ABSTRACT

In India, around 70 percent of population resides in rural or semi urban area, which makes it to over 750 million people. Rural population is still dependent upon agriculture for its livelihood either as a laborer or as owner of the farms. However, as the land size is shrinking and numbers of family members are growing, per capita earning is low in rural areas. Nearly 86 percent of rural population earns less than Rs 100 per day. The quality of life is poor, as majority of rural population does not have basic civic amenities such as safe drinking water, sewage, roads, communication and electricity. People have to face extreme hardship in their daily routine thereby reducing their work efficiency and productivity. Though rural literacy rate has improved, it is still extremely poor considering that less than one-tenth of the population is educated up to the primary level in more than one-third of the districts and only 6 percent of the rural males are educated up to the middle level, despite of several literacy programmes initiated by government and non-government organizations. Thus, large section of rural population remains deprived in major walk of life resulting in out migration to the urban areas.

The Indian rural market with its vast size and demand base offers great opportunities to marketers. Two third of countries consumers live in rural areas and almost half of the national income is generated here. Rural and small town economy, which accounts for 60 percent of India’s income, has remained insulated from the economic slowdown. Moreover, rural incomes are on the rise driven largely due to continuous growth in agriculture for the last few consecutive years. The rural markets are estimated to be growing more rapidly as compared to the urban markets. The potentiality of rural markets is said to be like a 'woken up sleeping giant'. In recent years, rural markets have acquired significance in countries like China and India, as the overall growth of the economy has resulted into substantial increase in the purchasing power of the rural communities. On account of the green revolution in India, the rural areas are consuming a large quantity of industrial and urban manufactured products. In this context, a special marketing strategy, namely, rural marketing has taken shape. Sometimes, rural marketing is confused with agricultural marketing - the later denotes marketing of produce of the rural areas to the urban
consumers or industrial consumers, whereas rural marketing involves delivering manufactured or processed inputs or services to rural producers or consumers.

Indian market centres mostly exhibit a picture of rural life as they provide primarily a base for collection and subsequent distribution of various agricultural products of the surrounding area. It is actually this characteristic of market centre that links it with the countryside and as such the bulk of the market centres of India have a strong rural bias. Market centres are the significant dynamic elements which are inherent in the expressions of the cultural and economic structure of the region. Rural market centres are not only the centres of marketing activity but they are also the nucleus of development. They have economical, social, cultural importance and helps in increasing social contacts, serve as centres of diffusion and become focus for political and other activities. They are the controlling centres of marketing system and have an important role in stimulating production and consumption and also helpful to accelerate the art of economic development. Thus, development of market centres implies the economic development and their growth always follows the development of agriculture, transportation, industries etc., which ultimately lead to overall regional development. The role of rural markets in rural development has been examined in terms of their role as - (a) centres of employment generation (b) centres of agricultural innovation diffusion (c) centres of attracting rural amenities (d) centres of controlling flow of goods and regulating prices of agricultural produce, and (e) centres of generating marketing systems of agricultural products.

In view of the importance of rural markets in socio-economic life of the rural people, the study of such markets is very essential. A large section of population in Ambedkarnagar district of Uttar Pradesh lives in villages whose main occupation is agriculture. The rural population is more or less depends on rural markets and visit for buying and selling commodities and to discuss various socio-economic matters prevailing in the society. The study of rural markets and its role in rural transformation is an important aspect of marketing geography. A number of worthwhile studies have been made to analyze and evaluate the different aspects of market centres but little attention has been paid to examine the relationship between rural markets and transformation of rural areas. So, the present study tries to explore the role of rural markets in rural transformation.
The study is a modest effort to bring to light the manifold perspectives of spatial analysis of rural markets and their role in rural transformation in Ambedkarnagar district of Uttar Pradesh. The work has been organized into six chapters. The first chapter serves as an introduction. Second chapter deals with the review of literature on different aspects of rural markets at national and international perspectives. The third chapter gives a detail account of the geographical outlook of the study area. Forth chapter deals with the genesis and development, spatio-temporal distribution, classification as well as hierarchy and sphere of influence of different rural market centres. The demographic and socio-economic characteristics of rural market participants have been carried out in the fifth chapter. The sixth chapter analyses the role of rural markets in rural transformation in Ambedkarnagar district. In the last, the conclusion summarizes the main findings of the study and implies policy suggestions.

The first chapter deals with the concept and significance of markets in rural transformation, statement of problem, objectives and hypotheses of the study, database and research methodology, and organization of the study. Rural transformation in a region is an outcome of various socio-economic and political factors acting combined to enhance the economic growth and development of the region. Rural markets, though, a very small spatial unit, are one of the important factors of rural transformation. The transformation in the context of rural markets occurs first in the socio-economic status of market participants and then subsequently to its rural hinterland. So, the present study is an attempt to assess the role of rural markets in rural transformation in terms of level of socio-economic transformation of market participants who are directly or indirectly engaged in these centres of marketing for their livelihood.

Keeping in view the significance of the rural markets in the socio-economic life of the rural participants in Ambedkarnagar district, the present work has been undertaken with the following objectives: (i) To examine the spatial and temporal distribution of rural markets, (ii) To study the types, hierarchy and sphere of influence of rural market centres, (iii) To study the demographic and socio-economic structure of the rural market participants, and (iv) To assess the role of rural markets in rural transformation. For the study, three hypotheses have been put forward with a view to infer result regarding the discussed objectives: (i) The rural markets have developed
considerably over the last two decades, (ii) The rural markets are a common place for exchange of social, cultural, political and economic activities between people of different socio-economic classes and strata, and (iii) The socio-economic and cultural transformation in rural areas is influenced by the markets of that area.

