

Effectiveness of Public Distribution System with Special Reference to Irinjalakuda Municipality

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Abstract: *The public distribution system has a great role in our economy. It was established by government of India under ministry of consumer affairs, food and public distribution system. It is managed jointly by state and government of central India. Public distribution system is also known as fair price shop (FPS) is established by government of India which distributes rations at a subsidized price to the poor. These are known as ration shop. The items are offered by government through the issue of ration cards. The items are kerosene and food grains such as rice, wheat and sugar etc. Consumers get food grains at reasonable and fair price, that is the price is lower than market price through the ration shops. The central and state governments shared the responsibility of regulating the PDS. While the central government is responsible for procurement, storage, transportation and bulk allocation of food grains, state hold the responsibility for distributing the same to the consumers through the established network for fair price shop.*

Keywords: Public distribution system, Ration shops, fair price shops

1. Introduction

The public distribution system has a great role in our economy. It was established by government of India under ministry of consumer affairs, food and public distribution system. It is managed jointly by state and government of central India. Public distribution system is also known as fair price shop (FPS) is established by government of India which distributes rations at a subsidized price to the poor. These are known as ration shop. The items are offered by government through the issue of ration cards. The items are kerosene and food grains such as rice, wheat and sugar etc. Consumers get food grains at reasonable and fair price, that is the price is lower than market price through the ration shops. It is one of the important food security system in India. This system ensures food security to all people on a reasonable price. It aims to reduce poverty among poor people and also to make a balanced growth in the economy. In our state, Kerala government is the controller and regulator of PDS. It is necessary to open more ration shops in rural areas to make food security more effectively without any malpractice.

The central and state governments shared the responsibility of regulating the PDS. While the central government is responsible for procurement, storage, transportation and bulk allocation of food grains, state hold the responsibility for distributing the same to the consumers through the established network for fair price shop. For this people are classified in to different groups such as APL and BPL based on this income level. The PDS operates through allocation of ration cards to households in which house holders either classified as being above poverty line (APL) and expected to pay economic cost of food grains or below poverty line (BPL) or poorest of the poor, Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) card holders are provided subsidized food grains. Under PDS scheme, each families below the poverty line is eligible for 35 kg of rice or wheat every month, while a house hold above the poverty line is entitled to 15 kg of food grain on a monthly basis. Ration cards are an official document

entailing the holders to a ration of food, fuel or other goods issued by the government of India. They are primarily used when purchasing subsidized food stuffs (wheat, sugar, rice) and kerosene. They are an important subsistence tool for the poor, providing proof of identity and a connection the government database. India 's public distribution system is based on the ration cards, which it uses to establish identity, eligibility, and entitlement.

2. Statement of Problem

The PDS is a rationing mechanism that entitles households to specified of selected commodities at subsidized prices. Eligible households are given a ration card entitles then to fixed rations or selected commodities. The six essential commodities supplies through the PDS nationally, are rice, wheat, sugar, edible oils, kerosene and coal. Additional commodities like pulses, salt, tea are supplied selectively. The commodities are made available through a network of fair price shops. In 1994, there were around 0.42 million ration shops in the country. These shops are run by private agents, cooperative, few are state owned. An important features of PDS is that the responsibility for implementation, monitoring and for enforcement of legal provisions relating to public delivery with the state government. Now days, ordinary people in rural area depend heavily on PDS. Therefore it is an attempt to examine the effectiveness in the functioning of PDS.

3. Objectives of the Study

- 1) To examine the level of awareness towards the functioning of PDS
- 2) To identify the level of satisfaction regarding services provided by fair price shop.
- 3) To analyse the reasons for purchasing items from ration shop.

Research Methodology

The collection of this study includes primary data and

secondary data. The primary data will be collected from consumers covered under ration shops in Irinjalakuda using questionnaires. The secondary data will be collected from internet, journals and other publications etc. Tools such as Likert scale, Ranking are used for data analysis.

4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1

Table showing the reasons for purchasing items on the PDS shop

Reasons for purchasing items in PDS shop	Mean score	Rank
To get more information on the availability of goods	1.9	VI
To get goods in affordable price	4.2	II
Quality of goods satisfied your purchase	2.8	V
Due to more quantity of goods	3.84	III
There are regular supply of goods	3.4	IV
To get govt. subsidy on the PDS shop	4.86	I

From the above table it is clear that respondents mostly prefer to purchase the item, to get govt. subsidy on the PDS shop (4.86). The lowest preference is made to get more information on the availability of goods.

Table 2

Table showing the level of awareness towards PDS shops

Factors	Mean score	Rank
I know the availability of ration items in the shop at the right time	3.1	II
I get correct information about the availability, quantity, price of ration items in the shop	3.9	I
Matters related with PDS is discussed in gramasabha	2.16	III

From the above table it is clear that the respondents are highly aware towards the functioning of PDS such as to get correct information about the availability, quantity, price of ration items in the shop. The lowest awareness is in matters related with PDS discussed in gramasabha.

