

IMPACT OF PDS ON ECONOMICALLY WEAKER SECTION

Dr. Karuna Goenka,

Assistant Professor, Women's College, Tinsukia.

e-mail: karuna.goenka@gmail.com, karuna.goenka.research@gmail.com

Rakesh Agarwal,

Assistant Professor, G.S. Lohia Girls' College, Tinsukia

e-mail: messengerakesh@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Food is essential for survival, and it is the duty of the government to ensure that all the people of the country, especially the vulnerable and economically weaker section of the society, have access to nutritional food at affordable prices. Public distribution System is a step in this direction which aims to reduce food insecurity. This study aims at finding out how far PDS has been successful in fulfilling the basic needs of the vulnerable section of the society. This is an Empirical study carried out by collecting data from 50 respondents randomly selected with the help of schedules. Data collected has been analyzed using various tools of descriptive statistics and inferences has been drawn based on such analysis.

Keywords:

PDS, Food Policy, Indian Economy, Economically weaker section.

INTRODUCTION

Food policy in India is a comprehensive policy covering all the aspects relating to producing, distributing and consuming food. It is an important policy which ensures the development of the nation and helps in eradicating poverty and crimes. There have been significant achievements of food policy such as growth in output, self sufficiency in food grains production and a continuous increase in getting food. Public Distribution System (PDS) has led to making food grain available to all at low prices. This ensures inclusive growth in the economy. PDS was started by the government of India to ensure there is stability in the prices of food grains, poor get access of food, etc. This was done with the help of Food Corporation of India (FCI) and the state governments.

RESEARCH DESIGN

- Need for the study:-

This study aims to study the significance of PDS and how it helps the economically weaker section of the society.

- **Objectives of the Study:**

- To study the impact of PDS on the economically weaker section of the society.
- To understand the challenges of PDS, and suggest remedial measures.

- **Scope of the Study:** This study has been conducted in the vicinity of Tinsukia Town. Any generalizations should be made cautiously.

- **Methodology:** This research has been done through schedules. Random Sampling Method has been used to decide upon the sample units from a population of the people belonging to economically weaker section in Tinsukia town, Assam.

- Sample Size: 50

- **Collection of Data:**

- Primary Data: The data collected for this study has been through schedules.
- Secondary Data: The secondary data has been collected through books, news papers, websites, journals

- Both these are required to make a research complete.

- **Sample Size:** The research is a sample study, with a sample size of 50 respondents.

- **Data Analysis:** The data collected has been analyzed using simple descriptive statistics whereby simple percentage method has been employed to arrive at the conclusion. Diagrammatic presentation of the data aided in the analysis.

- **Limitations of the Study:** Like mentioned above, all studies conducted have their unique set of limitations. Limitations are barriers or hurdles in conducting a fully realistic & authentic research.

Some of the limitations faced are:-

- a. Geographical extent
- b. Bias
- c. Sample size
- d. Time and cost constraint

DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 TABLE SHOWING WHETHER THE RESPONDENTS AVAIL RATION THROUGH PDS

RESPONSE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
YES	50	100
NO	00	00
TOTAL	50	100

SOURCE: SCHEDULE

4.2 TABLE SHOWING WHETHER FOOD GRAINS ARE AVAILABLE ON TIME AT FAIR PRICE SHOPS

RESPONSE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
ALWAYS	35	70
SOMETIMES	15	30
NEVER	0	00
TOTAL	50	100

SOURCE: SCHEDULE

4.3 TABLE SHOWING WHETHER THE FOOD GRAINS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE REQUIRED QUANTITY

RESPONSE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
YES	30	60
NO	20	40
TOTAL	50	100

SOURCE: SCHEDULE

4.4 TABLE SHOWING THE QUALITY OF FOOD GRAINS PROVIDED

RESPONSE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
GOOD	20	40
MODERATE	20	40
BAD	10	20
TOTAL	50	100

SOURCE: SCHEDULE

4.5 TABLE SHOWING THE CONSISTENCY IN THE QUALITY OF FOOD GRAINS PROVIDED

RESPONSE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
ALWAYS SAME	10	20
SOMETIMES SAME	10	20

NEVER SAME	30	60
TOTAL	20	100

SOURCE: SCHEDULE

4.6 TABLE SHOWING WHETHER PDS SYSTEM FULFILLS THE BASIC FOOD NEEDS

RESPONSE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
YES	10	20
NO	40	80
TOTAL	50	100

