

# Role of Rural Service Centres In Sustainable Development: A Case Study of Jehanabad District of Bihar

Paper Submission: 10/07/2020, Date of Acceptance: 29/07/2020, Date of Publication: 30/07/2020



**Vivek Kumar**

Guest Teacher,  
Dept. of Geography,  
B.R.B. College, Samastipur,  
L.N.M.U. Darbhanga,  
Bihar, India

## Abstract

Rural service centre means, the rural centre which provide different types of services to their population as well as the population of their surrounding areas. Rural service centres of many developing countries serve the important function of providing most commercial public services for the dispersed rural population. So that, the rural service centres play a vital role in the sustainable development of Bihar. The economy of Bihar is primarily based on agriculture, and according to Census 2011, approximately 88.70 % (92074713 people) people of Bihar live in rural areas. The main objective is to study the role of Rural service centres in sustainable development of rural area. The present study is based on primary and secondary data. Primary data have been collected by self-observations and by interviewing the villagers and the secondary data from Census office, Government offices, internet, Books, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis and journals. The selected meso level study area of Bihar is Jehanabad district having areal extent 93209 hectares (932.09 Sq. KM.), situated in the west side of Falgu river, According to Census 2011 the total number of villages in Jehanabad district is 611, in which 59 villages serve as Rural service centre. And in Jehanabad district, Jehanabad & Makhdumpur are two urban service centres. According to primary observation in 2017, it is clear that there is promising development of Jehanabad district occurs due to improvement in the availability of various types of services (like- Educational, Medical, Transport & communications, Administrative centres, Marketing and other facilities) in the Rural service centres. So that there is overall development of Rural service centres as well as their surrounding areas occurs, and people becoming prosperous economically, culturally and medically.

In conclusive way, we can say that the rural service centres play a vital role in the sustainable development of any region. In the influence of service centres, there is significant changes occurs in people's economic, social, cultural and other aspects and they becoming progressive.

**Keywords:** Rural Service Centre, Sustainable Development, Off-Farm Employment.

## Introduction

Sustainable development means the development that meets the needs of present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, i.e. It is the organizing principle for meeting human development goals while simultaneously sustaining the ability of natural systems to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services upon which the economy and society depend. In this case it can be said that Rural service centres play a vital role in the overall development of rural areas, because Rural service centres provide various types of facilities like – market, transport & communication, education, medical, social and cultural activities etc. to their own population as well as surrounding areas. We know that agricultural is the means of livelihood of major portion of the people of Bihar, it is an important economic activity of people of rural areas of Bihar and it play an important role for socio-economic and cultural upliftment of the people. But in the modern days the maximum people of rural areas unable to get maximum profit from their economic activities for this various causes are responsible, such as – lack of nearest market centre, transport facilities, educational institutions, medical facilities etc.

and unaware from governmental policies. And the Rural service centres are able to provide these type of facilities to rural areas, i.e. obviously Rural service centres play an important role in the overall development of the rural areas. The main rural service centres of Jehanabad district are Kako, Ghoshi, Tehata, Okari, Modanganj, Hulasganj, Qazisarai etc. and Jehanabad & Makhdumpur are two urban service centres.

The present study area, Jehanabad district of Bihar is situated in the west side of Falgu river. Like other region of Bihar, it is also an agricultural dominated region having fertile flat land. It is drained by Falgu river, Mohana river, Kararua river, Jamuna river, Dardha river, Morhar river etc. In this region economy of people is mostly agriculture oriented and approximately 77.42% of its total workers are engaged in agricultural activities.

#### Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the present study are –

1. To study the functions of Rural service centres.
2. To study the role of Rural service centres in sustainable development of rural areas.

#### Hypothesis

The following hypothesis have been formulated-

1. Rural service centres are helpful in improvement of socio-economic condition of the people of rural area.
2. Rural service centres are very helpful in agricultural development.

#### Methodology

The present study is based on primary data as well as secondary data. The secondary data have been obtained from the census office, books, journals, Unpublished Ph.D. thesis & internet, and primary data is collected by self observation & by interviewing the villagers. The data have been analysed by simple mathematical method and represented by suitable tables.