Level of satisfaction regarding services provided by fair shop

Customers have different level of satisfaction regarding the transparency of dealings, infrastructure facility, fair dealings and complaint redressal mechanism provided by fair price shop.

Table 3

Table showing the transparency dealings of PDS shop

Statements	Mean score	Rank
PDS dealers give me up to date or relevant information	2.88	IV
PDS dealers behave fair and friendly to customers	2.7	V
PDS is impartial to all	3.7	II
The price is charged by ration shop are low compared to others	4.34	I
PDS dealers has the transparent ration shop will all customer	3.34	III

The above table it is clear that the respondents are highly satisfied regarding the price charged by ration shop are low

compared to other shop in market, and also lowest satisfaction regarding the respondents are the PDS dealers to give me up to date or relevant information.

Table 4

Table showing the infrastructure of PDS shop

Statements	Mean score	Rank
Adequate space is provided for keeping items inside the shop	3.04	II
Adequate space is provided for queuing customer	2.54	III
PDS dealers having proper weighing machine in the PDS shop	3.58	I
Proper strong facility for storing each items separately	2.38	IV
There is separate space for receipt of items and payment of money	1.82	V

The above table it is clear that the respondents are highly satisfaction regarding PDS dealers having proper weighing machine in the shop. The lowest satisfaction regarding there is separate space for receipt of items and payment of money.

Table 5

Table showing the ranks of fair dealings of PDS shop.

Statements	Mean score	Rank
Supply right quantity of item at the right time	2.84	IV
Quality of items maintained in the PDS shop is prescribed by civil supply department are correct	2.94	III
Price of different articles are displayed in the outside of display board	3.64	I
Disparity between services rendered on APL and BPL	3.9	II
Providing correct clarification about my doubts from the dealer	2.36	V

From the above table it is clear that all respondents are highly satisfied by the price of different articles displayed in the outside of display board. The lowest satisfaction are providing correct clarification about my doubts from the dealer.

Table 6

Table showing the complaint redressal mechanism in PDS shop

Statements	Mean score	Rank
Malpractice are noticed in PDS shop in dealing with weighing machine	2.88	IV
I have complaints regarding the performance of PDS shop	3.46	III
PDS dealers provide items with different price for different customer	3.6	I
I noticed proper complaint box is placed in PDS shop	1.68	V
I have no option for redressal of my complaints	3.4	II

The above table it is clear that all respondents are highly satisfied by the PDS dealers provide items with different price for different customers. The lowest satisfaction regarding there is no proper complaint box is placed in PDS shop.

5. Findings

- 1) Respondents are mostly preferred for purchasing the item, because to get govt. subsidy on the PDS shop (4.86). The lowest preference is made to get more information on the availability of goods (1.9).
- 2) Respondents are highly awareness towards the functioning of PDS is to get correct information about the availability, quantity, price of ration items in the shop (3.9). The lowest awareness is a matters related with PDS is discussed in gramasabha (2.16).
- 3) On the basis of transparency of the dealings the Respondents are highly satisfaction regarding the price charged by ration shop are low compared to other shop in market (4.34), and also lowest satisfaction regarding the respondents are the PDS dealers to give me up to date or relevant information (2.88)
- 4) on the basis of infrastructure facility the respondents are highly satisfied PDS dealers have proper weighing machine in the PDS shop.
- 5) Respondents are highly satisfied by the price of different articles displayed in the outside of display board (3.64). The lowest satisfaction are providing correct clarification about my doubts from the dealer (2.36).
- 6) Respondents are highly satisfied by the PDS dealers provide items with different price for different customers (3.6). The lowest satisfaction regarding there is no proper complaint box is placed in PDS shop (1.68).

6. Conclusion

PDS in India is one of the largest welfare programmes in the world with primary aim of improving food nutrition security of the socially and economically deprived sections in the country. PDS is considered as principal instrument in the hands of central and state government to providing safety net to the poor against the spiraling rise of price of essential commodities. Ration shops are grass root level functioning of the total public distribution system in India to ensure food security. That India is developing nation and largest population in the world. To ensure food security in India is why the study of effectiveness of ration shop is important in this scenario.

This study shows that how effectively the ration shops are working in Irinjalakuda in Thrissur. To conclude that most of people are depending on ration shops at least for an item. But in present situation the availability of food items is not adequate for the consumers. There is need for increase the quantity of food items given through ration shop and also need to ensure the quality of food grains which supplied to consumers. The strong intervention from the government to ensure adequate full supply to every poor in the society helps to eradicate poverty by attaining food security.

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