SOURCE: SCHEDULE

4.7 TABLE SHOWING WHETHER RESPONDENTS FEEL THE NEED FOR INCLUSION OF OTHER ITEMS

RESPONSE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
YES	35	70
NO	15	30
TOTAL	50	100

SOURCE: SCHEDULE

4.8 TABLE SHOWING THE BEHAVIOUR OF FAIR PRICE SHOP OWNERS

RESPONSE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
CONDUCTIVE	20	40
NEUTRAL	0	0
NON CONDUCTIVE	30	60
TOTAL	50	100

SOURCE: SCHEDULE

4.9 TABLE SHOWING THE OPINION OF THE RESPONDENTS REGARDING PDS

RESPONSE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
BENEFICIAL	50	100
NEUTRAL	0	0
NOT BENEFICIAL	0	0
TOTAL	50	100

SOURCE: SCHEDULE

4.10 TABLE SHOWING THE BENEFITS OF PDS AS PERCEIVED BY BENFICIARIES

RESPONSE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
MAKES FOOD AFFORDABLE	50	100
STABILITY OF PRICES	30	60
EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION	20	40
CONTINUOUS SUPPLY	40	80
POVERTY ALLEVIATION	45	90
ENSURES FOOD SECURITY	50	100

SOURCE: SCHEDULE

FINDINGS:

- 5.1 All the respondents availed benefits of food policy of India through PDS.
- 5.2 Most respondents reported timely availability of food grains. However, few of them reported that the availability of food grains was delayed sometimes.
- 5.3 Most reported the availability of the required quantity of food grains. However, a significant portion of the sample consisting of 40% reported that there was a shortage of food grains and hence, they didn't get the quantity they were supposed to get.
- 5.4 40% of the respondents reported the availability of good quality food grains while 60% of the respondents responded that food grain provided were of moderate or low quality.
- 5.5 60% of the respondents reported inconsistency in the quality of food grains made available to them. This has been a cause of concern.
- 5.6 80% of the respondents reported that food grains acquired through PDS was not sufficient to meet their food requirements.
- 5.7 70% of the respondents feel the need for inclusion of more variety in the items provided.
- 5.8 60% of the respondents reported non conducive behavior of the fair price shop owners.

5.9 All the respondents feel that PDS is beneficial for the Indian economy.

5.10 All the respondents reported PDS system to have made food affordable and provide food security. However, respondents have reported price fluctuations and economic instability. This brings to light corrupt practices by the fair price shop owners as well as a lacuna in the implementation of the system which poses hindrance in the system.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

As per the above findings the following recommendations can be put to effect:

6.1 Timely delivery of food-grains to fair price shops will go a long way in reducing stock-out situations at fair price shops. Accountability should be fixed for delayed delivery of food-grains, and the goods-vehicles carrying food grains should be continuously monitored and tracked so that continuous and timely supply can be assured.

6.2 The entire system should be digitalized. Digitalized ration cards can be an aid to verify that the benefits reach the target population. Fair price shops could also be digitalized so as to ensure fair transactions and timely disbursement of food grains.

6.3 Cash could be transferred under direct benefit scheme so as to enable the beneficiaries to purchase required variety of items directly from the open market.

6.4 Surprise checks and raids should be conducted on fair price shops to ensure that no unfair means are being adopted by them, and the good grains meant for the beneficiaries are delivered to them. It should also be ensured that all the fair price shops display the actual quantity available with them prominently in their shops. Also,

6.5 More fair price shops should be opened in remote areas for easy accessibility.

6.6 Use of OTPs and messages to confirm the receipt of food grains by the beneficiaries.

6.7 Update the list of beneficiaries from time to time to ensure the aid to the needy, and inclusion of the new entrants into the system.

6.8 Quality of food-grains at fair price shops must be ensured. Also, adequate steps should be taken to ensure that fair price shop operators don't engage in malpractices and replace the food grains received for distribution under PDS with inferior quality food grains purchased from open market.

CONCLUSION:

PDS system was implemented by the government of India to ensure poverty alleviation, food security, stability of price and balanced growth. This system has benefitted many but is however, misused by many. To ensure its proper and perfect implementation, various measures have been suggested.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Websites:

- (n.d.). etrieved from www.philoid.com
- (n.d.). etrieved from www.drishtias.com
- (n.d.). Retrieved from www.quora.com
- (n.d.). Retrieved from www.google.com
- (n.d.). Retrieved from www.business.com