
EXAMINATION OF THE FUNCTIONS OF MARKETS IN THE RURAL AREAS OF ANAMBRA STATE NIGERIA

Mba, S.A *; Obienusi, E.A **; Obikwelu, M.C **

* Department of Geography, Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe.

** Department of Geography and Meteorology, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

ABSTRACT: *This study examined the functions of markets in the rural areas of Anambra state, Nigeria. This study was carried out to enable one find out the integrative functions of markets as central places in the rural areas of the state. The objectives of the study were to: identify the integrative functions of the markets in the state and identify the communities which are in functional contact with each other on the basis of goods and services provided in the markets. Stratified random sampling procedure was adopted to choose respondents in the study area. A structured questionnaire was constructed and administered to the respondents; the computation was done using centrality coefficient and functional indices. Three hundred and ninety – nine (399) questionnaires were administered to the respondents in the study area. The data collected were analyzed using Principal Component Analysis (PCA), Weighted Mean, Centrality Coefficient, Functional Indices and Nearest Neighbor Analysis; the Centrality Coefficient showed that the markets play essential roles in the socio-economic life of the people and that the markets were in functional contacts with each other. While the Nearest - Neighbor Analysis indicated that the markets were randomly distributed in accordance with the distribution of settlements in the study area. The Principal Component Analysis indicated that the major function of the markets in the study area was that they serve as centers for diffusion of innovation. The researchers concluded that markets are very important in the socio-economic space of an area and that their importance lies in the fact that they provide the channels of socio-economic linkages among the rural people and between the rural economy and the urban economy. The study recommended that the state government should encourage private investors to invest in market development by putting in place adequate logistic and administrative guidelines.*

KEY WORDS: rural areas, markets, integrative functions, central places, functional linkages

INTRODUCTION

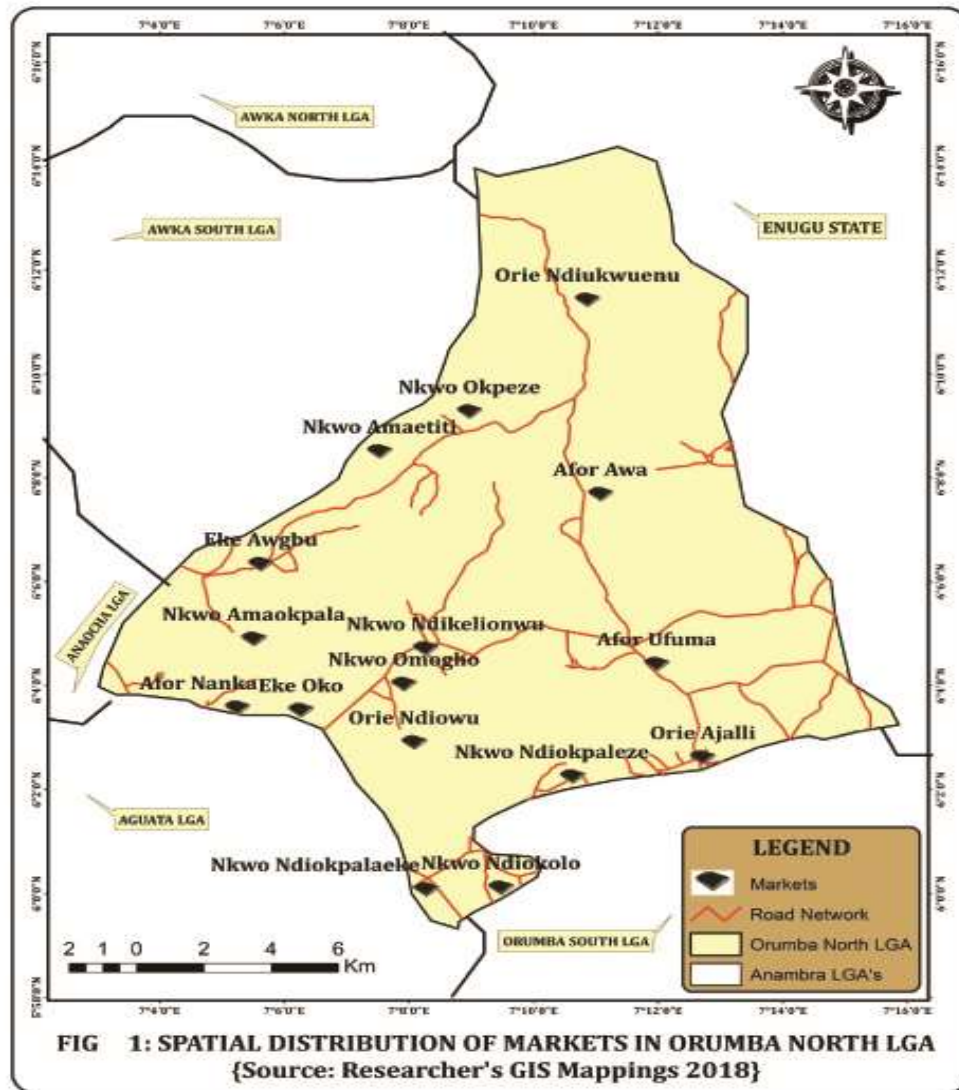
Most of the Nigerian rural areas are beset with myriads of problems. The greatest of the problems is underdevelopment. The human and material resources in the rural areas are underdeveloped. With this, poverty in all areas is the order and it reoccurs in vicious circle (Onuorah, 2007). Thus, the rural areas in Nigeria are clearly differentiated from urban areas by various inadequacies of basic necessities of life such as deplorable state of the roads, non-existence or irregularities in the supply of basic amenities, low income, low standard of living, poverty and low quality of life (Ijere, 1992).