The entire study is based on the intensive fieldwork supplemented by secondary source of data. The primary data have been collected through field survey during the year 2010-11 by direct questionnaire, using random sampling technique. Thirty one markets i.e. 15 percent of the total rural markets which are spread all over the study area has been undertaken for the detailed field work. For analyzing the socio-economic characteristics of sellers in the sampled rural markets of the study area, 50 percent farmer sellers and traders have been sampled out of the total market participants. The hierarchical orders of selected rural markets have been computed based upon Composite Functional Index value. To assess the role of rural markets in socio-economic transformation of respondents in the selected market centres, an assessment of 26 selected variables pertaining to change in market infrastructure and facilities, employment and income status and socio-economic status of respondents over a time period of 20 years during 1991 to 2011 has been made. The interrelationship among 26 variables was established with the help of Karl Pearson’s correlation coefficient technique using SPSS 20.0 software. Finally, interrelationship between Composite Functional Score (CFS) and Composite Transformation Score (CTS) has been checked to derive specific conclusion. Different statistical methods and techniques like Composite Functional Index (CFI), Z-score, Correlation Coefficient, Correlation Matrix and simple percentage have been used in the analyses and interpretation of data. For preparing maps and diagrams, suitable research methods and cartographic techniques are used. Maps were prepared with the help of GIS software packages like Arc GIS 3.1 and Geo Media Professional 3.1.

Chapter second deals with the review of available literature. It includes various studies at the national and international level related to origin/evolution, growth/development, distribution, centrality and hierarchy, trade area, consumer and traders’ behaviour, agricultural marketing, and planning and development of rural markets. Third chapter is devoted to the geographical profile of the Ambedkarnagar district encompassing its physical, social, economic and agricultural profile. The Ambedkarnagar district in North Indian State of Uttar Pradesh has been selected as
study area, taking into consideration its agricultural base as well as presence of large number of rural market centres. The area is very backward in infrastructure as well as in industrial development. More than 90 percent population of the district depends upon agriculture for their livelihood. It forms a part of the Ghagra sub-basin of Ganges basin and lies between 26° 09’ N and 26° 40’ N latitudes and between 82° 12’ E and 83° 05’ E longitudes. The total area of the district is 2361 sq km, which supports a population of 2,026,876 persons. About 91 percent population lives in villages and it mostly depends on rural market centres. Administratively, the district has been divided into four tehsils (subdivisions) and nine development blocks. It has total 1780 inhabited villages, 7 town areas and 205 rural markets.

The forth chapter is devoted to the dynamics of rural markets, which includes genesis and development, spatial and temporal distribution, classifications and hierarchy. Study found that the socio-economic factors played an important role in the emergence of rural markets. The majority of the rural markets held today were emerged as a result of natural needs, and partly established by the powerful Nawabs and Zamindars of the district. There are 205 rural markets which are distributed over an area of 2361.03 sq km. These markets are unevenly distributed over the space. In the district, each market tends to serve a definite area around it. The district occupies an area of 2,361.03 km² and the average area served per rural market is 11.52 km². Study shows that there is a remarkable regional variation in the average area served by per rural market. Out of nine development blocks, in four blocks, the average area served per rural market is greater than the district average. In the remaining blocks, the average area served per rural market is less than the district average. It is mainly because of the presence of large number of market centres due to the development of transportation and agriculture in the district.

Each rural market also serves a definite proportion of total population in the area around it. The average population served per rural market for the district as a whole is 9,887.20 persons. Four blocks of the district viz., Katehri, Jalalpur, Tanda and Bhiti serve more people than the district average. Except Jalalpur, other 3 blocks serve more population than the district average due to the presence of large population along with less number of rural markets, whereas Jalalpur has large number of markets but the population is also much larger than the other blocks. The other five
blocks tends to serve less average population than the district average due to presence of large number of markets.

The study of the marketing system of an area needs an investigation into the temporal aspects of the market centres. Periodicity is an essential element of market centres and classification based on periodicity can be considered as primary or basic for the geographical study of market centres. Based on periodicity, the rural markets in the Ambedkarnagar district, has been classified into two types, viz., (i) regular or daily or permanent markets, and (ii) periodic or temporary markets. The regular or daily markets are those in which the marketing or buying and selling activity is a regular or daily feature and are located permanently, whereas, periodic markets are a temporary feature, held either on a specific day or days of the week, fortnight or a month or once, twice or thrice in a year. In the study area, most of the periodic markets are held at those places or locations which already have a permanent/daily market. Therefore, the daily market centres also observe periodic marketing during specified day(s) of the week.

There are total 205 rural markets in the study area, out of which, 152 are bi-weekly, 27 are weekly and 26 are daily. The tri-weekly markets are totally absent in the study area. The block level study shows that more than 74 percent of total rural markets are bi-weekly markets. The daily markets share 12.68 per cent of the total rural markets of the district. Study shows that all the periodic markets are distributed among seven days of the market week. In a week time, 179 periodic market centres are furnished with 331 markets meeting, which include 152 bi-weekly as well as 27 weekly markets centres. The day on which the market held is also an important consideration in the study area. Different markets are held on different days of the week. Such an arrangement has related to socio-economic and religious causes. Study illustrates that like distributional pattern of rural markets, their frequency also varies among different blocks of the district. The total number of market frequency for the district is 331, which has spread over all the seven days of the week. Thus, market meeting or frequency of market varies from block to block, and also from day to day. The frequency of markets on different days ranges from 35 on Sunday to 61 on Saturday, followed by 56 on Friday, 50 on Monday, 49 on Thursday, 41 on Wednesday, and 38 on Tuesday. There is a high concentration of market meetings on Saturday, owing to the weekend market day and an important day for temple visit.
Similarly, Friday and Monday has considered as being auspicious days among Muslims and Hindus respectively. Friday is favoured as a market day in the larger centres where consumers can attend both Namaz-e-Juma in Mosque and markets on the same day.

