

4-1-1961

Size of trade center and development programs

Harold F. Kaufman

Lucy W. Cole

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsjunction.msstate.edu/mafes-bulletins>

Recommended Citation

Kaufman, Harold F. and Cole, Lucy W., "Size of trade center and development programs" (1961). *Bulletins*. 741.

<https://scholarsjunction.msstate.edu/mafes-bulletins/741>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station (MAFES) at Scholars Junction. It has been accepted for inclusion in Bulletins by an authorized administrator of Scholars Junction. For more information, please contact scholcomm@msstate.libanswers.com.

Mitchell Memorial Library
Mississippi State University
Physical and Biological
Sciences Reference Room

Size of Trade Center And Development Programs

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY
AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION

HENRY LEVECK, Director

STATE COLLEGE

MISSISSIPPI

JUL 29 1961

IMPLICATIONS

If participation in development programs and population growth are valid indices of vitality, then most of the population centers in Mississippi do have a future. This is true of the rural centers (under 2,500) as well as of the larger places. Although participation in the Hometown Program and population growth were related to size, a relatively large number of rural centers showed decided potentiality for growth and development. This was especially true for places over 500 population.

The potentiality of the smaller centers for development as well as their relatively larger numbers in Mississippi challenges research, education, and action programs. Traditional city planning programs have not generally been aimed at places under 2,500, although they comprise four-fifths of all incorporated places in the state. By far the largest number of towns with development potential —

organization, leadership, and growing populations — fall in this population class.

A careful study of factors making for development of hamlets and small towns is greatly needed. For example, are their futures largely as centers of production, of residence, or both?

Many industrial specialists would say that factories will settle in few of the smaller places, although some programs of industrialization, such as the one in Lee County, have promoted this type of development.

The small center may have a greater future as a place of residence than of production, especially if it stresses quality living. Certainly the role of the small center, both as a place to live and to make a living, should be studied more carefully before it is abandoned by community development leaders as hopeless.

SIZE OF TRADE CENTER AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

By HAROLD F. KAUFMAN and LUCY W. COLE

Do rural population centers — those under 2,500 — have a future? This report attempts to provide some information in answering this question by a look at the population changes in Mississippi trade centers (incorporated towns) and at their participation in a development activity. The specific activity analyzed is the Hometown Development Program, which was conducted during the three-year period 1957-59.

The two major objectives of the analysis are to relate the size of the center (1) to participation in the Hometown Program, and (2) to the nature of the involvement.

As necessary background for this analysis, the population trends of population centers are noted and pertinent characteristics of the Hometown Development Program are described. This study is also to be seen in the context of rapid changes and adjustments in agriculture and in the perspective of community and rural development programs to improve the level of life of farm and other rural people.

Growth Related to Size

The larger the center, the more likely it was to gain population. This was true for the South and for the United States

as a whole.¹ In Mississippi 75 percent of the 52 places of over 1,000 population in 1900 had either gained population or held their own during the half century 1900-1950, while only 37 percent of the 240 places under 1,000 in population had fared as well.²

The same trend continued in the 1950-60 decade, as is shown in Table 1. Over two-fifths of all the centers gained 10 percent or more population during the 1950-60 decade. Over two-thirds of the centers over 1,000 had such a gain. Even three-fourths of those in the population class 501-1,000 either remained relatively stable or showed an appreciable increase. Only in the very small centers, those un-

*Acknowledgment is made to the Mississippi Economic Council and to the scores of communities participating in the Hometown Development Program for the information on which a part of this study is based.

¹Edmund deS. Brunner, "Village Growth 1940-50," *Rural Sociology*, June 1951, and "The Small Village: 1940-50," *Rural Sociology*, June 1952.

²A. Alexander Fanelli and Harald A. Pedersen, *Growth Trends of Mississippi Population Centers, 1900-1950*, Mississippi State College, Social Science Research Center, Community Series No. 10, July 1956.

Table 1. Incorporated places in Mississippi in 1950 classified by population growth during 1950-60 decade.

Population 1950	Total No. of towns	Percent of incorporated places with following population changes		
		Decrease of 10%	10% increase-decrease	Increase of over 10%
All towns	278	24	33	43
500 and under*	97	50	30	20
501-1,000	64	23	44	33
1,001-2,500	64	3	34	63
2,501-5,000	25	4	32	64
5,001-10,000	13	0	23	77
Over 10,000	15	0	13	87

*Seven towns were not reported in the 1960 census, and four towns reported in 1960 that were not present in 1950, for a total of 275 in 1960.

der 500, was there a decided decrease in population. Half of these centers decreased 10 percent or more in population during the decade, while only one-fifth of them gained over 10 percent.