This made Madu (2000) to assert that the multi-faceted nature of rural development means that it is influenced by many factors; prominent among these factors are the existence and efficiency of rural markets in the rural areas. Market places are fundamental points of economic life and besides, they serve as centers for innovation, social and political interactions. For these purpose, “ they generate high traffic flow and had open-up channels of interaction with the outside world (Datonjo, John and Chikagbum, 2015).

The markets also help to establish rural-urban linkages, which are crucial for rural development. The urban areas, rather than induce growth to outlying settlements, serve to milk them dry and eventually stagnate them economically (Uwadiogwu, Iyi and Ezenwaji, 2016). Unfortunately, most of our rural markets have insufficient organized waste disposal, most of their roads are without drains, majority of the access roads within the markets are in poor conditions and there is generally no provision for water supply, while trading in the highway dominates the markets. (Adekunle, 2015). Against this background, the objective of the research is to examine the functions of the rural markets by analyzing their locational efficiency and relative strength among other factors.

Study Area

This study was conducted in Orumba North Local Government Area of Anambra State. Orumba North Local Government Area has the geographical coordinates that lie between longitudes $6^{\circ} 7^1\text{E}$ and $27^{\circ} 7^1\text{E}$ and latitudes $5^{\circ} 40^1\text{N}$ and $6^{\circ} 48^1\text{N}$. It has an area of 297.00km^2 and a 2018 projected population of 204,597.25; with a 2018 projected population density of $688.88/\text{km}^2$. The area is located within the sub-tropical equatorial climate with an annual rainfall of about 200mm and an average annual temperature of 27°c (Ofomata, 2000).



Orumba North falls within the rainforest zone of Nigeria. Although, annual rainfall is high, it is concentrated in one season, with about four months of dryness. It is made up of 16 communities and according to the 2006 census, the population of Orumba North is 172,773 while the 2018 projected population is 204,597.25; with a 2018 projected population density of 688.88/km².

Statement of Problem

The primary role of rural markets in the integration process is the injection of locally produced food stuff and craft into the distributive trade. The markets perform integrative roles by providing the links between production and consumption centers of the economies within their location. The market structures shape local social organizations and provide some of the crucial modes for integrating a myriad of peasant communities into a social and economic system.

