

## Problems and Potentials of Rural Growth Center: A Case Study of Baneshwar Bazar in Rajshahi, Bangladesh

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### Abstract

The rural economy is essential to the development of a solid economic foundation for an agricultural nation like Bangladesh. In this respect, the significance of rural growth centers cannot be overemphasized. This paper examines the current circumstances, difficulties, and possibilities of the Baneshwar Bazar growth center in Rajshahi, Bangladesh, via the lens of a case study. The study was done to analyze the market's physical viability, infrastructure requirements, and condition. In this study, both quantitative and qualitative methodologies were employed. compilation of information from both primary and secondary sources. The research methodology includes interviews, surveys, and case studies. The problem was identified, future demands were projected, the ideological concept was modified, and this rural market was promoted based on the projections and requirements of the local rural population. The analysis was conducted using Microsoft Excel. Lack of parking and vending facilities, bad footpaths, drainage, and maintenance concerns, to name a few, plague visitors. Moreover, some political prejudice was evident. To remedy this, ideas to address these challenges in a broader sense have been offered. "In a nutshell, the study report attempts to depict the current state of the majority of rural marketplaces in our nation." "It can also serve as a blueprint for constructing a new market in rural areas of our nation."

**Keywords:** Rural growth Center, Case study, problems and potentials, Physical viability

### 1. Introduction

The growth center is a rural center of social, cultural, and economic activities. In Bangladesh, growth centers are rural markets selected by the Planning Commission based on socio-economic and administrative criteria. There are a total of 8,000 country Hut or bazaars. The government has decided to use 2100 bazaars as growth centers, update infrastructure and invest in them. Growth centers need a Pucca platform, connected footpaths, shelters, clean water and waste management facilities etc. Growth centers operate in rural areas with severe constraints that directly impact the rural economy (khan et al.,2000).

Baneshwar Growth Center is one of the largest markets in Puthia Upazila of Rajshahi District, Bangladesh. It is located 4 km from Puthia Sadar Upazilla and 21 km from Rajshahi Sardar. Most of the population in the area is dependent on agriculture, and the market can play a significant role in the development of the local economy in this regard. In the summer season, Baneshwar Bazaar is full of mangoes and molasses in winter. In addition, many cattle are sold in this part of the market. This market falls under the "assembly market" category.

This paper aims to find the management problems of the growth center and to clarify the potentiality of socio-economic improvement in rural areas. The sample sizes were appropriately determined, which would yield more valuable results for our research. A questionnaire survey will be used in this study to achieve the objectives of the study. However, the market management authority encounters a significant challenge in the systematic development of the market.

The hut committee lease the shop to the shop owner with leasing amount and monthly payment. The shop owner also bear the electricity and other bills in the growth center. While purchase in hut time like vegetable, mango, cow or others by individual buyers should pay token charge while purchasing.it should be collected by the leased authority . This article examines the current situation of the growth center, aiming to enhance the overall market conditions. Convening monthly meeting to present land use review and evaluation recommendations to the

market's by committee for consideration. The regulations and maintaining order in the maintenance and preservation of growth center by the puthia upazilla administrative.

## 2. Literature Review

The research begins by examining existing literature that highlights the importance of rural markets in supporting rural economies, which primarily revolve around farming and agriculture. The study explores various marketing routes and systems, such as farm gate markets, neighbourhood markets, assembly markets, and direct sales to urban markets. The evaluation shows that improving the market is a complex process that involves commercial and social growth, infrastructure development, and public involvement. The literature review provides a comprehensive understanding of the importance of rural marketplaces and the challenges involved in improving them (Islam et al., 2016).

Barua et al. (2015) examine existing literature on the connection between rural and urban areas in Bangladesh. They also suggest ways to enhance the efficiency of the marketing system. The significance of market interactions and infrastructure investments in economic exchange is highlighted. Marketing intermediaries from both rural and urban areas are actively involved in rural-urban interaction, with growth centers playing a crucial role. Efficient marketing systems are crucial for promoting agricultural diversification and enhancing nutrition in Bangladesh. These systems provide support to grower sellers and wholesalers.

