



RESEARCH ARTICLE

FUNCTIONING OF PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM IN COVID 19 PERIOD

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Abstract

Public Distribution system functioning is an important for ensuring food security especially for the weaker section. PDS has succeeded in securing minimum food requirement but in large size families it food requirement is insufficient. In the pandemic situation small, marginal size family is very difficult to livelihood due to loss of earning. For the welfare of the people the central Government and State government has announced several measures to deal with the food in - security situation. For protecting the requirement of food the Central and State government announced to distribute food items to all ration card holder at free of cost, in addition Rs. 1000 , Rs. 500 kits and mask are provided to imbalanced situation of covid 19 period. In this situation ration shop functioning well. Hence this paper mainly focuses on functioning of ration shop in the pandemic situation.

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Introduction:-

Food, cloth and shelter are an essential for every human being. One of the major problems of basic need is food security to all type of people. Due to increase population rate is the major challenging in India. High degree of income inequality, widespread of poverty, unemployment and malnutrition are the common problem in India. The government of India under Ministry of Consumer Affairs, food and public Distribution to distributed food items to India's poor. Essential commodities like rice wheat kerosene oil, cereal sugar etc are supplied through PDS at affordable price. People are directly purchased from ration shop and full fill the basic need at minimum level. The COVID-19 pandemic is the turning point in modern history it outbreak of COVID 19 has brought about drastic changes in our lives, and by every measure we are going through a great crisis and many experts argue that the world we are entering will be fundamentally different from the one we knew before.

Due to lock down of covid 19 small, medium and large enterprises are not functioning property. After some relaxation announced by the government of India these enterprises are functioning with minimum number of employees other are ideal no earning of income. In this situation the central government and state government initiated to distributed food items to ration card holders at free of cost.

Review of Literature:-

Pallavi Pathak et.al.(2020) in their study entitled on "Effect of COVID-19 on public distribution system in India" The article express as the economic crisis in covid 19 period the author explain the India's food safety and measures for COVID 19 and its food security and governance challenges further Tamil nadu government issued order to full fill the food insecurity. The study concluded that, Food security exists when all people, at all time, have physical

and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

Thomas & Shanmugam (2018) in their study entitled on “An analysis of the consumer satisfaction with the public distribution system in kottayam district”, with the objectives of to study the socioeconomic factors that influence PDS card holders to purchase from the PDS shops, to understand the factors related to customer's satisfaction from the Public Distribution System. The researcher collected primary data from the district by using purposive random sampling technique. They concentrated of BPL SC, BPL ST, and APL categories. To analyze the data the researcher using simple percentages and Liker scale technique. The utilization of services given by the PDS scheme depends upon the satisfaction level of the customers in relation to the quality of services from ration shops. From the above analysis, it could be comprehended that the prevailing PDS system protects the needs and satisfaction level of the customers to some extent, but it has to be implemented and scrutinized at its full swing to realize its basic purposes effusively.

Rukshana Begum & Archana (2018) the study has been attempt to “A Study on customer perceptions towards Technological Developments in Public Distribution Services [smart card] with Reference to Coimbatore”. The objective of the study is to study the socio demographic profile of the respondents, to find the factors influencing the customers' preference towards smart card, to study about the customer satisfaction towards Smart card in public distribution. The primary data were collected from Coimbatore city by adopted convenient random sampling method. The collected data were presented in statistical analysis like simple percentage; Correlation and Chi-Square test were used. The study concluded that the smart card system is more secure and transparent than the ration card system. Using this smart card system we can have Better management of the ration distribution system. The government can have indirect check on the availability of the ration to the beneficiary. It is transparent and has control over prices of some commodities in the open market. Dealer will not be able to keep fake ration cards with them. System helps to modernize traditional rationing and combat corruption up to a great extent.