The condition of rural markets in the rural communities in Anambra State are in a state of despair: poor link roads, lack of water, convenience and electricity while heaps of solid waste compete with traders for space. The consequences being poor marketing network, wastage, and low rural income. If adequate attention is given to the rural markets, marketing will become a pleasurable activity, basic services will be available in the markets and wastage of rural products will be eliminated, all these will be translated to improve rural income and by extension, reduction of rural–urban migration in the State.

Conceptual Framework

Market

The term ‘market’ according to Holder and Ukwu (2009) is defined as an “authorized public concourse of buyers and sellers of commodities meeting at a place, more or less strictly limited or defined at an appointed time”. Most markets in the rural areas are traditional and locally based on the type of goods and services offered in the markets. Thus, rural markets are points of sale of farm produce into larger sacks for sale in urban markets. The periodicity of rural markets fulfills the local need for which they are established and the intervals between markets afforded sufficient time for preparation for the next market day.

Theory of Rural Markets

Stone (2009) argues that rural markets opens once every few days because of the per capital demand for goods sold in the market is low and high transport limit the extent of the market and the aggregate demand is therefore insufficient to support permanent sellers. For consumers also, rural market lessens the physical distance between him and the goods and services he desires.

Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to examine the integrative function of rural markets in Orumba North Local Government Area. In order to achieve this aim, the following specific objectives are set:

1. to identify the integrative function of the rural markets in Orumba North Local Government Area.
2. to identify the communities which are in functional contact with each other on the basis of goods and services provided in the markets.

METHODOLOGY

The author adopted the survey research design and the sample size was calculated using Taro Yamane (1967) sample size formula. Three hundred and ninety-nine respondents were selected

for the study. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select respondents from the sixteen communities in the study area. A structured questionnaire was constructed and administered to the respondents; the computation was done using centrality co-efficient and functional indices. The secondary data was collected from local government records and library while several field study visits was made to the study area to collect data.

Table 1: List of Communities, their markets and number of respondents selected.

Name of Community	Name of Market	Population Size 2017(projected)	No. of Respondent Selected.
Nanka	Afor Market	38,780	77
Ufuma	Afor Market	38,046	76
Awgbu	Eke Market	32,135	64
Oko	Eke Market	30,107	60
Ajalli	Orie Market	13, 200	26
Ndiowu	Orie Market	12,441	25
Ndike	Nkwo Market	7,698	15
Amaokpala	Afor Market	5002	10
Awa	Afor Market	4927	10
Omogho	Nkwo Market	4826	10
Ndiukwuenu	Oye Market	3106	6
Okpeze	Nkwo Market	2683	5
Ndiokpalaeze	Nkwo Market	2347	5
Amaetiti	Nkwo Market	2092	4
Ndiokpalaeke	Nkwo Market	1918	4
Ndiokolo	Nkwo Market	885	2
	TOTAL	200,193	399

Source: Researchers fieldwork 2018

DISCUSSION

Functions of the Markets in Anambra State

Based on the various field studies made in the study, it was observed that there was lack of recognition given to the development of market centers in the area; yet, they act as centers for the diffusion of information to the surrounding area and regions (Adelemo, 2019). They are also

fundamental points of economic life. They also act as social centers (Anthonie, 2003). Investigations also revealed that Afor market Nanka and Eke market Awgbu also serve as places of sacrifice or ritual centers (Holder and Ukwu, 2009, Ehinmowo and Ibitoye, 2010). The rural markets in the area are also a major source of livelihood for the rural people (Asogwa, 2012).

Investigation from the field also revealed that the geographical spread of the rural markets in the area enhance the distribution of commodities produced locally which helped to expand the economic base of the rural people (Datonjo, Dekor and Chikaghum, 2015). This can be seen from the analysis made in Table 2 – Table 6 and Plate I.

Table 2: Weighted Scores of Visits by Traders from other communities to markets in Orumba North (in degree).