Most of the small towns of America were established and grew as trade and service centers for the surrounding farm population. Two major factors in the decline of small agricultural trade centers over the last several decades have been (1) the increased competition of larger centers with improved transportation and communication, and (2) the decline in the farm population. Small centers have lost such services as retail stores, post offices, and schools. The number of school districts in Mississippi has declined from 4,211 in 1948 to 151 in 1958. The number of attendance units has likewise greatly declined.

The farm population of the state and region is rapidly moving out of agriculture. Mississippi is estimated to have lost a half million from its farms in the period 1940-1954. This is equal to more than a third of the farm population at the earlier period.³ The number of farms and farm operators likewise declined during this period. If anything, the decline was even more precipitate for the period 1954-59. During this period, Mississippi lost over 66,000 farms, or nearly 31 percent of the 216,000 farms enumerated in 1954.

Two major factors in the shift out of agriculture have been (1) improved technology, which has allowed for greater production per man and the need for fewer workers, and (2) the desire for higher incomes on the part of the people engaged in agriculture. Thus if the population in a given area is not to decline appreciably, nonfarm employment must be supplied. For a number of years Mis-

issippi leadership has been aware of this situation. Efforts to meet it are characterized by the work of the Agricultural and Industrial Board through its Balance Agriculture with Industry program. The purpose of this program has been to help the various communities in the state to secure industry in order to maintain employment.

The Hometown Development Program

Many programs have arisen in the South since the end of World War II, organized at the community level to increase the opportunities for making a living as well as to improve the quality of living. Some of these programs have been organized primarily around trade centers, like the Hometown Development program, and others have focused chiefly on the open country neighborhoods.⁴

Although increasing nonagricultural employment has been a major objective of all trade center programs, they have also expressed the philosophy that factories are not likely to locate in communities which do not have a high level of governmental, educational, and other services. Thus, the development programs have been broad in their interests and community-wide in terms of groups and agencies involved.

A typical trade center program was the Hometown Development Program which was organized by the State Chamber of Commerce (the Mississippi Economic Council) in the mid-fifties. The program was based on careful study of similar work in other Southern states and had the support of over 30 business and manufacturing corporations and state agencies. It was continued for three consecutive

³Harald A. Pedersen, "Migration from Mississippi," *Mississippi Farm Research*, Vol. 19, No. 5, May 1956, p. 6.

⁴Harold F. Kaufman, *Community Development Programs in the Southeast*, Social Science Research Center, Community Studies No. 9, June 1956; and A. W. Baird and W. C. Bailey, *Community Development Clubs in Alcorn County, Mississippi*, Mississippi Agricultural Experiment

calendar years, 1957, 1958, and 1959.⁵

Formal entry was made into the program early in the year, and a final report was submitted at the end of the year. All reports were reviewed by a panel of out-of-state judges. Varying from year to year, from 22 to 34 "finalists" were chosen and cash awards were given to half this number. Awards the first year were divided among three population class centers, with breaks at 2,500 and 10,000 population. The last two years a fourth class was created with a break at 1,000 population.

"One organization," preferably the "Chamber of Commerce or similar community-wide organization," was permitted to enter "any incorporated community." "Rural improvement and agricultural development projects" were "not only eligible but sponsors" were "encouraged to enter them." In entering the annual state-wide program, a community listed the projects it planned to work on during the year. No limit was placed on the number of projects entered but during the two years of the contest a community to enter must have had a beautification project.

Three aspects of developing a program and 15 areas of subject matter content were suggested. The contest guide suggested that the community reports be made in terms of (1) analysis of community needs and problems, (2) organization and plan of action, and (3) record of accomplishments. The 15 project categories were agriculture, beautification, business activities, county government, education, family living, health and sanitation, industry, municipal government, population and manpower, recreation and

⁵For details see *The 1957 Mississippi Hometown Development Program*, *The 1958 Mississippi Hometown Development Program*, *The 1959 Mississippi Hometown Development Program*, and *Planned Development: Basic Steps for Mississippi Towns, Areas and Counties* (January 1959), all published by the Mississippi Economic Council, Jackson, Mississippi.

culture, spiritual life, tourists, transportation and communication, and youth.

