



Economics of Public Food Delivery System in Urban India

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ABSTRACT

Increasing urbanisation in India gives rise to different socio-economic problems of which urban food insecurity is one important. As urban population largely depends on the market, therefore urban poor are found to be more vulnerable to price shocks and food & nutrition insecurity. In this situation Public Food Delivery System (PFDS) has been an extremely important instrument of food security in urban area. Present study was based on secondary data collected from different published sources. It was found from the study that the accessibility of beneficiaries of different schemes of PFDS in urban India varies from states to states. It is recommended that an integrated action plan for motivating beneficiaries along with the principle of exclusion for repeated non respondent etc may be implemented for improving the efficiency of PFDS in urban area.

KEYWORDS

Urbanisation, Household, Dependency, Beneficiaries, Consumption

Introduction

Urbanization is becoming the most dominate demographic feature in India since last few decades. According to Census 2011 for the first time since 1921, urban India added more numbers to its population in a decade than rural India did. As per the Census of 2011, India urban population is 37.7 crores which is 31.61% of its total population against 28.6 crores in 2001 which was only 27.8% and the growth rate of population is found to be 31.5% in 2001 which increased to 31.8% in 2011. Number of the town, statutory town and census town has increased from 5161,3799,1362 in 2001 to 7935,4049,3895 respectively in 2011.

Rapid urbanization no doubt causes growth of the urban economy but creates problems like urban inequality, urban poverty, urban livelihoods, unemployment and growth of urban slums etc. All these have a bearing on urban food security and nutrition security. As urbanization is taking place rapidly in India it is certainly causing food insecurity and allied problems. FAO 2004 strongly advocates Public Food Delivery System (PFDS) in addressing food insecurities in many countries. In fact PFDS is claimed to be more important in urban context vis-à-vis the rural, where some amount of own or subsistence cultivation and consumption may be expected of owner-cultivator households and there is also sometimes payment in kind for labor. In other hand, urban population largely depends on the market, making the urban poor more vulnerable to price shocks and food & nutrition insecurity. In this situation PFDS has been an extremely important instrument of food security in urban area. In India different PFDS is in operation to provide food security to its citizen. Still India is facing the problem of food insecurity & the problem is found to be more acute in urban area, so providing food security in urban area is becoming a challenge for PFDS. In this backdrop it became imperative to take a look at the functioning of PFDS in urbanization process of India.

Objective:

- To study the performance of different PFDS in urban India
- To study the dependency of households on PFDS in the context of urbanization in India.
- To recommend policy for improvement in the performance of PFDS in the context of urbanization in India.

Data:

In the present study indirect data collected from NSSO 2007

and other relevant indirect sources have been used.

Result and Discussion

In India different types of PFDS are in operation to provide food security to both rural and urban people. The present paper is a modest attempt to study the performance of three important PFDS i.e. Public Distribution System (PDS), Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) and Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) in urban area.

Public Distribution System

The origin of Public Distribution System (PDS) in India could be traced with effect from the Second World War, when the colonial Govt. undertook public distribution of grains in 1939 among urban population of Bombay. Till mid 1960s, PDS was confined to urban area only. In post green revaluation period the move came towards the public distribution of food grains to urban working people. However, in 1980s it was extended towards non-urban and non-food deficit areas. A major policy shift in PDS took place in 1997 in form of Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS).

With an objective to know the percentage of urban household reporting consumption of rice and wheat from PDS across different consumption expenditure class, data from NSS is collected and presented in Table-01 and Table -02 respectively.

It is revealed from the Table 1 that at all India level 25.67% urban household in bottom 30% of Monthly Per capita Expenditure Classes (MPCE), 40% of urban household in middle 40% of the MPCE classes and 4.17% of top 40% of MPCE classes consume rice from PDS. In aggregate only 13.1% of urban households are accessing PDS for consumption of rice.

Among the state in bottom 30% of the MPCE classes, consumption of rice from PDS in urban area is highest in Tamil Nadu (77.74%) followed by Andhra Pradesh (57.27%) Kerala (53.38%), Karnataka (45.95%). But utilization of rice from PDS is poor in states like Haryana (0.10%), Rajasthan (0.37%), Bihar (5.56%), Uttar Pradesh (4.68%). Rice consumption from PDS by urban households of middle 40% of MPCE classes is highest in Tamil Nadu (57.30%) followed by Uttar Pradesh (32.82%) and Kerala (28.18%). On the other hand in state like Punjab and Haryana consumption of rice from PDS is insignificant, it may be due to regional food habits.