S/NO.	Market	Weighted Score	Rank
1	Afor Nanka	206	4
2	Afor Ufuma	350	1
3	Eke Awgbu	251	2
4	Eke Oko	239	3
5	Oye Ajalli	6	10
6	Oye Ndiowu	4	11
7	Nkwo Ndiok	26	5
8	Afor Amaokpala	25	7
9	Afor Awa	26	5
10	Nkwo Omogho	25	7
11	Oye Ndiukwuenu	20	9
12	Nkwo Okpeze	0	13
13	Nkwo Ndiokpalaeze	2	12
14	Nkwo Amaetiti	0	13
15	Nkwo Ndiokpalaeke	0	13
16	Nkwo Ndiokolo	0	13

Source: Researchers fieldwork 2018.

Table 2 indicates that Afor market Ufuma is the most popular rural market in the area. It is followed by Eke Market Awgbu, Eke Market Oko and Afor Market Nanka respectively. The most unpopular markets are Nkwo Ndiokolo, Nkwo Amaetiti and Nkwo Okpeze with zero score each.

Table 3: Weighted Scores of Traders' Visit to Markets outside their Communities (Out degree).

S/No.	Community	Weighted Score of Visits.
1	Nanka	5
2	Ufuma	1
3	Awgbu	3
4	Oko	6
5	Ajalli	20
6	Ndiowu	15
7	Ndiike	18
8	Amaokpala	16
9	Awa	15
10	Omogho	7
11	Ndiukwuenu	8
12	Okpeze	12
13	Ndiokpalaeze	10
14	Amaetiti	10
15	Ndiokpalaeke	10
16	Ndiokolo	10

Source: Researchers fieldwork 2018.

The picture changes when links are looked at in terms of weighted scores of visits to markets outside one's community.

Table 3 revealed that people from communities that have high scores according to market attendance, visit fewer number of markets. This is understandable, since more inflow into their markets means more goods and services available to them and lesser the need to visit markets outside their community.

Thus, Table 3 indicates that Ufuma, Awgbu, Oko and Nanka ranked relatively low in this respect.

Centrality / Functions of rural Markets

The term centrality as it applies here means the location of a market in relation to goods and services it provides. Thus, the more the number of goods and services, the more central is the market place.

$$\text{Centrality Coefficient } C = \frac{t100}{T}$$

Where C is the centrality coefficient,

t is the number of stalls or persons selling an item in a market

T is the total number of stalls or persons selling or providing a particular item or service in the 16 markets.

Here, availability of 20 goods and 13 services was used to determine the centrality of the 16 markets investigated.

Table 4: Market Centrality of Goods in Orumba North

S/NO	Rural Market	Centrality Coefficient	Rank
1	Afor Nanka	18.7	2
2	Afor Ufuma	23.5	1
3	Eke Awgbu	15.0	4
4	Eke Oko	17.9	3
5	Oye Ajalli	0.5	15
6	Oye Ndiowu	1.3	10
7	Nkwo Ndiike	2.8	9
8	Afor Amaokpala	3.6	7
9	Afor Awa	4.8	6
10	Nkwo Omogho	5.2	5
11	Oye Ndi-ukwuenu	3.6	7
12	Nkwo Okpeze	0.7	12
13	Nkwo Ndiokpalaeze	0.8	11
14	Nkwo Amaetiti	0.5	15
15	Nkwo Ndiokpalaeke	0.6	13
16	Nkwo Ndiokolo	0.6	13

Source: Researchers fieldwork 2018.

It is evident from table 4 that Afor market Ufuma ranks first with a centrality index of 23.5 followed by Afor market Nanka, Eke Market Oko and Eke Awgbu with indices of 18.7, 17.9 and 15.0 respectively. The markets with the least indices as shown in Table 4 are Nkwo Amaetiti (0.5), Nkwo market Ndiokpalaeze (0.6), Nkwo market Ndiokolo (0.6) and Okpeze (0.7). The range of services was analyzed in the same way by enumerating the services available and by calculating the centrality indices of the services in the 16 markets in the area. The results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Rural Market Centrality of Services in Orumba North.