#### Review of Literature

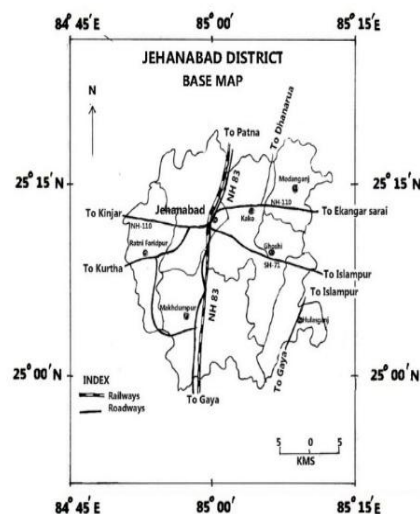
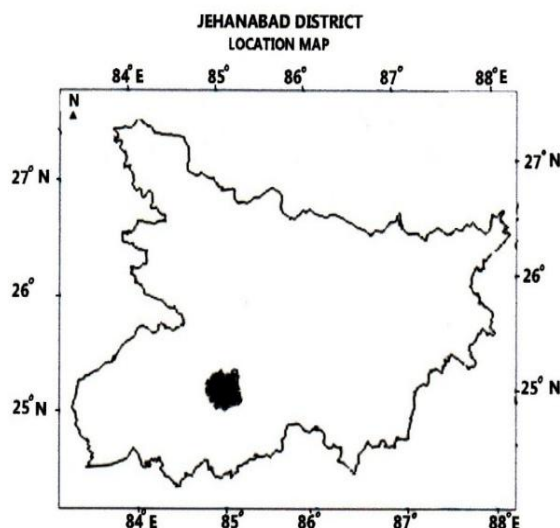
Many researchers have contributed extensively in the field of study of Rural Service Centres and sustainable development, and suggested much solution & planning for the Government. However, the Many studies has speltout the role of Service Centres in the development of rural area. In this concern Bromley.R (1984); Chang, B.L. (1979); Katiman, Rostan (1991); Christaller, W. (1933) like foreign scholars have the important contribution. Bromley has studied about the market centres and its impact on agricultural development, B.L. Chang have studied about the role of small towns in rural-urban development in northern Malaysia. In Malaysia, Katiman Rostam have studied about the role of Rural Service Centres in rural development. In India, Swaminathan (1928); Sudhir Wanmali & Yassir Islam (1995); Jha, V.N. (2006); Mandal, R.B. (1981); Sinha, V.N.P. (1976); Sinha, M.M.P. (1942) and other scholars also played important role in this field. Sudhir Wanmali have studied about Rural services, Rural infrastructure and Regional development in India. And in the present day Kumar, Anil (2007) and Kumar, Vivek (2019) of Patna University like young scholars have also contributed in this regard, which have spelt

# Asian Resonance

out the role of Rural Service Centres in sustainable development of rural areas.

#### Study Area

The selected meso level study area is Jehanabad district of Bihar state, situated in the west side of Falgu river, having latitudinal extent from 24°59'30" N to 25°19'16" North Latitudes and longitudinal extent from 84°50'00" E to 85°12'40" East Longitudes. Its area is 93209 hectares (932.09 Sq. Km.). Normal slope of study area is from south to north direction and it is drained by many rivers like – Falgu, Mohana, Jelwar, Kararua, Dardha, Morhar etc. According to census 2011, total population of Jehanabad district is 1125313 in which 990117 people live in rural area and approximately 77.42% of Jehanabad's total workers engaged in agricultural work. Population density of Jehanabad district is 1209 personas per sq. KM. It is demarcated by Patna district in North, Gaya district in South, Nalanda district in East and Arwal district in West.



## Rural Service Centre

The concept of Rural service centre is almost 90 years old, given by Walter Christaller in his Central place theory in year 1933, which tries to explain the spatial arrangements and distribution of human settlements. The Rural service centre may be defined as those focal points in rural area, around which rural life revolves and which provide socio-economic services such as trade, transport & communication, agricultural inputs, finance, administration, education and health, which facilitate the overall development of the rural area.

In the study area (Jehanabad district), there are 611 villages in which 59 villages work as Rural service centre of which Ghoshi, Kako, Okari, Tehata, Hulasganj, Modanganj, Nehalpur etc. are the main Rural service centres of Jehanabad district. These service centres provide various types of services to the surrounding population as well as the surrounding smaller rural service centres, which facilitate the rural life and became helpful for agricultural development and upliftment of economic condition of the villagers. And Jehanabad & Makhdumpur are the two urban service centres of the study area, which provide specialized services to their population.

### Blockwise Rural Service Centre In Jehanabad District (2011)

Sl.no.	C.D. Block Name	No. of existing Rural service centre
1	Ratnifaridpur	9
2	Jehanabad	15
3	Kako	10
4	Modanganj	7
5	Ghoshi	9
6	Makhdumpur	15
7	Hulasganj	4
<b>Jehanabad district (Total)</b>		<b>59</b>

**Source:** Kumar, Vivek (2019); Bihar keJehanabadzila me Graminsewakendron ka kshetriypratiroop, Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Patna University, P.- 114.