The growth and development of market and marketing system are in a state of continuous change and their characteristics are not attributable to present day economic factors, but also to historical legacies and to socio-cultural factors. The temporal growth of rural markets implies the change in area of market morphology and in number of markets, between two points of time. Study shows a positive trend of growth has been recorded with reference to number and periodicity of the rural markets. Temporal growth brings the fact that number of markets has increased during 1991-2011 from 173 to 205 at the rate of 0.92 per cent annually, which varies block wise with maximum 1.67 per cent in Bhiti to minimum 0.25 per cent in Bhiyaon. The average annual growth rate of rural markets in other blocks is Jalalpur (1.25 per cent), Ramnagar (1.14 per cent), Katehri (1.11 per cent), Tanda (1.05 per cent), Jahangirganj (1.00 per cent), Akbarpur (0.81 per cent) and Baskhari (0.50 per cent). The positive trend of growth in the rural markets indicates the commercialization of agriculture and surplus production, demand and supply as well as urban influence in the study area. The number of market centres has considerably increased owing to agricultural production in large quantities, introduction of some new commercial crops and their heavy production, as well as influence of urbanization. The growth in market centres is the resultant impact of the cumulative forces bringing about the awareness and efforts to improve the life and economy of rural population. Hence, the first hypothesis which states whether the rural markets have developed considerably over the last two decades is found valid.

In the study area, bi-weekly markets are most significant features of periodicity. By proportion it accounts for 74.15 per cent to the total number of markets. Though their share declined from 80.92 per cent in 1991 to 74.15 per cent in 2011. The share of daily markets has improved drastically from 6.94 per cent in 1991 to 12.68 per cent in 2011. The proportion of weekly markets has also increased during 1991 to 2001 from 12.14 per cent to 13.17 per cent. This trend shows the change of bi-weekly markets into the daily markets which are mainly due to the improvement of
purchasing power of rural consumers and money derived from the different sources due to seasonal or permanent migration.

One of the most important concepts in the study of market centres is the concept of topology i.e. to arrange the market centres in different groups on the basis of their characteristics. Keeping in view the above facts, effort has been made to classify the selected rural markets based on estimated participants, number of shops, number of transacted commodities, market function as well as trade area of the market. The number of shops is an important and basic variable for the classification of the market centres as it reflects their functional magnitude. In rural areas, all the shops in a market are not permanent particularly in periodic markets. At any market, there are generally, three kinds of shops, viz., temporary, permanent and itinerant, and all these have crucial importance for the classification of market centres. In the present case, all such kinds of shops have been added up to classify market centres of the district. On the basis of total number of shops in the market, the selected rural markets have been classified. The classification of markets has been undertaken to exhibit the large variation in the total number of shops in the 31 selected markets. Thus, the markets were categories as small size (up to 100 shops), medium size (101-200 shops) and large size (more than 200 shops). Among the total 31 selected markets, 8 markets (25.81 per cent) fall in category of small size markets while 14 (45.16 per cent) fall in medium category and the rest 9 markets fall in large category.

On the basis of total participants in the market, the selected rural markets have been classified in three categories as small (up to 500 participants), medium (501-1,000 participants) and large markets (more than 1,000 participants). The markets which have up to 500 participants are categorized as small markets. They share 22.58 per cent (07 markets) of 31 selected rural markets. There are 15 (48.39 per cent) medium markets, having participants between 501-1,000 persons and the remaining nine markets with more than 1,000 participants are categorized as large markets.

The size and status of the market depends upon the number, volume, nature and specialization of commodities. In the study, selected markets of the district are classified on the basis of major commodities traded at the rural market centres of the district. The major commodities transacted in the rural markets have been categorized into 22 types. On the basis of the major commodities traded, rural markets of the
district are grouped into three categories, i.e. small markets (≤ 7 commodities), medium markets (8-15 commodities) and large markets (> 15 commodities).

The type of function is a very important aspect in the study of markets. The selected rural markets of the district are classified on the basis of function and exchange orientation as, ‘weekly markets’ (haat) which performs market business only on the fixed day/days of the week, ‘retail periodic markets’ which met on the fixed day/days of the week but also perform market business on other days of the week though on a very small scale and, ‘retail daily markets’ which have no periodic meetings and function throughout the week but only with retailing facilities. Bi-weekly retail markets predominate in the district having a share of 54.84 per cent to total rural markets. The daily retail markets share 32.26 per cent rural markets of the district with transaction business throughout the week and serve relatively larger population for a larger number of goods and services. The weekly haats share merely 12.90 per cent of the rural markets in the district but attracts a large number of rural population for their specialized nature of goods and commodities, like food grains, oil seeds, vegetables, meat and fish and livestock.

Market trade area is the reflection of market size, range of goods and services dealt in a particular market. The extent and potentiality of demand of commodities from tributary region, determine the origin and development of market centres. Thus, the market area and the size of the market are interdependent. The trade area of 31 selected rural markets is computed based on the average distance travelled by consumers and traders in a given market. The travelling distance by consumers and traders is the best expression of centrality of rural market centre. The trade area of the selected rural markets varies from 396.70 km² of Rasoolpur Mubarakpur to 64.44 km² of Indaipur.

The study tried to find out the relative importance of the market centres of the district and to group them into various hierarchical orders. The present hierarchical classification of rural markets of Ambedkarnagar district is based upon Composite Functional Index value computed from 27 different quantitative and qualitative attributes following a 5 point weighting scale varying from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest). Thus, on the basis of calculated Composite Functional Index for each selected rural market, three grades as regional (>100 C.F.I.), block level (50-100 C.F.I.) and local market (< 50 C.F.I.) have been classified on the basis of CFI value of a particular
selected market. Study found three orders of market hierarchy in the study area. There are only 3 first order markets (Regional markets), namely Rasoolpur Mubarakpur, Kasaruwa and Pratappur Chamurkha. Whereas, 7 second order markets (Block level markets) and 21 third order markets (Local markets) has been identified in the study area.

