

Analyzes the performance of the public distribution system in the Bellary district of Karnataka.

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Abstract:

Public Distribution System (PDS) aims at poverty alleviation programme and has worked towards the overall health of the people. Critical commodities like rice, wheat, sugar, kerosene is supplied to the citizens under the PDS at fair rates. The people living on the Below Poverty Line got PDS as a boon. The PDS is the government of India's key services for social security and poverty reduction. The PDS is seen as the most critical network for food security. There are some criticisms, however, particularly that the cereals supplied are not adequate to meet the needs of the poor for consumption and are of inferior quality.

Key Words: Public Distribution System, alleviation, Poverty

Introduction

The Public Distribution System (PDS) is a system for food protection set up under the oversight of the Ministry of Consumption, Food and Public Distribution by the Indian Government. It in cooperation with state governments, distributes subsidized food and non-food goods to impoverished people in India. Wheat, corn, sugar and kerosene are among the products that food shops sell under this scheme.

The PDS is seen as the most critical network for food security. There are some criticisms, however, particularly that the cereals supplied are not adequate to meet the needs of the poor for consumption and are of inferior quality. For its metropolitan orientation and its failure to represent the poorer sectors of the population, it has been blamed. In the course of removing the poor from those less in need, the targeted PDS is costly and contributes to a great deal of corruption.

Central and state governments share the obligation to monitor the PDS. Although the central government is responsible for the bulk supply, transportation, transport and distribution of food grains, through the fair pricing scheme, state governments allocate the same to consumers. Operational tasks are also the responsibility of state governments, including appointing and recognizing families below poverty, distributing ration cards, supervising and controlling the operation of the fair price shops (FPS).

The system of public distribution is the system of distribution by fair price stores of some vital commodities such as rice, wheat and sugar, which continued to occupy a significant portion throughout the time. The other "ration shop" or co-operatives controlled by the government, run by private concessionaires under government supervision and direction. The aim is to offer, in particular to the more disadvantaged segments of the population, at least a basic minimum quantity of necessary goods at fair prices, and also to stabilize their open market prices, or at least to avoid an undue escalation in those prices under conditions of scarcity.

We have been part of our food management with the public supply scheme. The primary objective was to provide urban consumers with food at lower prices through ration stores and show stores. The aims of the PDS were also to create a buffer stock per stage and include a minimum support price (MSP) to deter sales of farmers' distress. In India, the Public Distribution Scheme is more than half a century old, as rationing was first instituted by the British Government in Bombay in 1939 as a step to ensure the equal distribution of food grains to urban consumers in the face of increasing prices.

Poverty, Hunger and Malnutrition in India

The slogan raised by the World Food Summit, as above, weighs on humanity as long as hunger and deprivation occur. When a country achieves food security for its people, the road to growth begins. A country's food security means an adequate quantity of foods that are produced, properly stored and made available to all, especially deprived groups.

Food security occurs where all people have physical, social and economic access at all times to sufficient, secure and nutritious food that satisfies their food requirements and food desires for productive and balanced living, according to the Global Food Summit. Is household food security the implementation of this term at the family level, with individuals belonging to households being at the center of concerted living.

The problems of poverty, hunger and malnutrition have continued to be addressed by the world. Poverty is a source and effect of malnutrition, about 805 million people are currently suffering from chronic hunger, and almost two billion people worldwide are affected by micronutrient deficiencies. Among infants, about 162 million (a quarter) under the age of five suffer from chronic malnutrition, 99 million are underweight, and 55 million are chronically malnourished.

Hunger and malnutrition are the two intertwined problems that the world continues to face, and more effort is required to ensure the availability of food and nutrition for vulnerable communities. There are places where some of the population does not even have adequate food to consume on a daily basis, leaving them poorer, less active and in essence, poor and unhealthy. With the efforts of policymakers and the international development community, reducing malnutrition in the world continues.