S/NO.	Market	Centrality Index	Rank
1	Afor Nanka	30	2
2	Afor Ufuma	40	1
3	Eke Awgbu	12.9	4
4	Eke Oko	15.7	3
5	Oye Ajalli	0	-
6	Oye Ndiowu	0	-
7	Nkwo Ndiike	0	-
8	Afor Amaokpala	0	-
9	Afor Awa	1.4	5
10	Nkwo Omogho	0	-
11	Oye Ndiukwuenu	0	-
12	Nkwo Okpeze	0	-
13	Nkwo Ndiokpaeze	0	-
14	Nkwo Amaetiti	0	-
15	Nkwo Ndiokpaeke	0	-
16	Nkwo Ndiokolo	0	-

Source: Researchers fieldwork 2018.

Table 5 shows that Afor market Ufuma, Afor market Nanka, Eke Market Oko and Eke Awgbu with centrality indices of 40, 30, 15.7 and 12.9 respectively. All other markets except Afor Market Awgbu (1.4) has a centrality index of zero. Using the centrality of goods and services, we calculate the mean centrality, which yielded the functional index of each market. The mean centrality or functional indices of the markets are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Functional Indices of Rural Markets in Orumba North

S/No.	Market	Centrality of Goods	Centrality of Services	Total	Mean	Rank
1	Afor Nanka	18.7	30	48.7	24.35	2
2	Afor Ufuma	23.5	40	63.5	31.75	1
3	Eke Awgbu	15.0	12.9	27.9	13.95	4
4	Eke Oko	17.9	15.7	33.6	16.8	3
5	Oye Ajalli	0.5	0	0.5	0.25	15
6	Oye Ndiowu	1.3	0	1.3	0.65	10
7	Nkwo Ndiok	2.8	0	2.8	1.4	9
8	Afor Amaokpala	3.6	0	3.6	1.8	7
9	Afor Awa	4.8	1.4	6.2	3.1	5
10	Nkwo Omogho	5.2	0	5.2	2.6	6
11	Oye Ndiukwuenu	3.6	0	3.6	1.8	7
12	Nkwo Okpeze	0.7	0	0.7	0.35	12
13	Nkwo Ndiokpalaeze	0.8	0	0.8	0.4	11
14	Nkwo Amaetiti	0.5	0	0.5	0.25	15
15	Nkwo Ndiokpalaeke	0.6	0	0.6	0.3	13
16	Nkwo Ndiokolo	0.6	0	0.6	0.3	13

Source: Researchers fieldwork 2018.

Table 6 again confirms that Afor market Ufuma (31.75), Afor market Nanka (24.35), Eke Market Oko (16.8) and Eke market Awgbu (13.95) are the four most functional markets in Orumba North Local Government Area.



Plate 1: A market scene at Eke Awgbu on a Market Day.

FINDINGS

Based on the objectives, the researcher discovered that:

1. markets play essential functional role in the socio-economic life of the people of Orumba North Local Government Area of Anambra State.
2. the markets in the area are in effective functional contacts with each other, forming a system whereby, lower order markets depend on the nearest higher-order market for higher order goods and services. There exists a weak linkage between lower-order markets of the same order. Thus, conforming to the christalleian market principle K3 interactions.
3. using the nearest-neighbor analysis, it was discovered that the mean nearest-neighbor distance for the study area is 2670.39 meters (Fig 2). This depicts an efficient locational configuration, since people only have to travel for that distance to get to the nearest market. However, the efficiency of the locational configuration is often constrained by socio-economic distance among other difficulties that limit rural market functional integration.
4. the markets perform integrative roles by providing the links between production and consumption centers of the economies within the area, through the visits and links that are established as the markets are visited.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Rural market linkages should be given adequate attention by the government. This should be done by creating marketing boards in the state.
2. The Government should encourage private investors to invest in market development by putting in place adequate logistic and administrative guidelines.

CONCLUSION

This study has firmly established that rural markets are very important in the socio-economic space of an area. Their importance lies in the fact that they provide the channels of socio-economic linkages among the rural people and between the rural economy and the urban economy. The various rural development initiatives cannot yield the desired results effectively unless the rural markets are first adequately developed.

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