Fifth chapter focused on the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of rural market participants. For the study, the market participants have been broadly categorized into sellers and consumers. The sellers have been further classified into farmer-sellers and traders. Furthermore, to analyze the socio-economic characteristics of sellers in the selected rural markets of the study area, 50 per cent farmer sellers and traders have been sampled out of the total market participants. Whereas the consumers has been excluded from the study.

Sellers are those people who come to the rural markets for selling different goods and commodities. The sellers are broadly classified into farmer-sellers and traders. The present categorization has been done keeping in mind the nature and type of market participation in the Ambedkarnagar district. The farmer-sellers are those who are farmers and attend one or two nearby markets to sell their surplus agricultural produce such as food grains, vegetables, pulses, oilseeds, fruits, etc. They are part-time sellers with agriculture as their main occupation. It is found in most of the rural markets that the number of local farmer sellers is large as compared to other sellers. They share 40.92 per cent to total sellers. Study shows the variation in the per cent share of farmer-sellers according to the type of market i.e. daily and periodic.

Traders are the people, who buy and sell goods and services in the market place for business purpose or who display merchandise in the hope of making a sale. All type of traders found in the different rural markets with share of 59.08 per cent to total sellers. Unlike farmer-sellers, the proportion of traders is higher in daily markets as compared to the periodic markets.

Farmer-sellers are the most vital component of the rural markets in the study area owing to their higher proportion (41.08%) in the selected rural markets. The male farmer-seller constitute 76.84 per cent of the total farmer-sellers attending the rural markets, where as the average share of female sellers is 23.83 per cent. The age structure of the farmer-sellers has also shown the variation in the number of sellers in different age groups. The mature groups (30-50 years) of farmer-sellers were found in
larger proportions (47.26 per cent) in the selected rural markets. Under this age group of farmer-seller, male sellers constitute 33.31 per cent as well as female sellers occupied 13.95 per cent share. The share of male sellers represented in the selected markets with a varying proportion between 39.13 per cent to 27.27 per cent. The share of female sellers also varied from market to market and ranges between 9.09 per cent to 20.69 per cent. The adult groups (18-30 years) of farmer-sellers were found in second largest proportions (39.70 per cent) in the selected rural markets. Under this age group, male sellers constitute 33.97 per cent as well as female sellers occupied 5.73 per cent share with total farmer-seller. The juvenile (under 18 years) and senile (above 50 years) population are found in very low proportion in the rural markets with a share of 3.49 per cent and 9.56 per cent respectively. The caste wise study of the farmer sellers in the selected rural markets shows that most of these sellers are belong to backward and scheduled castes and together share 80.23 per cent of the total farmers-seller. The OBC (Other Backward Castes) occupied the highest proportion with 60.30 per cent, followed by SC (Scheduled Castes) with 19.93 per cent and HC (High Castes) with having 19.77 per cent of the total farmer-seller.

Study reveals that the farmer-sellers who have monthly income ranging between Rs 1,000-5,000 are found in higher proportion i.e. 76.74 per cent. The sellers who are earning more than Rs 5,000/month share low proportion i.e. only 23.26 per cent of the total farmer-sellers in the markets. The high income group farmer-seller is usually not interested in selling their marketable surplus in small markets due to the low demand and price of goods in these markets. They mostly prefer to visit the regulated markets or town markets. Study does not found any farmer-seller with having monthly income less than Rs 1,000.

Size of land holding and participation of farmer-sellers (crop producer sellers) in the rural markets has inverse relationship, i.e., higher concentration of farmer-sellers belong to lower size of land holdings. The study shows that 88.20 per cent farmer-sellers belong to marginal and small categories of landholders having less than 2 hectares land, whereas only 11.79 per cent are from semi-medium, medium and large landholders. The landless were not present in the selected markets. These markets are the chief centre of attraction for the marginal farmers for the exchange of their agricultural commodities, and meeting places where they discuss the agricultural, political and regional issues. That is the reason that out of 31 selected
rural markets, the share of marginal farmers is higher than that of average (67.52 per cent) in 17 markets. It is point to note that the maximum range of participation of marginal farmers is found in small and medium size of periodic markets than the daily markets.

Educational development among different socio-economic strata of the people brings social changes as well as economic prosperity. The individual category of farmer-sellers who are educated from class 6th to 10th is on top rank (56.40 per cent) among the total participation of farmer-sellers in the selected rural markets. It is followed by farmer-sellers who are educated up to class 5th (24.83 per cent), and with intermediate education (11.13 per cent).

Traders are the most vital section of the rural markets in the study area owing to their higher proportion (58.92 per cent) in the selected rural markets. The study attempts to analyze the participation of male and female traders of different age group in selected rural markets of the study area. The male traders constitute 83.50 per cent of the total traders attending the rural markets; whereas the average share of female traders is only 17.08 per cent. The proportion of female traders is very selective in rural markets; they dealt mostly in vegetables trading, ladies items and handicrafts goods. They are generally from socially backward communities. Females of high socio-economic strata are not allowed to do work as traders. Females usually do not take up public dealing activities in rural India. The age structure of the traders has also shown the variation in the number of traders in different age groups. The mature groups (30-50 years) of traders were found in larger proportions (60.85 per cent) in the selected rural markets. Under this age group of traders, male traders constitute 50.43 per cent as well as female traders occupied 10.42 per cent share. The adult groups (18-30 years) of traders were found in second largest proportions (29.82 per cent) in the selected rural markets. The juvenile (under 18 years) and senile (above 50 years) population are found in very low proportion and low proportion with a share of 0.74 per cent and 8.86 per cent respectively. The proportion of traders under these age groups are very low because the senile population does not have the potential to go to the markets for trading and the juvenile population is not well versed with the selling and marketing techniques.