The target of halving the proportion of undernourished people by 2015 from the 1990-92 amount set under the UN Millennium Development Goal 1C remains realistic, while many countries have already accomplished the goal of the World Food Summit of halving the percentage of undernourished people by 2015 seems far from hitting the estimated number of undernourished people globally and about 98.2 per cent of residues globally.

Present Status of PDS

Public Distribution System is the biggest initiative taken by the Government of India to ensure food security. PDS coverage was originally inclusive without any distinction between the poor and non-poor. The public distribution system was not a public distribution system.

Current Status of the Public Distribution System is:

- The Government of India's most big step in maintaining food security is the public distribution scheme.
- Initially, there was no inequality between the poor and the unprivileged that covered PDS. Over the years, PDS strategy has been implemented in order to improve its efficacy and emphasis.
- Revamped 1992: In the region, 1700 blocks implemented the Public Distribution System (PDS). The goal was to provide remote and backward areas with the advantages of PDS.
- In a renewed effort to follow a principle to target 'poor people in all regions,' a renewed Targeted Public Distribution Scheme (TPDS) was launched in June 1997 and a preferential pricing strategy for the poor and the poor was first introduced.
- In addition, in 2000, two special schemes with unique focus classes of the 'poorest of the poorest' and indigent, senior citizens were initiated, namely Antiodaya Anna Yoiana (AAY) and Annapurna School (APS). Both schemes functioned in combination with the current PDS network.

Theoretical Background

Malthusian Optimism

Community theory is Thomas Robert Malthus's eminent population theory. In his well-known book 'An Essay in the First Population Principle', shakes at the potential improvement of civilization published in 1798, vocalized his opinions on the people. In his view, he describes the impact of the population on the provision of food and claims that humans want to expand more quickly than the strength to generate livelihoods in the world. In other words, population is geometrically compounded and food is arithmetic. It means a steady growth in food production, and a massive increase in population itself. The individual naturally is rational and wants to increase his welfare and profits; but with minimal capital, it is difficult to fulfill his limitless desires. Therefore, he is concerned with the disadvantaged, particularly the rural poor.

In Malthus' vision, an increase in the population rather than availability of food would end perfection and suffering, hunger and famine would arise worldwide. Theoretically, the relationship between food production and population development is thus clarified. The theory suggests the population grows more rapidly than food sources and if the unlimited population expansion is not regulated or controlled it produces negative inequalities in society. Thus, it is beneficial and realistic to supply critical food products at subsidized prices to reduce food shortfalls. In this case, the value of PDS is regarded as an even distribution mechanism in order to escape this insecurity. PDS is an Indian food security scheme that is closely connected to anti-poverty policy to be an aspect of the food policy to protect the vulnerable.

According to Malthus, food is an important necessity in human life, and supply where PDS becomes applicableness must eventually be limited. Fortunately, the government tries through the PDS to match food grain supply among the citizens (who are deprived of the possibility of producing food grains for their livelihood and the people who owns food grains). As the second largest population country in the world, a country's production needs the providing of resources especially for the food crops (which is one of the essential components of human existence). It would alleviate violence, malnutrition and epidemics by properly enforcing the PDS scheme. This will benefit the vulnerable.

Review of Literature:

Garry Pursell (2014) worked on "India's Food Grain Policies and the Public Distribution System: The Case of Rice, Who Wins, Who Loses and By How Much?", Indian government policies on food grains, especially rice and wheat, are highly interventionist. This includes import and export barriers, which separate domestic markets from international markets, an MSP, promoting and controlling domestic wholesale prices, broad input subsidies to farmers and producer subsidies to supply rice and wheat to very low incomes (below the poverty line GPL) to customers at very low rates through about half a million "fair price shops" Under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS).

Swamulu et al. (2015) have worked on “Performance of Public Distribution System in India”. Within the first 7 day of the month the whole monthly distribution quota of food grains has to reach the retail outlets (FPSs). In presence of PRI representatives or any other competent organism, the delivery of grains to FPS is needed in this case. The PDS is an important policy tool for mitigating hunger by supplying the population below poverty line with minimum requirements for food grains at very subsidized rates.

