

F22 ENQUIRY INTO PREFERENCE OF MODES AND ROUTES IN THE MOVEMENT OF GOODS:
EXPORTS/IMPORTS/INTER-REGIONAL FLOWS IN SRI LANKA

M. H. Gunaratne

The extent and modal structure of a transport system reflects many influences, such as the geography, terrain, the structure of the economy and the history of its growth and development. Within any system, the modes complement and compete with each other. Complementarity arises inevitably from the scattered distribution of production, marketing and residential points as well as from technological and economic conditions. Shippers' choice of a mode and the designs of public policy are not exclusively a matter of cost comparison in a narrow sense. For example, one reason for the success of trucking in competition with railways has been more decentralized and flexible organisation, better able to meet shippers' needs.

The objective of the study was to elicit information on all factors of demand for a particular mode and route of transport, in this instance, for the movement of freight which is vital in planning the co-ordination of transport. The information required was obtained through a sample survey.

It was found that transporters of bulk items viz. cement, fertilizer, tea, fuel, presently transported by lorry, had indicated preference for railway, if facilities are made available. Transport cost as a percentage of value of goods transported by lorry was found to be marginal and consequently the lorry had become a popular mode of transport.

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