

Beneficiaries Perception in Public Distribution System through Fair Price Shops in Coimbatore

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Abstract - Public distribution system is a poverty alleviation program and a direct intervention to ensure regular supply of essential consumer goods at cheap and subsidized prices and contributes towards the social welfare of the people. Essential commodities like rice, wheat, Sugar, kerosene are supplied to the people under the PDS at reasonable prices. The present study is an attempt to find out the current status of Beneficiaries Perception in Public Distribution Systems through Fair Price Shops in Coimbatore District. This study is completely based on the both primary and secondary data. The primary data were collected from the 100 rice card holders through a well structured questionnaire. It is clearly observed from the survey, most of the consumers reported the price of the ration commodities is very low compared with the open market. This study presented information about the PDS details and consumer satisfaction of card holders. Most of the cardholders do not purchase if they find the bad quality of commodities supplied by the shop. The shops are not opened regularly; the reason is salesman runs more than one shop and has to attend to others in different locality. Individual cardholders have to wait to purchase in waiting in queue. The consumers face many problems at time of purchase of commodities in the FPS such as overcrowding and non-availability of all commodities at the time of purchase, and delay in the supply of goods by the FPS in the study area.

I. INTRODUCTION

Tamil Nadu Government is implementing Universal Public Distribution System (UPDS) and no exclusion is made based on the income criteria. The Hon'ble Chief Minister has made the universal public distribution system 'poor friendly' by ordering rice at free of cost under public distribution system to all eligible card holders from 01.06.2011. Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation procures rice and other

essential commodities required for public distribution system from Food Corporation of India and through tenders. Distribution of commodities through fair price shops is being carried out by Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation and the Cooperative societies.

II. AGGREGATE DATA ON RATION CARDS IN TAMIL NADU

While individual details are private, the state's total number of ration cards and fair price shops are published in aggregate. According to the National Food Security Act (NFSA) dashboard data from October 2025:

- Total ration cards: 1,17,24,246.
- Total fair price shops: 34,809.

III. NFSA CARD CATEGORIES

- Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) (poorest of the poor): 18,68,141.
- Priority Household (PHH) (priority families): 98,56,105.

IV. FAIR PRICE SHOPS

The Public Distribution System is implemented through 33,222 fair price shops functioning under the various agencies are as follows:

S. No	Agency	Full Time	Part Time	Total
1.	Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation	1,178	277	1,455
2.	Cooperatives (Under R.C.S)	23,727	9,100	32,827
3.	Other Co-operatives	314	162	476

4.	Women fair price shops, including Self Help Groups	370	41	411
TOTAL		25,589	9580	35,169

Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation lifts essential commodities from Food Corporation of India and stores them in 284 operational godowns located all over the state. From the Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation operational godowns, stocks are moved by lead Cooperative Societies / self lifting societies and delivered at the doorsteps of fair price shops. Similarly, Sugar is moved by Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation from the respective Cooperative / Private Sugar Mills and distributed through its operational godowns. Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation also procures various other essential commodities for Special Public Distribution System directly from the market through tenders and also through designated Government of India agencies. Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation and Cooperatives lift kerosene from wholesale dealers of the oil companies.

The details of family cards in circulation in Tamil Nadu are as follows:

S.No	Type of Card	Commodity Entitled	No.of cards
1.	PHH	All Commodities including Sugar	76,99,940
2.	PHH-AAY	All Commodities including 35Kgs of Rice	18,64,600
3.	NPHH	All Commodities including Rice	90,08,842
4.	NPHH-S	Sugar Option Card (All Commodities except Rice)	10,01,605
5.	NPHH-NC	No Commodity	41,106
TOTAL			1,96,16,093

V. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of establishing Public Distribution System may not be satisfied until the subsidized products are distributed to the real beneficiaries. Further, the functioning of Public Distribution System is said to be success only if the number of population in Below Poverty Line diminishes. Whereas, in India contradictory results are noticed (i.e.) Quantum of below poverty line population is ever expanding,

which implies that the goods distribute through fair price shops have not reached the true beneficiaries. Unless, the PDS goods are distributed to genuine recipient, poverty may not be reduced in our country. Hence, in this study an effort has been made to ascertain the problems that exist at Public Distribution System at Coimbatore District and to suggest methods to resolve the problems.

