

## BOOK REVIEW

MARKET CENTER AND HINTERLAND IN LALITPUR DISTRICT, NEPAL; By Pushkar K. Pradhan, Published by Institute für Geographic and Regionalforschung, der Universität Klagenfurt, Austria, 1998 (Institute of Geography and Regional Studies, University of Klagenfurt, Austria). Klagenfurter Geographische Schriften Heft 17, 29 x 21 cm, 212 pages; figures 44, tables 65, bibliography and indexes, price not mentioned.

In Nepal there are a few general geographical literatures. Specific literatures such as on regional studies are lacking. This is a praiseworthy endeavor to lay down geographical information and to infuse inspiration amongst the development planners. The book is the result of research work carried out for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy some years back in the Institute of Geography and Regional Planning Studies, University of Klagenfurt, Austria. It is an appropriate and contextual work that focuses on market centers and hinterland linkages addressing the priority problems at the local level.

The study area is situated within the mid-hill region of Nepal. The area has distinct physical anomaly and socio-cultural diversity. As the author states, geographic analysis of market center and hinterland relation includes three broad but interrelated components such as structure and function of market centers and their spatial distribution, resource use system of the hinterland area defined by market centers, and nature and type of interaction, flow or linkages between market center and hinterland. Most of the market centers are developed in valley or in lowland area, there are well-developed infrastructure, whereas the rural areas are in less accessible hinterland. Between market center and hinterland interaction accessibility is important.

The book is divided into ten chapters. Chapter 1 deals with the major issues on the role of market centers, amongst surrounding rural neighbors, an important social and economic infrastructure, to mobilize the fruits of development. In rationale of the study the context of geographical diversity and developing nature of economy's relationship is highlighted. Likewise, specific objectives, hypotheses, assumptions and scope of the study are lucidly presented. Chapter 2 is devoted to review of literature. The literature is divided into two broad sections. The first section gives a general description of theoretical concepts, development models and issues to describe market centers and hinterland relation. The second section deals with overview of market center and hinterland relation, rural regional development planning and policies and research studies on market center and hinterland in Nepal. Chapter 3 discusses the methodology. In this text, selection of the study area, concepts and definitions, market center survey, primary and secondary database, method of field data collection (observation, interview and sampling) data processing and different methods of analysis using several statistical tools and indices.

Under profile of the study region four different settings are presented in Chapter 4. Physical setting describes diverse topography, drainage system, climate conditions flora and land use. Economic setting gives a glimpse of farm activities like agricultural systems, irrigation, livestock and inputs; and non-farm activities like labor selling for crops processing, mat and basket making, masonry, carpentry, pottery, brick kiln, domestic uses' materials etc. Social setting elaborates population dynamics of the area; and infrastructure and institution service facilities explain the road networks and service facilities in and around the study area. The Chapter 5 relates to the hinterland analysis and four major issues are elaborated apparently. In the first issue occupational pattern, land holding size, type and social groups are analyzed. Second issue is confined on cropping, cropping pattern, production and surplus analysis. Likewise, the third issue describes about the condition of domestic animals which are kept of milk and meat purposes. The fourth issue related to deal relationships between landholding size, production and marketable surplus. The analysis is based on agricultural

activities. Under Chapter 6, agricultural marketing system of Nepal is highlighted and then marketing commodities, type and price determination based on field survey is analyzed.

Chapter 7 on market center analysis is the most significant part of the book. The highest number of pages are contributed to it. This chapter deals morphological histogenesis of market towns in and around Kathmandu valley and their functional growth. In other sections market center spatiality, structure, functional units, infrastructures, hierarchies and sphere of influences are elucidated crystal clear employing statistical tools and models. Similarly, Chapter 8 on accessibility analysis, gives an idea of geographical analysis of service accessibility for agricultural inputs, health services, credit and other services related to agriculture development are lucidly described. Another important aspect of the book is problems and prospects of market centers and hinterland development which is outlined in Chapter 9. This chapter sheds light on environmental resource potentials of hinterland. For infrastructure development analysis, the important parameters like road and bridge, irrigation, drinking water, health, school, market, industry, social services, public house and amenities are put forward. Regarding agriculture and market center development, in consultation with local concerning personnel, some issues are presented such as agriculture development, service delivery, marketing reform, institutional and other constraints. As the author explains, for potential of market center development the histogenic significance, environmental base, hinterland activities and functional base of the market centers are taken. Among valley market centers Chapagaun and Lubhu possess a remarkable functions and infrastructure facilities. Lele and Tikabhairav are the newly developed intermediate centers as nodes which have been serving as a collection center of the agricultural surplus products and other primary goods. Besides, Bhattedanda and Gotikhel are two hill market centers, they are facing constraints of vicious circle. However, Pradhan is optimistic that if the infrastructure facility is approached the area will have better possibilities.

In Chapter 10, which is the summary and conclusion chapter, the author has presented major finding categorically. The findings and policy implications will have wider relevance to the planning and rationalization of the market centers.

The study was conducted in a small part of the mid-hill region but presented as valuable essay. The author's harmonious relation with the study area, personal observations and stance are distinctly reflected in each pages of all chapters. The research work is however, of applied nature. This book may provide inspiration to the future researchers who are interested to undertake such type of rural market centers and hinterland linkages wishing the disadvantaged areas' betterment and development. There is a need for such geographical studies based on field work for isolated areas in the remote hills, which could be utilized for socio-economic development planning in the context of Nepal.

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