The nature of occupation and composition of traders in the study area are also embedded in the social stratification of caste system prevailing in the study area. The
Caste wise study of the traders in the selected rural markets shows that majority of these traders are belong to backward and scheduled castes and together share 62.77 per cent of the total traders. The OBC (Other Backward Castes) occupied the highest proportion with 55.07 per cent, followed by HC (High Castes) with 37.23 per cent and SC (Scheduled Castes) with 7.70 per cent among the total traders. The upper castes found in the selected rural markets of the study area are Pandit, Thakur, Banya among Hindus and Pathan, Sheikh, Syed among elite Muslims. Whereas among OBC, the major backward castes found are Yadav (Ahir), Nau, Dhunia, Kumhar (Prajapati), Saini (Mali), Koiri, Kunjra (Raina), Rangrez, Halwai, Sonar, Maurya, Lohar, Lonia, Julaha (Ansari), Darzi (Idreesi), Churihaar (Siddiqi) and Kasai etc., while among scheduled caste, Chamar, Dhobi and Pasi are the major castes.

Income-wise analysis of traders reveals that the traders who have monthly income ranging between Rs 1,000-5,000 are found in higher proportion i.e. 67.98 per cent. The traders who are earning more than Rs 5,000 per month have low proportion i.e. only 32.02 per cent among the total traders in the markets. Any traders having monthly income less than Rs 1,000 was not found in the selected markets. The high income group traders were in low proportion due to low demand of goods of high quality and price structure in rural periodic markets. The high transportation, loading and unloading costs and low profit are the factors which compels them to stay away from participation in these market centres. The landholding wise participation of traders in selected rural markets of the study area shows that more than 77 per cent traders belong to marginal and small categories of landholders who have less than 2 hectares of land, while only 18.94 per cent are semi-medium, medium and large landholders.

The education-wise distribution and proportion of traders in selected rural markets of the study area shows that the traders who are educated from class 6th to 10th is maximum (55.47 per cent) among the total traders in the selected rural markets. It is followed by traders educated up to intermediate (21.25 per cent) and up to class 5th (17.89 per cent). Study also highlighted the participation of well educated traders in higher order daily markets. Hence, from the ongoing discussion, the second hypothesis which states whether the rural markets are a common place for exchange of social, cultural, political and economic activities between people of different socio-economic classes and strata is found to be valid.
For the detailed understanding of the nature and causes of sellers and consumers’ movement for rural markets, 50 per cent traders and at least 5 percent consumers from each selected markets were interviewed for their spatial movement or travel for visiting a particular market. The study shows the visiting pattern and traveling distance made by traders in daily rural markets and periodic markets are different. Traders and sellers in daily markets travelled less distance as compared to the periodic markets. In daily markets, many traders are home based i.e. their shops and residence are found in the markets. The itinerant and part-time traders, who are not having permanent shops in the markets, travel an average distance of 6.75 kilometres from their residence to the markets. The nature of commodities for transactions has also affected the traders travelling distance in the daily rural market centres. The market wise travel pattern shows variation among daily markets, which varies between 9.38 km to 5.10 km. In rural periodic markets, traders have to travel a longer distance to get the economic viability of the business. Thus, they visit a number of periodic markets held in a region on different days of the week. Study shows that the average distance travelled by traders of different commodities and items in periodic markets is 7.62 km. The market wise travel pattern shows variation among periodic markets, which varies between 10.47 km to 6.11 km.

The average distance traveled by consumers in selected daily markets was 8.62 km. In daily markets, consumers travelled maximum distance of 31.14 km to purchase bike/bicycle. The study revealed that the 25 per cent consumers are local, 45 per cent from the distance between 1-5 km, 20 per cent between 5-10 km and 10 per cent from more than 10 km distance from the markets have attended the daily sampled rural markets during the survey. The market wise travel pattern shows variation among daily markets, which varies between 13.10 km to 5.35 km. In periodic markets, rural consumers travelled an average distance of 4.18 km. Thus, they travel shorter distance for periodic markets as compared to daily markets because low range of goods transacted there. The maximum distance of 18.15 km is travelled to purchase livestock.

The final chapter assessed the role of rural markets in rural transformation. To assess the role of rural markets in socio-economic transformation of respondents in the selected market centres in the study area, a detailed assessment of the selected variables pertaining to rural markets, employment generation and socio-economic
status of respondents over a time period of 20 years, during 1991 to 2011 has been made. Thus, total 26 variables were selected, out of which 5 variables belongs to change in market infrastructure and facilities, 6 variables are of change in employment and income status, and 15 variables of change in socio-economic status of respondents. The variables were selected at market level from the primary data obtained through field survey. To analyze the level of change in the selected variables, percent change during the given interval of time has been computed. Furthermore, Z-score technique was used to analyze the change at a uniform scale. The selected rural markets were classified into 3 categories on the basis of Z scores, viz., rural market with high change (> 0.5), with medium change (-0.5 to 0.5), and with low change (< -0.5).

The change in the number of shops in selected rural markets reflects its growth and transformation in its functional magnitude over a period of time. Increase in the number of shops implies expansion of rural markets which is mainly due to the increasing demand from the rural hinterland. Increase in education, employment and income level of rural household, exposure to print and electronic media are the important factors in transforming the purchasing behaviour of rural consumers. The demand of urban consumer goods in rural markets has greatly increased during the last 20 years. The development of roads, electricity, banking and communication facilities has also facilitate the development of rural markets in terms of quality and quantity. To exhibit the magnitude of change in the number of shops during 1991 to 2011 in the selected rural markets, they were classified into 3 categories, markets with high change, medium change and low change. Among the total 31 selected rural markets, 8 markets (25.81 per cent) fall in category of markets with high change in number of shops while 13 markets (41.93 per cent) fall in category of medium change and the rest 10 markets (32.26 per cent) in low change.

The change in the number of major commodities transacted at rural markets reveals its growth and expansion due to increasing demand from the rural surrounding areas. For the study, 22 major commodities transacted in the rural markets during the study period have been categorized. Study shows high rate of change in the number of major commodities transacted in the selected markets, which varies from one market to another. Among the total 31 selected rural markets, 6 markets (19.35 per cent) fall in category of markets with high change in total number of commodities while 15
markets (48.39 per cent) fall in category of medium change and the rest 10 markets (32.26 per cent) in low change.

