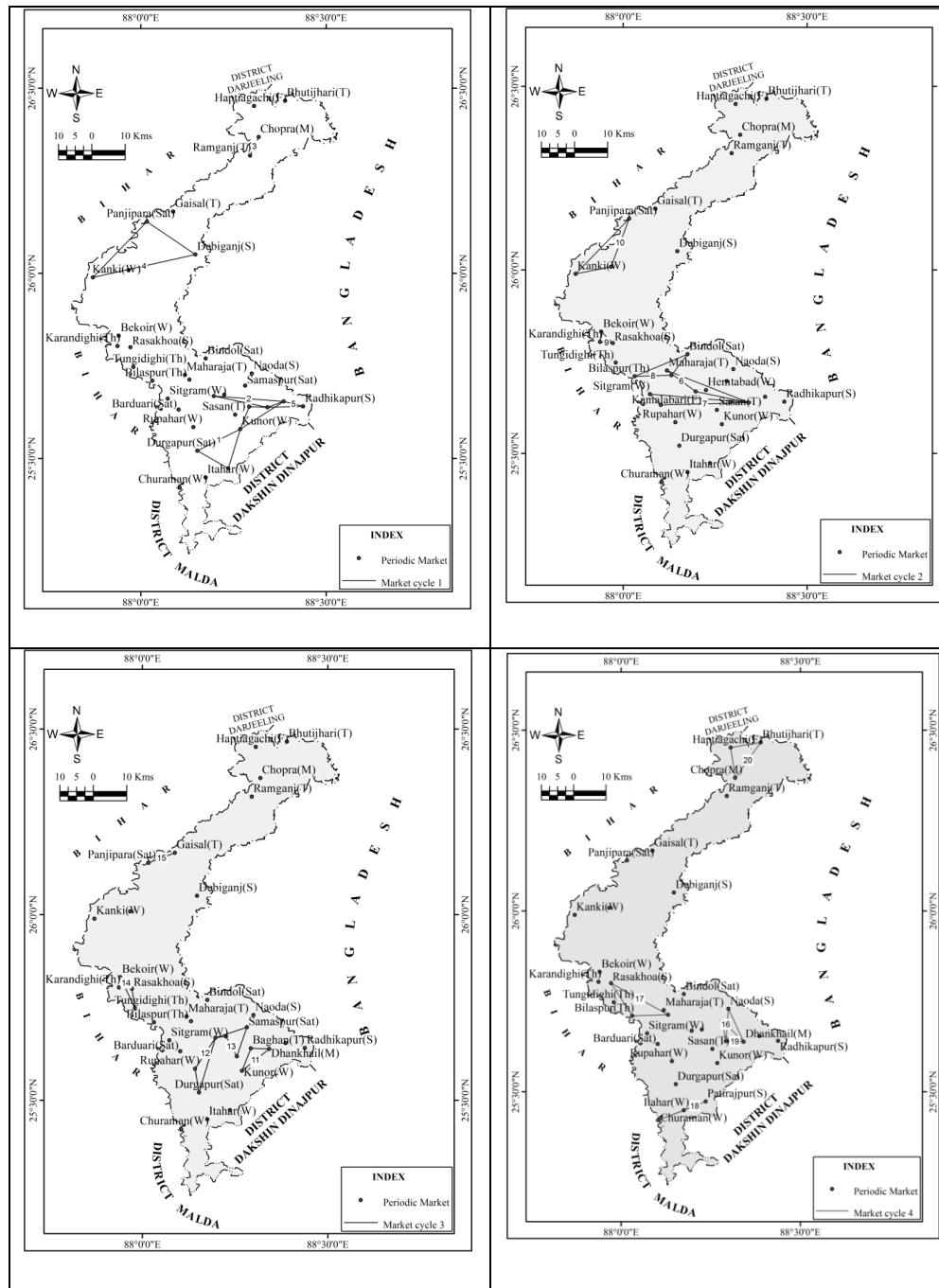


Figure : 2 Market Shifting Pattern of Sellers in Periodic Market Centers



Plate : 1 Different types of Seller and Their Itinerancy

CONCLUSION:

The above study has an intention to focus on the decision taken by the different types of sellers to approach the visiting pattern to different periodic market centers. With the advancement of marketing process today still periodic markets bears its traditional marketing process. Even in today the residents of rural area usually visit the different periodic markets in their vicinity. Owing to the high turnover sellers do not bother to travel more distance periodic market centers. Specialization of commodities, seasonality is the unique characters of different periodic markets. Without a market, many other services are unlikely to be established, and if they are, they may fail or languish for lack of custom⁶. Although the markets are arranged in spatial and temporal aspects on judicial basis that none of the smaller markets are affected owing to the proximity larger market centers on the same day of the week. Though, the study has proved that most of the sellers prefer to home based journey to periodic markets. It does not mean that aggregative approaches where all the sellers attend sequential journey to periodic market centres are conducive for integrating the region. But it can be argued that with the advancement of transport and seller's mobility has made possible to prefer their journey to individualistic way. On the other hand the market place is a vital interface not only for exchange of goods but also for the personal contact and communication of ideas which hoists the diffusion process and generate changes⁷. The traditional cultures are incorporated with the modern cultures and the materialistic culture are also transforming through these periodic market centers and

seller's movement around these centres. The markets have enabled the convenient way for regional development altogether for the people, agriculture, economic prosperity, integration, cultural assimilation. Although, the seller's movement depends on the conveniences of their own in terms of distance, cost, turnover etc but it is their decision making approach which lead their journey ultimately.

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