VI. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the socio-economic status of beneficiaries
2. To analyse the performance of public distribution system in Coimbatore district

VII. METHODOLOGY

1. Data:

The present study is based on primary data. The primary data were collected from the 100 rice card holders through a well-structured interview schedule.

2. Area of Study:

The present study is confined to the beneficiaries who avail services of Public Distribution System through Fair Price Shops in Coimbatore District of Tamil Nadu.

3. Sample Design:

By adopting convenient sampling method, 100 beneficiaries of Public Distribution System have been selected.

VIII. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table No.1 - Age of the Household			
S. No	Particulars	No. Of Household	Per Cent
1.	18 - 30 Years	44	44
2.	30 - 50 Years	47	47
3.	Above 50 Years	9	9
Total		100	100
Table No.2 Education Level of the Household			
1.	School Level	65	65
2.	Diploma	4	4
3.	Under Graduate	22	22
4.	Post Graduate	6	6
5.	Doctorates	3	3
Total		100	100
Table No.3 Monthly Income of the Household			
1.	Below Rs.20,000/-	74	74
2.	Rs.20,000/- to Rs.30,000/-	13	13
3.	Rs.30,000/- to	9	9

	Rs.40,000/-		
4.	Above Rs.40,000/-	4	4
	Total	100	100
Table No.4 Types of Ration Card			
1.	All Commodities including sugar	65	65
2.	All Commodities including 35Kgs Rice	9	9
3.	All Commodities including Rice	17	17
4.	Sugar Option Card	5	5
5.	No Commodity	4	4
	Total	100	100
Table No.5 Distance of FPS distance from residence			
1.	Below 1 Km	65	65
2.	Between 1 Km - 3 Kms	30	30
3.	More than 3 Kms	5	5
	Total	100	100
Table No.6 Availability of goods in FPS			
1.	All the goods are available	65	65
2.	50% available	35	35
3.	25% available	0	0
	Total	100	100
Table No.7 Behaviour of the shopkeeper			
1.	Friendly	40	40
2.	Polite	39	39
3.	Rude	21	21
	Total	100	100
Table No.8 - Opening and Closing hours of shop			
1.	Satisfied	74	74
2.	Not Satisfied	26	26
	Total	100	100
Table No.8 - Quality of Goods			
1.	Good	44	44
2.	Moderate	39	39
3.	Poor	17	17
	Total	100	100

Source : Primary Data

IX. FINDING & SUGGESTIONS

- Majority (47 Per cent) of the beneficiaries are under the age group of 30 - 50 years.
- Majority (65 Per cent) of the beneficiaries are completed their school level.
- Majority (74 Per cent) of the beneficiaries' family monthly income is below Rs.20,000/-.
- Majority (65 Per cent) of the beneficiaries are having all commodities including sugar card.
- Majority (65 Per cent) of the beneficiaries' Fair Price Shops are located below 1 KGM from their residence.
- Majority (65 Per cent) of the beneficiaries are telling that goods are available at all the time.

- Majority (40 Per cent) of the beneficiaries are feels friendly approach from the shopkeeper.
- Majority (74 Per cent) of the beneficiaries are completely satisfied with the opening and closing time of shop.
- Majority (44 Per cent) of the beneficiaries are telling that the quality of goods is good.

X. SUGGESTION

- Quality of items released from the Supply Department for distribution should be improved.
- Smart system communication like information can be provided to consumers by SMS about rations.
- Beneficiaries are not possible to obtain goods from the PDS in all months, as PDS goods are diverted in open market. Thus, the stringent measures have to be taken against the politicians and PDS staff members, who indulge in black marketing activities in order that public may obtain goods all over the month.
- Fair price shops are to be located at a place, which are easily accessible to consumers, so that they may avail goods to a maximum extent.

XI. CONCLUSIONS

The fair price shops will be fulfilled when the real beneficiaries have optimally utilized the services offered at PDS. Whereas, the utilization of services by the beneficiaries depend on satisfaction which they derive from ration shops. The result of the study disclose that the general public will be satisfied when they could obtain goods from the PDS in all months, goods are supplied with accurate weight and adequate staff members are employed, PDS should be located at easily accessible place, distribution of variety of goods, supply of goods in time, goods supplied at PDS are fit for consumption, fair price shops are to be opened in accurate time, staff members of PDS should not insist the general public to buy unnecessary goods, PDS employees should redress the general public grievance at the earliest.

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