Extent of Program Participation

The Hometown Development Program was broadly based so as to meet the interests and needs of population centers of all sizes. A survey made before the program was launched indicated that residents of small as well as large population centers recognized the need for action.⁶ Thus the question follows as to the relative response among population centers of the various sizes. Nearly two-thirds, or 175 of 278 incorporated places, enrolled in the Hometown Program for at least one year. The number of towns enrolled and the number reporting for each of the three years were as follows:

	Enrolling	Reporting
1957	126	114
1958	153	125
1959	118	89

The participation of places by size in the Hometown Program is shown in Table 2. The most important findings in this table are the populations at which participation increases or decreases. The most important division is at 500 population. Lesser divisions are at 1,000 and 10,000. The findings of this table confirm the observations of community development specialists that programs such as the Hometown activity are most adaptable to places in the general population range of 1,000-10,000.

Nature of Program Participation

Decided divisions are seen among places of various sizes concerning the organizations sponsoring the Hometown Program. The Chamber of Commerce was the major sponsor for places over 2,500, while places 500 and under had a great variety of sponsors. Civic groups were the most common sponsor for the population group

⁶A. Alexander Fanelli, *Needs and Problems of Mississippi Communities*, Mississippi State College, Social Science Research Center, Community Series No. 5, March 1955.

Table 2. Incorporated towns enrolled and reporting in the Mississippi Hometown Development Program 1957-1959.

Population 1950	Total No. of towns	Percent		
		Enroll one or more years	Enrolled and reporting two years	Enrolled and reporting three years
All sizes	278	63	40	22
500 and under	97	23	11	5
501 to 1,000	64	80	47	20
1,001 to 2,500	64	84	53	33
2,501 to 5,000	25	92	76	36
5,001 to 10,000	13	100	62	46
Over 10,000	15	80	60	40

501-1,000. Town boards were prominent sponsors in the smaller centers. Programs sponsored by town boards, however, were less successful than the average.

Although a program in any given community had only one sponsor, in most cases a number of organizations cooperated in carrying it out. Organizations were classified by type and by size of population center. Civic groups were found more frequently to participate in development work than any other type of organization. They were active in over four-fifths of the programs in places between 501 and 10,000 in population. City government also was relatively active in all sizes of centers. Chambers of commerce were active in the larger centers, as in a number of the smaller ones such organizations did not exist. The church cooperated in nearly half of the programs in centers of 2,500 and under, but none of the programs in centers of over 10,000. In addition to the church, schools and agencies of the Agricultural Extension Service were prominent in the smaller places.

In the 1958 program, 125 centers made reports. These reports were analyzed concerning the extent to which effective community organizational procedures were followed.⁷ The 22 finalists of the 1958 program were compared with the 103 other communities as to the procedures employed. In general, the finalists were more likely to have the following organizational characteristics:

1. Many groups were involved in plan-

ning and carrying out projects.

2. A large number and variety of projects were initiated.

3. Widespread publicity was used and a number of special community-wide activities held.

4. Agencies outside the community were utilized for professional services.

5. Frequent follow-up meetings were held and progress reports made.

Smaller towns were often handicapped by not having a newspaper to serve as the publicity medium. However, one enterprising community under 500 mimeographed a monthly newsletter describing the progress of the program. The size of place seemed to influence the type of community-wide program. For example, community recreation for money-making purposes and joint religious activities was much more typical of the smaller places, while the larger places were more likely to have special drives, fairs, and historical celebrations.

A study of reports of 28 communities for the three-year period indicated that towns over 10,000 tended as time passed to have fewer and fewer groups involved in the program. There was a tendency

⁷These are procedures which community organization specialists regard as the more effective ones. These are discussed in detail in Lucy W. Cole's *A Mississippi Program in Trade Center Development*, Mississippi Agricultural Experiment Station Preliminary Report in Sociology & Rural Life No. 17, April 1961.

to turn over to one organization, such as the chamber of commerce, the responsibility for the development activity. This is further evidence to support the general observation that as population centers grow larger, widespread participation of many different groups becomes more and more difficult. Programs, even though they have widespread benefit, become more and more the concern of special groups.

Agriculture and Other Programs

Farm people appeared to be active in a relatively large number of programs. Over half of the communities judged as finalists in the 1958 program were reported to be involved in agriculture and trade center activities. During this year trade area programs were sponsored by all centers over 10,000, nearly half of those 2,500-10,000, but less than a third of those 2,500 and under. It is significant that the most outstanding program over the three-year period in a center under 500 had agricultural and trade area projects.

As would be expected, agricultural agencies, especially the Agricultural Extension Service, were more likely to be centered in the larger towns, many of which were county seats, than in the very

small ones. The Agricultural Extension Service took part in 43 percent of all the programs in 1958. It was most likely to be involved in towns between 1,000 and 10,000 in population. Agricultural projects included the recognition of outstanding farmers, 4-H Club days, dairy festivals, livestock days, forestry days, agricultural fairs, forestry queen contests, harvest festivals, and fairs. Some communities reported the construction of such agricultural facilities as hatcheries, feed mills, and grain elevators as projects in the Hometown Program.