### No. of Rural Service Centres of Jehanabad District under Different Hierarchical Categories (2011)

Level of hierarchy	Regional centrality score	No. of Rural service centre	% of total Rural service centres of Jehanabad district
1 <sup>st</sup> .	More than 3	4	6.80
2 <sup>nd</sup> .	2 – 3	14	22.03
3 <sup>rd</sup> .	1 – 2	25	42.37
4 <sup>th</sup> .	Less than 1	17	28.80
<b>Total</b>		<b>59</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Kumar, Vivek (2019); Bihar keJehanabadzila me Graminsewakendron ka kshetriypratiroop, Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Patna University, P.- 151.

## Functions of Rural Service Centres and Its Impact on Rural Area of Jehanabad District

Rural service centres are basically those villages, which provide variety of services to the rural population of surrounding villages. Each service centre provides developmental services to nearby villages. The importance of the rural service centres in rural development is not depend only on size, number and spatial organisation of centres, but also on the functions. The rural service centres are conceived as a bridge between the urban and rural universe to serve as development and diffusion centres. They play a potential role in efficient service delivery and agricultural development, so that they play a vital role in overall development of rural area. In this study an assessment is made of whether the rural service centres in Jehanabad district efficiently perform the basic role that contribute to help to development of rural areas.

The socio-economic functions of Rural service centres serve the people and play a vital role in the development of rural areas. The availability of adequate and efficient infrastructural facilities is a key factor not only to facilitate socio-economic development of a country but also to accelerate its pace. In the present context, the following functional activities / facilities are found in the area under study.

### Educational Facilities

The educational facilities comprise of functions like – Primary school, Middle school, Secondary school, Senior secondary school, and Degree college found in the study area. According to census 2011, it is seen that up to Middle school level educational facilities are available in many villages, but for Secondary school, S. Secondary school, Degree college and other technical educational facilities, villagers fully dependent on Rural service centres & in some cases on Urban service centres. In the study area out of 59 Rural service centres 26 rural service centres provide secondary school level education, 9 service centres provide S. Secondary school level education and only 02 service centres provide the degree college level education to the population of the study area, i.e. it is clear that Rural service centres play important role in the educational development of Jehanabad district.

### Medical Facilities

Medical facilities are very essential and frequent for the public. Generally most of the users travel a distance of less than 10 km., Which can be fulfilled by rural service centres. In the study area out of 59 Rural service centres 41 service centres have primary health centre/sub-centre which provide primary medical facilities to the villagers and for specialised medical facilities they have to move to Jehanabad, Gaya, Patna etc.

FACILITIES AVAILABLE IN "RURAL SERVICE CENTRES" OF JEHANABAD DIDTRICT (2011).											
Sl. No.	Rural service centre (Village Name)	Police station	Govt Secondary School (Numbers)	Senior Secondary Govt School (Numbers)	Govt. / Private Art and science Degree College (Numbers)	Primary Health Centre (Numbers)	Primary Health Sub Centre (Numbers)	Post Office (Status A(1)/N A(2))	Private Bus Service (Status A(1)/NA(2))	Commercial Bank (Status A(1)/NA(2))	Mandis/ Regular Market (Status A(1)/NA(2))
1	Lakhapur		0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	2
2	Kaswan		0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	2
3	Nehalpur		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
4	Jhunathi		0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2
5	Noawan		1	0	0	1	1	1	2	1	2
6	Shakurabad	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
7	Faridpur		0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	2
8	Ratni		1	1	0	0	1	1	2	1	2
9	Pandaul		0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	2
10	Kenari		0	0	0	0	1	2	1	2	1
11	Tali		0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	2
12	Pandui		1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2
13	Bhewar		0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
14	Sikariya		1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	2
15	Hajipur		0	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	2
16	Nonahi		0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	2
17	Kako	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
18	Saidabad Parsain		0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	2
19	Bhadsara		0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	1
20	Nigarpali		0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	1
21	Pali	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2
22	Qazi Sarai		0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
23	Bhelawar		0	0	0	1	1	2	1	2	1
24	Pinjora		0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	1
25	Gandhar		0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2
26	Jalalpur		0	0	0	1	1	2	2	2	2
27	Bishunpurokri	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	2	1	1
28	JaitipurKurwa		1	1	0	1	1	1	2	2	1
29	Naiawan		0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	1
30	Modangang		0	0	0	1	1	1	2	1	2
31	Bandhuganj		1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
32	Bharthu		1	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	1
33	Ghoshi	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	2
34	Golakpur		0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	2
35	Lakhawar		1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
36	Uber		0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	1
37	Korra		0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	1
38	Shaho Bigha		0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
39	Kure		0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	1
40	Sonwan		1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
41	Ner		1	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2
42	Chhatiana		0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	2
43	Rampur		0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	1
44	Pipra		1	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	1
45	Umta		1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
46	Dharnai		1	0	0	0	1	2	1	1	1
47	Chhariyari		1	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	2
48	Suganwan		0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	1
49	Saren		2	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	1
50	Tehta	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	2	1

51	Dekuli		0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	1
52	Sarthua		0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
53	Bishunganj		0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
54	Tilkai		0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	1
55	Dharaut		0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2
56	Bauri		1	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	1
57	Murgawan		1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
58	Keur		0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	2
59	Hulasganj		1	1	0	0	1	2	1	1	1

Source:-Census of India – 2011 and self observation by Researcher.