According to the study of Marocchino (2009), they examine the importance of upgrading for rural development and provide guidance on improving agricultural retail markets in rural areas. Mondal & Das (2010) focused on studying the main topic of the growth center for the economic and social development of rural Bangladesh. Barua et al. (2015) focused on the connection between rural and urban areas in Bangladesh through development hubs. The presence of infrastructure in rural markets leads to more job opportunities and a higher number of dealers and market turnover. Based on the study's results, various recommendations have been proposed to enhance the rural-urban connection by improving the marketing system's efficiency. The research examines how growth centers are connected to their surroundings, how they are linked to the main road network, how accessible they are to markets, and the role of intermediaries in these growth centers (Kafy et al., 2019).

## 3. Study Area Profile

One of the biggest markets in Puthia Upazila in Bangladesh's Rajshahi District is the Baneshwar growth center. It is at 24.3828° North and 88.7831° East. The total size of the growth center is about six acres. On Saturdays and Tuesdays, the hut is open from 5:00 AM to 9:00 PM. On a typical day, from 9 AM. to 8 PM.



Figure 1. Puthia Upazilla Map (LGED, 2022).

## 4. Methodology

### 4.1 Selection of the Topic

It is essential to choose the subjects that will be discussed in the report.

### 4.2 Objectives of this study

The completion of the study requires the selection of two study objectives.

### 4.3 Selection of the study area

Baneshwar is a growth center that connects Rajshahi Sadar and surrounding upazillas. The study area is selected for studying the problem and potential of this growth center.

### 4.4 Preparing the Questionnaire

The questionnaire will be designed to gather information about the issue at hand and the potential offered by the Baneshwar Growth Center to accomplish the goals of the study.

#### 4.5 Sample size

A simple random sampling method was used. The population size being surveyed is 388811 (BBS, 2011). The confidence level for this estimate is 90%. The error margin is 10%. The sample size is 69.

#### 4.6 Data Collection and Analysis

The Primary data came from a survey in the form of a questionnaire. The journal, other research articles, and the BBS all served as sources for the secondary data. The information analyzed statistically using Microsoft Excel 2021. The analysis of data can result in histograms, graphs, and pie charts.

#### 4.7 Result and Findings

Following the completion of the data analysis, the results will be available. Depending on how reliable the data from this investigation is, it might be possible to make improvements and do more research.

### 5. Data analysis

#### 5.1 Demographic Information

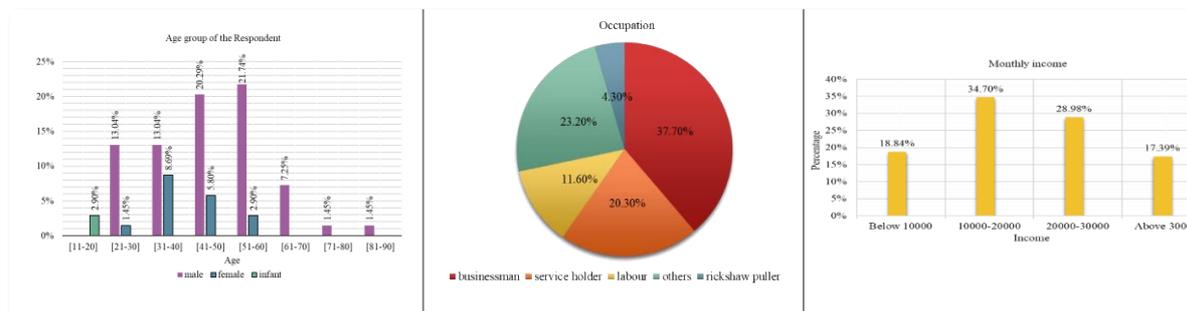


Figure 2. Demographic information (Authors survey, 2022)

The figure displays the respondents' ages, occupations, and monthly incomes. According to the Bar chart, 21.74% of males aged 51-60 and 20.29% of males aged 41-50. The chart shows that 8.69% of females are adults, and 2.90% are infant day labourers in stores.

The pie chart shows that most people in rural growth center areas are shop and grocery store owners. 37.70% of people are doing business in the growth center. And from the bar chart, we can see that more than 50 % of people's monthly income is under 20000 BDT which is very low to lead a comfortable life.

#### 5.2 Problem in the Existing Market Facilities

##### Poor infrastructure and lack of sales space of the market

During regular weekdays and hut days, many livestock, fisheries, and chickens are sold in the hut. Because of the poor infrastructure, the sellers faced economic losses. Furthermore, water enters the shop when it rains, causing agricultural products to deteriorate.



