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"A REGIONAL APPROACH TO RURAL SETTLEMENTS STUDIES"

An attempt is made here to study the growth of rural settlements and evolve a region or rural community area around the bigger settlements. The region is characterised by distinct physiographic, economic and cultural conditions and thus is unique for such investigation.

CHAPTER : I - PHYSICAL FEATURES :-

It deals with the physical features of the study area. Since site is a very important factor for the growth and development of settlements, and its influence on the surrounding area the growth of settlements are dealt with in relation to their geographical milieu. Rural settlements are found in plain areas where water is easily available. Physical features like hills, gullies and forests form barriers to human settlement and transportation and keeps them isolated from the outside world. These features distinctly divide the area into two, i.e. Western and Eastern divisions. The two rivers i.e. Unch in the north and Heran in the south are flooded during the monsoon and stand out as natural barriers to the smooth flow of products and population.

CHAPTER : II - GENERAL BACKGROUND :-

It deals with the growth of the three central villages in the study area. These central place villages have better amenities than their surround^{ing} villages, which are responsible for the existence and growth of the central places. Good services have developed in these central villages because of their central locations.

CHAPTER : III - RURAL COMMUNITY AREA :-

As every settlement has a zone of influence around it, in the rural area, also the bigger villages exert influence on the villages around them. In this way "The rural community area" is

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determined by studying the influence of establishments of the central villages on the villages that are served by them. Field investigation of 52 villages and their dependence on the establishment of the central place villages have facilitated the determination of service zone around central place villages. The establishments like carpentry, blacksmithy, goldsmithy, grocery shops, oil, rice and the flour mills, educational institutions, primary health units, banking facilities and transportation are responsible factors for the development of the three central place villages in the study area.

CHAPTER : IV - LAND USE :-

This chapter is divided into general land use pattern which comprises the net cultivated land, grassland, forest and uncultivable area of the 52 villages. For an analytical and systematic approach of the regions, the net cultivated area is divided into different crop regions, e.g. cotton, banana, rice regions and so on of 52 villages. The crop regions are evolved on the basis of percentage of each crop to the net cultivated area of 52 villages. The three central place villages are separately discussed for a better understanding of the regions. These three regions are further divided into sub-regions around the central place villages on the basis of the level of influence (influence based on percentages - 60, 40, 20)

CHAPTER : V - POPULATION :-

It is based on the figures of 1981 i.e. abstract of census. The study on population shows that the three central place villages inhabit people belonging to higher castes whereas the scheduled castes and tribes are found in the surrounding villages. The main occupation of the people of the study area is agriculture. It is also seen that most of the land owners belong to the higher castes whereas the agricultural labourers belong to the scheduled castes and tribes. In order to understand the nature of the population, 52 villages are scrutinised by taking up density and distribution, caste-wise, literacy and occupational structure of population.

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A general network of roads and railways is studied carefully to find out the effects of transport on the central place villages in their development and in their spatial association. More than the presence of roads and railways, it is the traffic or their utilization which is very important in the growth and development of any settlement. Bus frequency study reveals that road transport and connections have surpassed the traffic of railway and so Kesindra which was behind Bhatpur in its development till 1960 has emerged today as the most important central place village in the study area.

CHAPTER VIII - CONCLUSION :-

Different factors which stand out as separate elements, are closely knit to make up a region. Though these 52 villages for all practical purposes are isolated and having their own individuality they are very closely connected to the three central place villages for their day to day (Daily) needs. The very existence of the central place villages is dependent on the surrounding villages and similarly the smaller villages look up to the central villages for their economic, social and cultural existence.