The increasing availability of urban goods in rural markets implies the rising aspirations and demands among rural buyers. For the study, 11 categories of urban goods transacted in the rural markets during the study period have been identified. Study shows high rate of change in the number of urban goods transacted in the selected markets. Now days, lifestyle changes are witnessed in the rural areas. There is an up gradation from local or unbranded products to national brands and from low priced brands to premium brands. It is mainly due to the increase in literacy levels, migration to urban areas, availability of credit schemes, growth in media and telecommunication network and availability of cheaper technology products such as television, mobile, etc.

The status and privilege of any rural market can be identified by its specialization in dealing with non-agricultural commodities. Contrary to earlier perception that rural markets mainly deals in agricultural commodities, today a large number of non-agricultural commodities has been transacted through these markets. Out of total selected rural markets, 4 markets (12.90 per cent) comes under the category of markets with high change in the total number of non-agricultural commodities transacted while 13 markets (41.93 per cent) fall in category of medium change and the rest 14 markets (45.16 per cent) in low change.

The availability of various infrastructural facilities and services at any rural market specify its grade and hierarchical order among other market centres. Higher the number of market facilities, greater would be the hierarchical order. For the study, 10 market facilities available during the study period has been identified, viz., adequate space, metalled road, drinking water facility, sanitation facility (public toilet/sulabh), storage facility, electricity, public telephone facility, health care centre, banking facility, public transport facility. Study shows high rate of change in number of market facilities during the last 20 years at the selected rural markets. 12 markets (38.71 per cent) fall in category of markets with high change in market facilities while 6 markets (19.35 per cent) fall in category of medium change and the rest 13 markets (41.93 per cent) in low change.

The increase in income is an indicator of economic upliftment. Higher will be the income, greater would be the prosperity. Study shows increase in total income of
respondents at varying rates. Study shows that out of total sellers admitting positive change in their income i.e. 2,217 sellers, 39.47 per cent respondents acknowledged increase in their income up to 20 per cent in selected rural markets of the study area during 1991 to 2011. However, 32.66 per cent respondents acknowledged increase in their income up to 40 per cent whereas 25.67 per cent respondents acknowledged increase in their income above 40 per cent in selected rural markets during 1991 to 2011.

The growth of rural markets and increase in various market facilities has explored different kinds of marketing activities that has motivated the respondents to enter into the various non-traditional professions which has ultimately increased the proportion of employed persons in the selected rural markets. The small size of land holdings, low profit in agriculture, low literacy, unavailability of work, and unemployment among agricultural laborers due to mechanization of agriculture are also the major factors in motivating the respondents to enter in different commercial activities in the selected rural markets of the study area. Out of total markets, 8 markets (25.81 per cent) fall in category of markets with high change in total number of employed persons while 13 markets (41.93 per cent) fall in category of medium change and the remaining 10 markets (32.26 per cent) in low change. Increase in income is directly related with the saving. But the economic gain of any work cannot be judged by merely considering the income generation, but by assessing the cost benefit analysis i.e. the profit incurred. Higher would be the profit, greater will be the saving. The drastic change in the nature of rural trade and marketing has increased the income and profit, which has assisted them to make some saving for their future use.

Due to increasing employment opportunities, the proportion of market participants has increased considerably in selected rural markets. People from various socio-economic classes and strata have started active participation in rural markets of the study area. Study shows high rate of change in total number of participants in the selected markets, which differs from one market to another. The rate of women participation in various economic activities in rural markets has also increased, which is a sign of transformation in social and ethnic values. *Pardah* (veil) system has weakened in all rural communities especially in low socio-economic group of people. Education, mass media exposure and socio-political awareness have very much contributed to the expansion of female participation in selected rural markets. Male
dominated migration has also encouraged the large number of female traders and sellers. Women have to look after all types of household and family responsibilities along with trade and marketing in near-by rural markets.

The high rate of change in share of adult participants in selected rural markets is a positive sign of transformation in rural marketing activities and eventually in rural transformation. Out of total sampled sellers, the proportion of adult participants was found to be 33.88 per cent. The high proportion of adult age group in any economic activity indicates changing motivation and awareness among them. Adult age group are the most dynamic and motivated section of the society. Higher would be the adult participation, greater will be the socio-economic transformation. In rural markets, traders and sellers of mature age group act as a backbone of the various economic activities. The high rate of change in proportion of mature participants in selected rural markets indicates the strengthening of rural trade and marketing activities. Mature participants are generally the head of their households and referred as bread earner of the family. Being the head of households, they have various natures of responsibilities towards their family members. They have to manage the daily needs of the family, looking after the education and marriages of their children, social relations and ceremonies. So, increase in share of mature participants clearly indicates the increasing employment opportunities in selected rural markets which facilitates and support the socio-economic upliftment of their families and society.

The increase in proportion of backward (deprived) class in rural markets indicates social transformation in rural business and trade. Study shows the higher proportion of OBC participants in selected rural markets, which varies between 55 to 70 percent. Hence, these backward participants are the most significant constituent of rural markets in the study area and are responsible for the efficient working of the rural trade. Due to high rate of positive change in the proportion of OBC participants in the selected rural markets, different nature of trade and marketing activities has been performed by this class of participants. Rural markets have acted as significant platform for employment generation among backward classes of the study area. The nature of change in proportion of most deprived untouchable community i.e. scheduled caste (SC) deserve special attention because their increasing proportion in any economic activity reflects transformation in social and ethnic values of the society. In the selected rural markets, their proportion has increased considerably
during the last 20 years and now they are running their own shops, stalls and small businesses in selected rural markets of the study area.