Figure 3. (a) Poor infrastructure and (b) lack of sales space of the market (Authors photography, 2022)

According to demand, there is a shortage of sales space on the market. So many people sell their products beside the road. The farmers cannot sell their product, and they sell it to the agent at a cheap rate.

### Lack of drainage, waste management and sanitation facility

There is no proper drainage system in the market area. So, the wastewater from the market is thrown near the pond. During the rainy season, the market is submerged, and the activity is hampered due to water logging. There are only two toilets, but they are not responsibly managed, and the existing sanitation facilities are not hygienic. So, the market people face a significant problem due to a lack of sanitation facilities.



Figure 4. Lack of drainage and waste management (Authors photography)

### Sellers' and buyers' problems faced

Market sellers face various kinds of problems. In the figure, 28.98 per cent of the respondents said that insufficient waste collection is the main reason for the negative impact on the market, and 24.64 per cent of the respondents said there is a lack of maintenance system for the market. Only 14.49 per cent of those surveyed said they were politically biased at the time of the store lease or purchase.

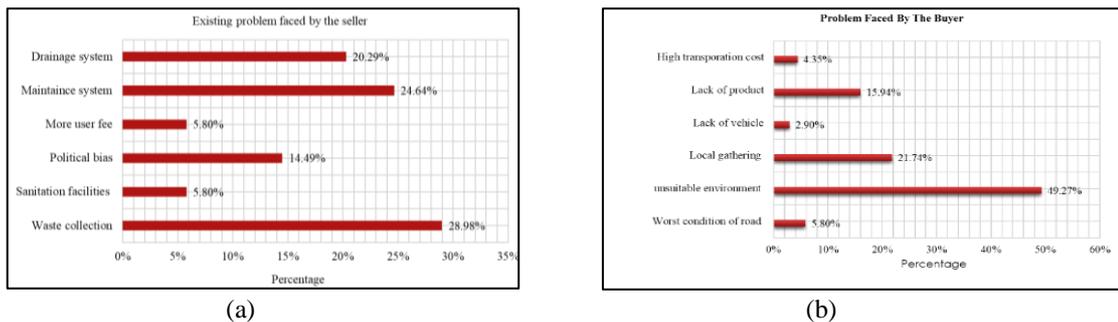


Figure 5. Existing problem faced by the seller(a) and buyer(b) (Authors survey, 2022)

Besides Buyers also face various kinds of problems. From the interview with the buyers, it was found that 49.27 % of the respondents said that the market environment is not suitable, 21.74% said that the local assembly in the market is insufficient, and 4.3 % of the respondents also said that the transportation cost is high for the trip to the market. As a result, they are unable to find the desired product.

### 5.3 Potentials of the Growth Center

#### Availability of product

Baneshwar Bazar is famous for summer mango, litchi, various vegetables, date molasses, and sugarcane molasses in winter. In the hut, distinct types of products are available in different areas.

Table 1. Availability of product (Field survey, 2022)

Serial No	Area	Available of Product
1	Baneshwar Govt College	Mango, Bay Leaf, Cow,
2	Traffic Mor	Different Types of Shop
3.	Boroitallar Goli	Tea
4.	Dhanhata	Rice
5.	Mariar Road	Animal Feeds
6.	Sobji Potti	Different Types of Vegetables
7.	Mosque Market	Fish, Onion, Rice Seeds

According to the pie chart, 47.80% of agricultural products are found in Bazaars. Besides, 26.10% of the products are livestock, 14.50% are handicraft tools, and the rest are others.

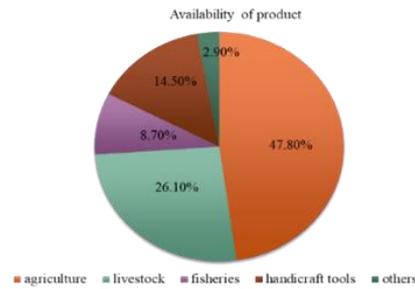


Figure 6. Availability of the product (Authors survey, 2022)

### Monetary transaction

The Puthia Upazila Parishad leases the Baneshwar hut. The 2022 lease amount is one crore twenty-five lakh, increasing daily. It is controlled by Baneshwar Bonik Somity, with the organizing body and monitoring by Puthia Upazilla Parishad.