Atma Ram (2015) worked on “Public Distribution System in Haryana”. India is dominated by agriculture and a food prosperous economy, but the issue of poverty is rising so that every third person lives under poverty today. A scheme for the eradication of poverty and hunger in India is implemented. PDS means the distribution of consumer goods publicly so that everyone can get sufficient quantities of foodstuffs at the specified rate. In 1939, during the Second World War, the PDS scheme was introduced to address the issue of food shortages. This was abolished in 1947, but the first five-year programme introduced the PDS again in 1951. In 1956, a permanent public delivery scheme was introduced by parliament.

Objectives

1. To analyses the performance of Public Distribution System and examine the role of PDS in Bellary district.
2. To identify the problems of BPL card holders in Bellary district.

Discussion:

1. Problems in Fair Price Shops

Data gathered from primary investigation regarding problems in Fair Price Shops is given in the below Table 1.1

Table 1.1
Problems in Fair Price Shops

Areas	Lack of time	Scarcity of goods	Distance of fair price shops	Political influence
Rural	21 (39.62)	31 (37.34)	13 (30.95)	06 (27.28)
Urban	32 (60.38)	52 (62.65)	29 (69.05)	16 (72.72)
Total	53 (100.00)	83 (100.00)	42 (100.00)	22 (100.00)

Note: Figures in the parenthesis shows percentage

Source: Field Survey

The problems with equal pricing firms as seen in the above Table 1.1. In rural areas, 39.62 per cent of respondent's state that there is no time to get fair price shop items. 37.34 per cent of households report the fair price shops have a lack of commodities. The gap from fair price shops is 30.95 percent of the rural household sector. 27.28 per cent of the household's state that the fair price shops have political control. According to city households, the majority state the political influence governs 72.72 per cent of fair price stores. 62.62 per cent of the metropolitan household said that in fair price stores there was a lack of product shortage.

2. Eradication of Problems through PDS

Information about eradication of problems through PDS is given in the below Table 1.2.

Table 1.2
Details of the Eradication of Problems through PDS

Response	Food insecurity	Hunger	Malnutrition	Poverty	Total
Yes	42 (29.16)	39 (27.08)	29 (20.13)	34 (23.61)	144 (72.00)

No	08 (14.28)	00 (00.00)	30 (53.57)	18 (32.14)	56 (28.00)
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Note: Figures in the parenthesis shows percentage

Source: Field Survey

Table 1.2 shows that 29.16 per cent of the 200 samples demonstrate that the PDS system eradicates the food insecurity issue in the BPL household. 27.08 per cent of households say malnutrition is removed from the PDS scheme, 20.13 per cent and 23.61 per cent say that the PDS system eliminates the illness and suffering. PDS is a cardholding system. This means that 14.28 per cent of households are claiming that PDS cannot eradicate food safety, and 53.57 per cent of households who believe that it is PDS that cannot eradicate malnutrition.

Suggestions:

- Government should take action in providing full day power supply to the fair price shops.
- There is a need to control over the block market, this point can be suggested by the Government rural committee and clean hand committee.
- Though the state government has initiated the process of eliminating fake ration cards, there is a need to speed of this process and completely eliminate fake ration cards.
- Government should provide proper information to the poor people about public distribution system.
- Government should arrange proper godowns to the fair price shops for the storage of food grains.

Conclusion

PDS performed well in the research field and gives disadvantaged people more benefits. Eventually, the poor will benefit from the PDS, but they face several obstacles. The primary target of the PDS is the identification of people below the poverty line and a low cost of foodstuffs through equal pricing shops. It is a program for poverty reduction. This system is also effective in enhancing the socio-economic position of those in BPL. People who are starving can easily get food from this machine. National and State governments have done well in recent years to boost the condition of the vulnerable.

In providing food protection to under-privileged residents, government plays an important role. If the poor people can get healthy food, they don't care about basic food and health security. If human power has not been wasted, a person can theoretically perform well by the use of raw materials and then raise per capita results in national growth.

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