Bhagyasree PG (2017) in her study entitled on “A Study on the Performance of Public Distribution System With Reference to Colachel Municipality” with the objective of to study the socio-economic conditions of rural population brought under PDS, to evaluate the issues related to access, utilization and perception of PDS among APL and BPL beneficiaries and to study the benefits derived out of PDS. The present study on Public Distribution System has been carried out in Colachel -Municipality of Kalkulam Taluk in Kanyakumari district. The primary data is collected from the sample surveys of the family card holders by using questionnaires, the primary data collected from 64 ration card holders in the study area. Rationing was introduced in India as a food control during the Second World War but has come to stay as a permanent feature of our economy as clearly stated in this study. Today the PDS is intended not only to ensure adequate and timely availability of essential commodities to people in the rural and urban areas, particularly the weaker section. The current study aims to analyze the socio economic background of rural population brought under study area, their perception and utilization level towards PDS commodities.

Statement of problem:

Pandemic of COVID 19 our prime ministry and chief ministry has announced a nationwide lock down for safeguard the people since 25th march 2020 is the initially lock down for 21 days then extended to another 19 days up to 3 may 2020 and again extended for 14 days until 17 may 2020, further till 31 may 2020 with some relaxation to slow down. The Tamil nadu government has announced lock down in 6 stages from March 2020 to August 2020. In this period people feel food insecurity and loss of earning income, especially small and marginal groups suffer daily wages it is difficult to maintain their live hood. Public Distribution System is the major key role in this pandemic situation. For the welfare of the people the central Government and State government has announced several measures to deal with the food insecurity situation. Food items such as rice, tur dal, oil, sugar and wheat are provided to ration card holder at free of cost in addition with Rs. 1000 was given to every ration card holders for one month by adopted token system for avoid overcrowding at ration shop. In the pandemic situation ration shop is well functioning to full fill the government decision. At this juncture the research undertakes the study of functioning of ration shop in COVID 19 pandemic situation.

Objective of the study:-

To identify the sources of awareness on government announcement

To study the level of satisfaction on quantity of rice in lock down period

To analyze the level of satisfaction on quality of food items.

Methodology:-

The validity of any research depends upon accurate and adequate data. Hence due care was taken for collecting the required data for the study

Sampling Design:

The present study used both primary as well as secondary data. For collecting primary data field survey technique was undertaken in the study area. Field survey technique was conducted in person and the data were collected as per the requirement. The first hand information collected from 75 respondents residing in pallipalayam town and secondary data were collected from various journals and magazines and ration shop.

Frame work of analysis:

For the purpose of analysis, master table was prepared with the information collected through interview schedule. The collected data were presented in the simple table and these tables systematically analyzed with the help of simple percentage, Chi-Square, and scaling technique.

Table No.1:- Demographic factors.

Age group	No. Of Respondents	percentage
20-35	27	36
35-50	39	52
50-65	09	12
Sex		
Male	62	83
Female	13	17
Family size		
1-3	26	35
3-5	38	51
5-7	11	14
Educational qualification		
Illiterate	17	23
School level	30	40
College level	28	37
Status of the respondents		
Government employees	16	21
Private employees	51	68
Business men	02	3
Agriculturalists	03	4
housewife	03	4
Annual Income(Rs)		
100000-300000	47	63
300000-500000	24	32
500000-800000	04	5

Source: Primary data

From the above table 52 percent of the respondents come under 35-50 years of age group, 36 percent of the respondents come under 20-35 years and 12 percent of the respondents age group between 50-65 years. 87 per cent of the respondents were male and 17 per cent of the respondents were female. 51 per cent of the respondents were 3-5 members in a family 35 per cent of the respondents were between 1-3 members in a family and 14 per cent of the respondents were 5-7 members in a family. 40 per cent of the respondents were educated at school level, 37 per cent of the respondents were educated at college level and 23 per cent of the respondents were illiterate. 68 per cent of the respondents were private employees, 21 per cent of the respondents were government employees, 3 per cent of the respondents were doing business and 4 per cent of the respondents were agriculturalist and house wife. 63 percent of the respondents were earned annual income between Rs.100000-300000, 32 per cent of the respondents were earned Rs. 300000-500000 p.a. and 5 per cent of the respondents were earned annual income between Rs. 500000-800000.

Table No 2:- Display of proposed rice allotment.

Display of New entitlement	No. of respondents	percentage
Displayed	75	100

Source: Primary data.

From the above table 100 percent of the respondents were states that display of new entitlement rice allotment notices are pasted in front of ration shop.