A most significant link between the Hometown Program and the farm and other country people was the sponsorship by county development associations of open-country community clubs. This sponsorship in some counties was reported as a project in the Hometown Program. Since the early 1950's, between 25 and 30 Mississippi counties, or approximately one-third, have had area-wide development associations. Open-country community development sponsoring activities, as well as other rural and agricultural programs described above, appear to be more and more centered in terms of planning and leadership in the larger trade centers, especially the county seats.

Table 3. Comparison of sponsoring organizations in towns of various sizes in the Mississippi Hometown Development Program, 1958.

Sponsor	No. towns all sizes	Percent of towns reporting					
		All sizes (N=125)	500 and under (N=14)	501- 1,000 (N=38)	1,001- 2,500 (N=36)	2,501- 10,000 (N=27)	Over 10,000 (N=10)
Chamber of Commerce	48	38	0	13	38	71	100
Civic club ¹	27	22	14	47	14	7	0
Development committee, club, or council	18	14	22	16	17	11	0
Town board	13	10	22	13	11	4	0
Joint sponsorship by clubs	7	6	21	8	3	0	0
All others ²	12	10	21	3	17	7	0

¹Fifty-nine percent of the civic club sponsors were Lions Clubs. In towns of 500 and under, 65 percent of the civic club sponsors were Lions Clubs; in towns 1,001 through 2,500, 40 percent; and in towns 2,501 through 10,000, 50 percent. The other civic clubs were Rotary, Jaycees, and clubs listed merely as civic clubs.

²All others consisted of two B.&P.W. Clubs, and one each of the following: Business Women's Clubs, Business Men's Association, Home Demonstration Club, Knights of Pythias, Travel Development Committee, City Planning Commission.

Table 4. Local organizations reported involved in different size towns in the Mississippi Hometown Development Program, 1958.

Types of organizations	Percent of towns reporting					
	All sizes (N=125)	500 and under (N=14)	501-1,000 (N=38)	1,001-2,500 (N=36)	2,501-10,000 (N=27)	Over 10,000 (N=10)
Civic clubs (including men's service clubs & women's federated clubs)	80	57	82	92	85	50
City government (legislative)	71	64	66	78	85	40
Garden clubs	52	36	32	61	70	70
Chamber of Commerce	42	0	13	50	74	100
Agricultural Extension Service	43	29	26	47	70	40
Church	35	50	37	42	30	0
Parent-Teachers	32	21	29	42	33	20
School	30	29	13	39	52	10
Patriotic organizations	27	14	13	33	56	0
Board of supervisors	21	29	8	28	33	0
City administrative departments	20	7	5	22	44	20
Youth (extra-school)	18	14	13	22	30	0
Development association, community club and hometown development steering committee	18	21	18	19	19	0
Other agricultural organizations	17	21	5	28	22	0
Other business and industrial organizations	11	7	11	11	15	10
Fraternal organizations	11	14	8	3	30	0
Study clubs and music clubs	9	0	11	11	11	0
Outdoor sports clubs	6	0	0	6	22	0

Table 5. Differences in community organization procedures in the 1958 Mississippi Hometown Development Program between finalists and others.

	All towns (N=125)	Finalists (N=22)	Others (N=103)
Procedures hypothesized to affect success			
Involvement in analyzing needs and setting goals:			
Percent inviting all citizens or highly representative groups to participate	77	100	72
Percent where a few participated	10	0	13
Percent not reporting analysis of needs	13	0	15
Percent where Negroes did planning	10	23	7
Involvement in projects:			
Percent involving most organizations	66	91	61
Percent involving few organizations	19	9	21
Percent involving sponsor or sponsor and one other organization	15	0	18
Percent involving Negro groups	25	50	19
Projects planned and completed:			
Percent completing all or large number	61	100	52
Median number projects planned	10	12	10
Percent with longtime projects	82	100	79
Use of non-local professional resources:			
Percent using free help	61	68	59
Percent using paid help	30	59	24
Variety of interests:			
Percent with projects for youth	86	96	83
Percent with projects for gainful employment	53	91	45
Percent with decided indication of a trade area program	34	59	28
Percent with projects especially for Negroes	44	73	38
Publicity:			
Percent with publicity in press, radio, etc.	78	100	73
Percent planning community-wide activities	70	86	67
Median number activities planned	3	4	3
Program evaluation:			
Percent reporting follow-up meetings and/or progress reports	55	91	48