### Average transaction on hut day and typical day

On hut days, transactions increased from 3-4 crore BDT in 2017 to 5-6 crore BDT in 2022. Similarly, for "Normal days," transactions surged from 50-80 lakhs BDT in 2017 to 1-1.5 crore BDT in 2022. The data shows the region's growth potential and challenges (Baneshwar Hut Community, 2022).

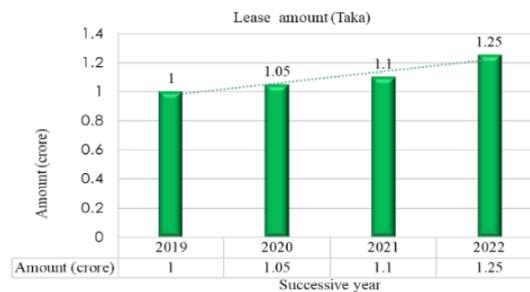


Figure 7. Lease amount (crore) in a different year (Baneshwar union, 2022)

### Origin of employment and Earnings

The growth center functions as a market and creates jobs that help the rural poor. In 2022, there were between 1,200 and 1,300 permanent outlets, while five hundred floating businesses were operating on the day of the cottage. In addition, many vehicles such as autorickshaws, van, Nosimon, and Korimon transport people from the local area to the growth center.

### Positive impacts of the market

From the field survey, 2022, it was found that 14.5 % of respondents said that the Baneshwar Bazar growth center is a better opportunity for selling agricultural products, and 58 % of respondents said that this growth center contributes to strengthening the rural economy. About 30.4 % of respondents said that this growth center is an essential source of employment generation. Only 7.2 % of respondents said that this growth center contributes to better scope for resource mobilization.

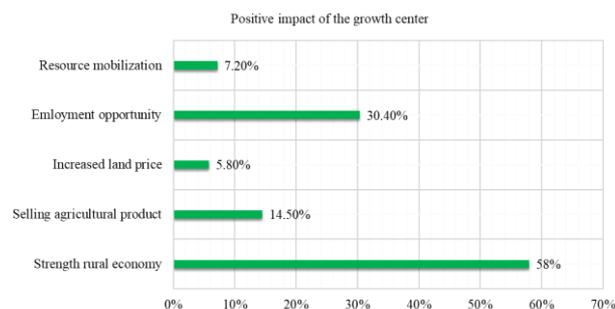


Figure 8. Positive impact of the growth center (Authors survey, 2022)

## Services and Facilities

Table 2. Social and Administrative services (Field survey, 2022)

Serial No.	Types of facilities distance	Distances
1	Primary School	3.7 kilometers
2	High School	350 meters
3	College	330 meters
4	Madrasha	Five kilometers
7	Union Parishad	320 meters
8	Mosque	In the growth center
9	Police Station	2.7 kilometers
10	Health Care Center	850 meters

Baleshwar Bazar supplies the facilities for the service area's population. Some services are within 5 km of the Growth Center, such as the Police Station, Madrasha, and Primary School. This center also influences the alignment of tiny rural hats, social institutions, and roads.

## 6. Recommendation and conclusion

After examining, it has been determined that the shop would have enough of both permanent and temporary shelters. The hot and rainy seasons are particularly damaging to the product because of the inadequate infrastructure. Establishing a warehouse in which to keep the merchandise. In the Baneshwar market, temporary shops can be alleviated with the strategic placement of seating so that they may better serve customers during busy hours. The indiscriminate and negligent dumping of waste in and around the market makes the working environment in the market more unpleasant. Since the waterbodies is littered with trash, the market authorities and government officials will need to take the necessary precautions to cross the pond. They provide garbage disposal services, set up specific dustbins in the market, and ensure that the market is cleaned on a regular basis. Construct sanitary sanitation facilities in some areas of the hut area and ensure that they are regularly monitored and maintained. The puthia upazilla administrative should maintain proper monitoring and guideline.

In conclusion, the rural growth centers of Bangladesh are extremely important to the socioeconomic development of the country's rural districts. The establishment of an environment that is beneficial to the expansion of the economy is made possible by the supply of various infrastructure services. It has been observed that the accessibility of rural markets paves the way for the creation of new job opportunities and contributes to the expansion of the number of merchants and customers, as well as the market lease rate and market turnover. This study focuses on the problems that are associated with the current conditions of growth centers and the chances for rural development that can be created by improving market conditions. The government needs to play a substantial role in improving market facilities.

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