Table No.3:- Source of Information.

Source of information	No. of Respondents	Percentage
T.V News	38	51
newspaper	27	36
neighbor	07	9
Notice Display in ration shop	03	4
Total	75	100

Sources: Primary data

From the above table 51 per cent of the respondents got awareness about the government announcement of distribution of rice during lock down period through T.V news, 36 per cent of the respondents got information through newspaper, 9 percent of the respondents got information from neighbor and 4 percent of the respondents got information through notice pasted at ration shop

Table No. 4:- Delivery of token, allotted time, distribution time and social distance.

Delivery of token	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Delivery at Home	71	95
From ration shop	04	05
Time allotted		
Satisfied	68	91
Not satisfied	07	09
Timely distributed		
Yes	75	100
No	00	00
Social distance		
Maintained	75	100
Not maintained	00	00

Source: primary data

95 per cent of the respondents state that token was distributed at home and meager 5 percent of the respondents received token from ration shop. 91 per cent of the respondents feel that the allotted time by ration shop for distributed food items is satisfied, whereas, 9 per cent of the respondents feel that there is no satisfied for allotted time by ration shop for distributed food items. 100 percent of the respondents were state that the food items are distributed as time mentioned on token and 100 per cent of the respondents are satisfied the maintenance of social distance followed the COVID guidelines at the time of distribution of food items.

Table No.5:- Quantity of items purchase (AT LOCK DOWN PERIOD).

Rice quantity(kgs)(free of cost at lock down period)	No.of Respondents	Percentage
12-32	26	35
32-52	38	51
52-72	11	14
Wheat		
1 kG	13	17
2kgs	62	83
Tur dal		

1kg	75	100
Sugar		
½ kg – 1½ kgs	26	35
1½ kgs-2½ kgs	38	51
2½ kgs-3½kgs	11	14
Oil		
One kg	75	100

Source: Primary data.

Table No. 5 indicated that 51 per cent of the respondents received rice between 32-52kgs, 35 per cent of the respondents received rice between 12-32 kgs. 14 per cent of the respondents received rice between 52-72 kgs. 83 percent of the respondents received wheat at 2kgs, 17 per cent of the respondents received wheat at 1 kg. Cent per cent of the respondents received tur dal. 51 per cent of the respondents received sugar between 1½ kgs -2½ kgs, 35 per cent of the respondents received sugar between 1½kg -1½ kgs and 14 percent of the respondents received sugar between 2½kgs – 3½kgs. Cent per cent of the respondents received oil of 1 kg.

Table No. 6:- Level of satisfaction on quantity of rice (Lock down period).

LOS/Quantity	12-32Kgs	32-52Kgs	52-72Kgs
Highly Satisfied	29	28	13
Satisfied	16	15	15
Neutral	6	4	5
Dissatisfied	12	14	22
Highly dissatisfied	12	14	20
Total	75	75	75

Source: Primary data.

The above table shows that the level of satisfaction on quantity of rice, 29 respondents states that highly satisfied under 22-32kgs of rice, 16 respondents were satisfied, 6 respondents does not give any opinion regarding quantity of rice, 12 respondents were dissatisfied and highly dissatisfied respectively. 28 respondents state that highly satisfied under 32-42 kgs of rice, 15 respondents were satisfied, 04 respondents were neutral, 14 respondents were dissatisfied and highly dissatisfied respectively. 22 respondents states that dissatisfied under 52-72 kgs of rice, 20 respondents were highly dissatisfied, 15 respondents were satisfied, 13 respondents were highly satisfied and 5 respondents does not give any opinion under 52-72 kgs of rice.

Table No.7:- Level of satisfaction on quality of food items.

Food items	Highly satisfied	satisfied	neutral	dissatisfied	Highly dissatisfied	Total score	Rank
Rice	50*5	15*4	7*3	02*2	01*1	336	I
Tur dal	19*5	23*4	08*3	12*2	13*1	248	III
Wheat	04*5	06*4	03*3	29*2	33*1	144	V
Sugar	29*5	33*4	06*3	04*2	03*1	306	II
Oil	09*5	10*4	16*3	19*2	21*1	192	IV

Source: Primary data.