The landless participants occupied a very low share in the selected rural markets, merely 4.05 per cent of total sellers. They mainly worked as agricultural or bounded laborers in the surrounding areas to earn their living. It is significant to note that the share of landless participants in sellers rural markets has witnessed a decreasing trend during the last 20 years. Due to various policies under rural development and political incentives small pieces of land has been allotted to the landless peoples of rural areas. Due to which the proportion of landless participants has decreased in the selected rural markets and are now categorized under marginal landholders. The marginal landholders are an important constituent of rural markets and occupied the highest share (between 55 to 70 percent) among other participants. Their higher proportion in selected rural markets is of great significance due to the fact that they are the people of lower economic strata, who usually do not have proper employment opportunities and enough landholdings that can support them to earn their living. Their higher proportion in the selected rural markets indicates that the rural markets are providing them employment through diverse nature of works and trading activities. The small landholders, like marginal landholders are also a significant part of rural marketing activities and occupied the second highest share (20 to 22 percent) among traders and sellers of the selected rural markets. Besides landholdings slightly larger than the marginal landholders, they also have the same economic conditions and limitations. Rural markets of the study area acted as employment and income generation centres for these peoples and provided them opportunities to work as part-time or full-time traders and sellers. Study shows high rate of change in share of small landholders in selected markets during 1991 to 2011.

The level of education of people in any society is a very good indicator to check the social change among them. Educational development among different socio-economic strata of the people brings social changes as well as economic prosperity. The high rate of change in the share of literate participants in selected rural markets is a positive sign of transformation in rural marketing activities, and ultimately in rural transformation, which in turn brought desirable changes in the social life of the people. Study shows high rate of change in share of participants educated up to high school in selected markets. Out of total participants, 19 to 27 per
cent participants are educated up to class 5th, whereas 58 to 61 per cent participants are educated up to class 6th to 10th. Further results shows the high rate of change in share of participants educated above high school in selected markets. Among selected rural markets, 12 to 23 per cent participants are educated more than high school. The large share of high educated participants in selected rural markets is an indication of social transformation. In the selected rural markets, the attitude of participants towards education has changed to some extent. Now, most of them, whether they are farmers sellers or traders, or belongs to any socio-economic strata are of the view that they want their children to be educated, so that they can read and write anything, which will help them to do anything in a proper manner. In some cases, participants want to educate their children not only up to intermediate but also even to the higher level. They do not want their children only to be educated but they want them to be educated in better schools and institutions so as to get quality education and in near future a good lucrative job.

The high change in share respondents availing social and political awareness through selected rural markets had also been witnessed during 1991 to 2011. Traders and sellers from near-by villages come to these markets to sell and buy goods as well as exchange the social news, and through exchange of ideas several social problems are discussed. Sometimes, these markets become the convenient place for discussing the matrimonial issues, settling down the social and family disputes, discussing the local political issues, talking and fixing the prices of different kinds of agricultural and non-agricultural commodities.

The rate of change in share of respondents acknowledging mass media awareness through selected rural markets during 1991 to 2011 varies from one market to another. Rural markets facilitate the participants to make use of available mass media methods like newspaper, telephone, mobile and sometimes internet. Mass media penetration and exposure accelerate the socio-political awareness among rural participants markets.

The present study was further strengthened by a detailed assessment to understand the dynamic nature of the factors responsible for the socio-economic transformation of respondents in the selected rural markets of the study area. Therefore, the 26 socio-economic variables selected at market level from the primary data obtained through field survey were analyzed. The inter-relationship among 26
variables was established with the help of Karl Pearson’s correlation coefficient technique. The selected 26 variables have been categorized into 3 broad categories. The categories are change in market infrastructure and facilities, change in employment and income status, and change in socio-economic status of respondents.

The role of rural markets in rural transformation can be determined by the change in the employment structure, income and socio-economic status of the respondents. The change in employment structure of rural market participants signifies the kind of work people was engaged in earlier and proportion of people presently engaged in different trading activities. The change in the level of income of sellers and traders are determined by the change in the nature of work they have performed and currently engaged in. The change in socio-economic profile of respondents over a period of time determines significant transformation in the economic standard and lifestyle of the respondents. The rural Indian society is based on social stratification and the caste system prevalent in the Indian society has a significant impact upon the nature of economic activity. The change in participation rate of various social classes of lower strata revealed a social change in their economic activities. The change in gender and age wise participation reveals the transformation in socio-ethnic behaviour of traders and sellers. The landholding has a social relevance in the Indian society. Land is the measure of social status and it determines the participation of respondents in rural markets. The size of landholding and change in the participation of seller and traders has significant relationship i.e. large share of traders and sellers belong to lower size landholdings. The change in mass media penetration in rural households and increasing educational level among respondents has also transformed the lifestyle, aspiration and social fabric of the respondents. Their social and political awareness has also been transformed through their participation in rural markets. All these factors have a direct or indirect relationship with the rural markets in transforming the life of respondents who are engaged in different trading activities in the selected rural markets of the study area.

The rate of development of infrastructural facilities in the selected rural markets of the study area reflects the transformation in their functional magnitude. The likelihood of trade at the markets increased significantly with the improvement in market infrastructure and facilities. The development of rural markets in terms of increase in the number of shops, availability of different kinds of commodities, urban
and non-agricultural goods, and improvement of basic infrastructural facilities and services leads to the increase in proportion of market participants and higher employment generation. So, the percent change in the number of shops has strong positive correlation with the change in total market participants and number of employed persons. The change in the share of mature participants shows a positive correlation with the change in the number of shops. It reveals that with the development of rural markets in the study area, the participation of mature population who are the bread earner of their household has increased. The relationship between change in the number of commodities sold in rural markets and the change in the percent share of respondents acknowledging increase in total income up to 40 per cent was found to be strongly associated, which implies change in marketing structure has increased the income of sellers and traders. The increase in number of commodities implies the expansion of rural markets which subsequently increased the share of adult participants especially from the backward classes who does not have sufficient landholdings for cultivation. Enhance in the market facilities assisted the high availability of non-agricultural commodities and urban goods in the rural markets of the study area. The growth of rural markets encouraged the higher participation of backward classes to perform the diverse nature of works in the rural markets. The social and political awareness among respondents has also increased to a large extent. The share of respondents acknowledging rise in income and saving has also increased. Thus, the growth of rural markets and increase in the number of market facilities has explored different kinds of marketing activities and has motivated the respondents to enter into the various non-traditional professions which had increased their level of income and saving. The market development facilitates the exposure to mass media and socio-political awareness among respondents. The participation of women in marketing activities also been improved.