Table—01**Percentage of Urban Households Reporting Consumption of Rice from PDS, 2004-05**

States	Percentage of urban household reporting consumption of rice from PDS across different consumption expenditure classes			
	Bottom 30% of the MPCE Classes	Middle 40% of the MPCE Classes	Top 30% of the MPCE Classes	All Classes
Andhra Pradesh	57.27	32.82	6.24	31.1
Assam	11.39	0.32	0.00	2.3
Bihar	5.56	1.67	0.00	2.13
Gujarat	25.02	8.29	0.58	7.2
Haryana	0.1	0.00	0.00	0.00
Karnataka	45.95	23.32	3.5	21
Kerala	53.38	28.18	9.36	23.3
Madhya Pradesh	21.526	6.42	1.27	10.63
Maharashtra	21.39	4.42	0.56	6.00
Odisha	12.27	1.08	0.51	5.8
Punjab	0.00	0.2	0.03	0.1
Rajasthan	0.37	0.04	0.09	0.2
Tamil Nadu	77.74	57.3	20.9	47.7
Uttar Pradesh	4.68	1.5	0.41	2.04
West Bengal	13.96	3.82	2.37	5.4
India	25.67	14.15	4.17	13.1

Source : NSSO 2007C

Table-02 represents the percentage of urban household reporting consumption of wheat from PDS. It is found from the table that percentage of urban household depending upon PDS for wheat in bottom 30%, middle 40% and top 30% of MPCE classes is 11.50%, 5.84% and 2.07% respectively. In aggregate only 5.8% of urban household access PDS for wheat.

Among the states, percentage of urban household reporting consumption of wheat from PDS in bottom 30% of the MPCE classes is highest in Karnataka (34.70%) followed by Gujarat (23.99%), Maharashtra (21.60%) and Kerala (17.49%). States having poor access to PDS in urban area for wheat in this category are Assam (0.00%) followed by Odisha (0.16%), Andhra Pradesh (0.26%). In middle 40% of the MPCE classes, percentage of urban household accessing PDS for wheat is found to the highest in Tamil Nadu (15%) followed by Karnataka (14.96%), Kerala (14.40%), Gujarat (7.39%).

Table—02**Percentage of Urban Households Reporting Consumption of Wheat from PDS, 2004-05**

States	Percentage of urban household reporting consumption of wheat from PDS across different consumption expenditure classes			
	Bottom 30% of the MPCE Classes	Middle 40% of the MPCE Classes	Top 30% of the MPCE Classes	All Classes
Andhra Pradesh	0.26	0.64	1.11	0.7
Assam	0.00	0.64	0.03	0.3
Bihar	3.51	1.8	0.38	1.84
Gujarat	23.99	7.39	0.92	6.8
Haryana	17.01	4.68	1.23	5.2
Karnataka	34.7	14.96	1.76	14.6
Kerala	17.49	14.4	8.66	12.1
Madhya Pradesh	16.58	4.42	1.54	8.19
Maharashtra	21.6	6.17	1.17	6.9

Odisha	0.16	0.71	2.72	1.00
Punjab	0.51	0.86	0.33	0.6
Rajasthan	2.96	2.31	0.34	1.9
Tamil Nadu	10.31	15	6.75	10.7
Uttar Pradesh	4.02	1.84	1.03	2.32
West Bengal	9.04	2.8	1.17	3.5
India	11.5	5.84	2.07	5.8

Source : NSSO 2007C

A comparison of Table -1 and Table -2 reveals that dependency of urban household for wheat is less than rice except Haryana. At all India level 25.67% of bottom 30% of MPCE classes reported depending on PDS for rice in comparison to 11.50% for wheat.

Thus, it is found that a good number of urban household in bottom 30% and middle 40% of MPCE classes a consuming rice and wheat from PDS but relatively big percentage of household in different state are not utilizing the benefit of PDS. Between rice and wheat it is found that more number of urban households depend on PDS for rice in comparison to wheat.

Mid-Day Meal Scheme:

Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) was started by the Govt. of India in August 1995 under the National Program of Nutritional Support to Primary Education with the aim of universalisation of primary education by raising the nutritional level of children and inculcating appropriate hygiene and sanitation practices. The scheme seeks to achieve its objective by improving the nutritional status of children in class-I to class-VIII

In MDMS a child at primary stage is provided which a mid-day meal of 450 calories & 12 grams of protein and a children at upper primary stage, the nutritional value has been fixed at 700 calories. In December 2009, it was decided that the quantity of pulses to be served is 30 grams, vegetables 75 grams and quantity of oil and fat 7.5 gram. (Ministry of Finance, 2010). In 2009-10, 8.41 cores children at primary stage (class - I to class- V) and 3.36 cores at upper primary stage (class- VI to class -VIII) were under the umbrella of MDMS.

With an objective to find out the important of MDMS for urban household across different consumer expenditure classes, percentage of urban household with at least one member benefiting from MDMS is presented below in the Table -03.