The above table identify that the level of satisfaction on quality of food items, quality of rice was ranked first with score value of 336. Sugar was ranked second with score value of 306. Tur dal was in third position with score value of 248. oil was fourth position with score value of 192 and wheat was ranked fifth position with score value of 144.

Testing of hypthesis:

Table No. 8:- Size of family and quantity (12-32Kgs) of rice.

factor	Chi- square value	Table Value	d.f	Remark
Family size	32.65	16.422	8	Significant @1%

It is identified from the above table that the calculated chi-square value is greater than the table value and the result is significant at 1% level. Hence, the hypothesis H_0 is rejected and the alternative hypothesis H_1 is accepted. From the analysis, it is concluded that there is a close association between the family size and 12-32 Kgs of rice provided.

Table No.9:- Size of family and quantity (32-52Kgs) of rice.

factor	Chi- square value	Table Value	d.f	Remark
Family size	37.25	16.422	8	Significant @1%

It is identified from the above table that the calculated chi-square value is greater than the table value and the result is significant at 1% level. Hence, the hypothesis H_0 is rejected and the alternative hypothesis H_1 is accepted. From the analysis, it is concluded that there is a close association between the family size and 32-52 Kgs of rice provided.

Table No.10:- Size of family and quantity (52-72kgs) of rice.

factor	Chi- square value	Table Value	d.f	Remark
Family size	15.86	16.422	8	Significant @1%

It is identified from the above table that the calculated chi-square value is lesser than the table value and the result is significant at 1% level. Hence, the hypothesis H_0 is accepted and the alternative hypothesis H_1 is rejected. From the analysis, it is concluded that there is no close association between the family size and 52-72 Kgs of rice provided.

Findings of the study:

Fifty two percent of the respondents were 35-50 age of age group.

Majority 83 percent of the respondents were male.

Fifty one percent of the respondents family size between 1-3members.

According to education qualification 40per cent of the respondents were educated at school level.

Sixty three percent of the respondents were earning their income between Rs.100000-300000 p.a.

100 percent of the respondents states that display of new entitlement rice allotment notice is pasted in front of ration shop.

Awareness about free distribution of food items, 51 per cent of the respondents got awareness through T.V news.

For distribution of token, 95 percent of the respondents states that token was distributed at home.

91 per cent of the respondents feel that the allotted time by ration shop for distributed food items is satisfied.

100 percent of the respondents state that the food items are distributed as time allotted in token

100 percent of the respondents are satisfied the maintenance of social distance at ration shop.

51 percent of the respondents received quantity of rice between 32-52kgs

83 percent of the respondents received wheat at 2kgs only

Cent percentage of the respondents received tur dal.

51 percent of the respondents received sugar between 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ kgs -2 $\frac{1}{2}$ kgs.

Cent percentage of the respondents received oil of 1 kg.

29 respondents state that highly satisfied under 22-32kgs of rice provided.

28 respondents state that highly satisfied under 32-42 kgs of rice provided

22 respondents state that dissatisfied under 52-72 kgs of rice provided

Identify the level of satisfaction of quality of food items rice was ranked first with score value of 336.

From the analysis of chi-square test, it is concluded that there is a close association between the family size and 12-32 Kgs of rice provided.

From the analysis of chi-square test, it is concluded that there is a close association between the family size and 32-52 Kgs of rice provided.

From the analysis of chi-square test, it is concluded that there is no close association between the family size and 52-72 Kgs of rice provided.

Recommendation of the Respondents:-

To handle this pandemic situation the government of India atleast one year help to poor to overcome the economic crisis.

Respondents recommended to the government to provide the monetary benefits in this period.

Respondents state that Home usage cylinder distributed through ration shop.

Respondents recommended to the government to Sanction ponni rice through ration shop.

Respondents recommended that increase of wheat quantity to card holders.

Conclusion:-

The public distribution system was introduced to providing food security to the people with provide good quality and essential commodities to the people at affordable price rate in covid 19 pandemic situation PDS functioning in effective way to food insecurity. In this study area, respondents were fully satisfied with the functioning of ration shop. Quality and quality are satisfied, timely distribution of food items also very satisfied.

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