Study highlighted that the rural market centres are playing a pivotal role in generating alternative rural employment. Peoples from various section of the society especially the marginal and small landholders, and backward classes attend these markets to earn their living. The change in the share of women participants was found to be positively correlated with change in the total income up to 20 percent. Thus, the share of women in the selected rural markets has increased considerably due to the increase in the income from rural trade. Further, the share of respondents
acknowledging change in the total income up to 40 per cent was found to be strong positively associated with change in the share of respondents acknowledging saving and negatively correlated with the change in the share of respondents educated more than high school. The considerable change in the level of income facilitates the sellers and traders to save some part of their earning for future use. Interestingly, the respondents who are educated up to high school have experienced rise in income level. It is mainly due to the fact that majority of the respondents in rural markets are educated up to high school, where as those with higher education prefers to establish their business in nearby town or city markets or markets of big horizon. The change in socio-political awareness and exposure among respondents as well as the drastic change in the mass media penetration in rural areas has ultimately transformed the nature of trade in rural areas. The rising aspirations and demands among rural buyers are greatly responsible for raising the horizon of rural markets, which had eventually increased the income of respondents to many folds. Rural markets are the important centres of employment among landless, marginal and small landholders. Thus, we found a strong positive correlation between change in share of landless participants, marginal landholders and small landholders with change in total employed persons. The rate of employment for marginal and small landholders has increased considerably in rural markets. The change in total respondents acknowledging saving was strong positively correlated with change in share of respondents availing social and political awareness through rural markets and share of respondents using mass media. The increasing mass media penetration and socio-political awareness among respondents urged them to make saving from their daily earnings to sustain their future life.

The role of rural markets in socio-economic transformation of respondents can be determined by the change in participation of traders and sellers according to particular gender and age group, caste, landholding, educational level, mass media usage and socio-political awareness of the respondents. The association between change in share of OBC participants and total market participants has also found strongly positive. Among the total market participants, the share of backward classes has increased greatly. The change in total market participants was positively correlated with the change in landless participants, marginal landholders and small landholders. The high proportion of small and marginal farmers in rural markets was
due to the increasing employment opportunities in rural areas. Further, the change in share of women participants was found to be positively correlated with change in the proportion of adult age group and OBC participants. It shows the increase in women participants under adult age group and from backward classes. The mass media exposure and socio-political awareness are the major factors in increasing the share of women in rural markets. The change in the share of mature age group was found strong positively correlated with the change in proportion of independent participants, thereby indicating the increase in participation of mature age group among working age groups. Respondents from mature age group were mainly the head of households and were responsible for looking after their families. The caste system of selected rural markets was found to be unique. The majority of rural markets have higher share of OBC participants followed by either high caste or scheduled caste. The change in share of respondents availing social and political awareness through rural markets was positively correlated with OBC participants and SC participants. This shows that the most depressed class was benefitted more than the other backward classes. Furthermore, the change in share of landless participants, marginal landholders and small landholders were positively correlated with change in share of respondents educated up to high school. This shows increase in literacy among respondents attending rural markets. The higher change in the educational level of respondents was motivated by the socio-political awareness through participation in rural markets, whereas the social and political awareness among respondents were facilitated by mass media penetration and exposure through these market centres. Hence, from the above discussion, the third hypothesis which states **whether the socio-economic and cultural transformation in rural areas is influenced by the markets of that area** is found to be valid.

Finally, to assess the degree of transformation through selected rural markets in the study area, the relationship between hierarchy of selected rural markets (Composite Functional Score) and Composite Transformation Score of the selected rural markets has been made. The various characteristics pertaining to a selected market collectively form the Composite Functional Score (CFS) of that particular selected market. Thus, the CFS is an indicator of the hierarchy of a particular selected market. For the present study, 27 attributes pertaining to various facilities and services available at selected rural markets were considered. Similarly, the 26 variables
pertaining to various socio-economic parameters of the participants like change in employment, income and various parameters of growth of selected market collectively represent the Composite Transformation Score (CTS). Thus, the CTS of a particular selected market are an indicator of the socio-economic transformation through that particular selected market among the 31 selected markets.

The relationship between the hierarchy of a particular market (CFS) and its impact upon rural transformation (CTS) highlighted that there is an overall decline in CTS with the increasing CFS. Thus, market of higher order has lesser CTS in comparison to the markets of lower order. The results indicate that the role of a particular market in rural transformation is highly affected by its hierarchy. Study elaborated the fact that there is a regular trend of decline in CTS with the increasing CFS. Although some markets do not follow the general trend and have shown greater CTS with respect to their hierarchy among the selected markets. Thus, these markets have a higher impact on rural transformation than the markets in lower hierarchy.

The role of market hierarchy in rural transformation reveals that there is an inverse relationship among the CTS and CFS of the selected markets i.e. level of transformation and hierarchy of selected rural markets. Although each market has affected the rural transformation in the study area but the rural transformation has been found more in case of rural markets of lower order or small rural markets. This is due to the fact that these markets have shown a considerable growth in market facilities, employment and income generation to its participants with respect to the big markets. Thus, it can be concluded that the role of small rural markets in rural transformation of its participants in general is more than the large rural markets during the same time period. Hence, the study exhibits the important role of small rural markets in rural transformation in the study area.