#### Transport and Communication Facilities

Rural service centres work as a junction for rural area, because service centres are connected to district road / S.H. / N.H. / Railway station through any metalled road and approximately in all Rural service centres means of transportation like – Jeep, Auto, Mini bus, E-taxi, Tractor etc. are available which carry the people and goods from one place to another place and people perform their work easily. As a means of communication Post office, Cyber café and PCO are available in maximum rural service centres which connect the villagers throughout the country. i.e. It can be said that Rural service centres are very helpful for rural development because transportation of agricultural inputs & its product, became easy.

#### Commercial Facilities

In the study area there 35 branches of Bank and ATM situated in rural service centres, which provide the financial facilities to the villagers, and approximately half of the rural service centres of Jehanabad district functioned as market centre, where the rural people of its surrounding areas go to fulfil their basic consumptions / necessities and for agricultural production inputs like- fertilizer, seeds and agricultural implements, electrical & electronic instruments, furniture, garments etc. as well as these market centres work as a collection centre of agricultural produce. So that it became clear that in the study area, Rural service centres play a vital role in the development of rural areas.

#### Administrative Facilities

The rural service centres having C.D. Block / Circle office / Police station / Panchayat bhawan / Registry office or any other governmental office, provide the different types of administrative services to their population, which help good governance of the rural area. In the study area 5 rural service centres have C.D. Block office and 7 Rural service centres have police station, which govern the administrative and social condition of the rural area.

#### Diffusion of Health, Agriculture & other Governmental Information

Apart from mass media, forums, talks and discussions are also influential in diffusing new ideas. Research on the diffusion of new ideas suggest that interpersonal communication can also be effective by way of information campaigns. Rural service centres are the lowest level of settlements in the urban hierarchy, where these facilities can be provided, i.e. their role in the diffusion of information related to health and other governmental schemes in the rural area.

#### Off-farm Employment Generation

Role of rural service centres in the provision of Off-farm employment opportunities is also vital. Increasing Off-farm employment would help towards raising rural incomes. This study investigates the extent to which the rural population of Jehanabad district benefits from the availability of non-farm employment at service centres.

#### Conclusion

The role of rural service centres in relation to development of Jehanabad district has been studied and it is found that the smaller rural service centres in the region are not likely to develop higher order functions for several reasons, so that the attraction of the larger centres (Jehanabad, Patna, Gaya etc.) became important. However, the smaller rural service centres are highly accessible for the use of basic retail facilities.

The role of rural service centres as the main providers of the basic public services and medical facilities is also confirmed. The rural service centres functioned as a distribution centre of agricultural inputs, information related to rural development schemes, basic specific health and technical information, new farming techniques. And the rural service centres are also work as a collection centre of agricultural produce where the farmers sell their agricultural produce and buy the other materials. But it is fact that, in the rural service centres the Off-farm employment is extremely limited in number, rather rural service centres play important role in the total development of the rural area.

In conclusive way, it can be said that the rural service centres provide most basic services and facilities required by the rural population. However, their economic role is not satisfactory. The smaller rural service centres are not able to accelerate the economic development of rural areas, it needs more public investment to play an active role in development, however the rural service centres are helpful in rural development in the study area.

#### References

1. Kumar, Vivek. (2019); Bihar keJehanabadzila me Graminsewakendron ka kshetriypratirop. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Patna University. P. – 3, 4, 114, 151.
2. Sudhir Wanmali&Yassir Islam. (1995); Rural services, Rural infrastructure andregional development in India. The Geographical Journal, vol. 161, no. 2, July 1995.
3. KatimanRostam. (1991); The role of rural service centre in rural development: A study
4. of the settlement in Hilir Perak, Malaysia. Akademika – 38 (January 1991) 29 – 58.

5. *Sinha, VNP.; Nazim, M.; Ahmad, P. Firoz. (2015); Bihar: Land, people and economy. Rajesh publication, New Delhi – 110002.*
6. *Sinha, VNP.; Verma, Usha.; Sahay, Anuradha. (2017); Introduction to settlement Geography. Rajesh publication, New Delhi -110002.*
7. *Kumar, Anil. (2007); Structural analysis of Urban centres in Magadh division. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Patna University.*
8. *Christaller, Walter. (1933); Central place theory.*
9. *District census hand book (DCHB), Jehanabad – 2011.*
10. *Government of India, Census – 2011.*
11. *Internet.*
12. *Google map.*
13. *[www.onefivenine.com](http://www.onefivenine.com)*
14. *[www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com)*