It is revealed from the table that at all India level in urban area, 19.52% household of bottom 30% of MPCE classes, 7.8% household of Middle 40% of MPCE classes, 1.07% household of top 30% of the MPCE classes depends on MDMS and in all class it is found only 8%. Responses of urban household of different MPCE classes for MDMS is found to be highest in Tamil Nadu i.e. 15.6% (38.6% of bottom 30% of MPCE classes, 16.68% of Middle 40% of MPCE classes and 1.33% of top 30 % of MPCE classes) followed by Kerala i.e. 12.5% (30.24%, 14.74% and 4.92% of respective MPCE classes) and Madhya Pradesh i.e. 11.4% (21.73%, 6.07% and 0.24% respectively). On the other hand important of MDMS in the consumer expenditure of different MPCE classes is poor in the states like, Punjab (0.3%), Assam (2.0%), Bihar (2.2%). In Punjab only 2.47% of bottom 30% of MPCE classes, 0.09% of middle 40% of the MPCE classes and 0% of top 30% of the MPCE classes are found benefited from MDMS. Corresponding figure for Assam is 5.6%, 2.09% and 0.19% respectively and in Bihar it is found to be 5.92%, 2.08% and 0.00% respectively. In state like Odisha only 9% urban household get benefits from MDMS out of which 16.55% belongs to bottom 30% of MPCE classes, 3.96% are of middle 40% of the MPCE classes and 2.24% is in top 30% of MPCE classes. Thus, it is found at accessibility of urban household to MDMS is not satisfactory.

Table – 03
Importance of MDMS for Urban Households Across Different Consumer Expenditure Classes, 2004-05

States	Percentage of urban households with at least one member benefiting from MDMS			
	Bottom 30% of the MPCE Classes	Middle 40% of the MPCE Classes	Top 30% of the MPCE Classes	All Classes
Andhra Pradesh	22.00	6.32	0.00	8.6
Assam	5.6	2.09	0.19	2.0
Bihar	5.92	2.08	0.00	2.2
Gujarat	30.94	9.89	0.71	8.7
Haryana	10.42	2.61	0.13	2.8
Karnataka	25.61	13.99	0.06	11.3
Kerala	30.24	14.47	0.92	12.5
Madhya Pradesh	21.73	6.07	0.24	11.4
Maharashtra	24.66	9.83	1.99	9.3
Odisha	16.55	3.96	2.24	9.00
Punjab	2.47	0.09	0.00	0.30
Rajasthan	7.10	3.82	0.61	3.8
Tamil Nadu	38.6	16.68	1.33	15.6
Uttar Pradesh	12.31	1.50	0.08	3.10
West Bengal	24.7	8.15	1.94	9.3
India	19.52	7.8	1.07	8.00

Source: NSSO 2007C

Integrated Child Development Services

Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme was launched in 1975 with the aim for holistic development of children up to six years of age as well as adolescent girls and pregnant and lactating mothers. A network of one million Anganawadi centers is in operation as on 31st March 2009 in offering ICDS (Ministry of Women and Child Development- 2009). It covers 37.5 million children in six months to three years categories and 34.7 million in the 3-6 years category under the supplementary nutrition program. 15 million pregnant women and lactating mothers benefited from supplementary nutrition from the center.

The 61st round of NSS provides information on the reach and access to ICDS. Urban scenario regarding the reach and access of urban household to ICDS is presented below in Table - 04.

Percentage of urban household with at least one member benefiting from ICDS in term of MPC classes is presented in the Table - 06. It is found that bottom three deciles (3.2%) of MPCE classes are utilizing ICDS in better way in comparison to middle 40% of MPCE classes (1.9%) and top 30% of MPCE classes (0.7%). With in the states it is found that Gujarat (10.8%) is having the best performance in utilizing ICDS followed by Kerala (9.9%), Maharashtra (9.9%), Odisha (6.9%) in bottom 30% of MPCE classes. In this category Rajasthan (0.0%) is having poor performance followed by Punjab (0.1%), Bihar (0.2%), Assam (0.4%). In middle 40% of the MPCE classes performance in accessing MPCE in urban area is highest in Kerala (6.8%) followed by Gujarat (4.5%), Haryana (3.7%). Performance of states like Bihar (0.0%), Uttar Pradesh (0.0%), Punjab (0.1%), Rajasthan (0.2%) in accessing ICDS in urban area is found very poor. So far as the reach of top 30% of the MPCE classes in utilizing ICDS is concerned Odisha (3.5%) top the list followed by Kerala (2.7%), Gujarat (2.4%), Tamil Nadu (1.8%). Among all classes it is founded utilization of ICDS is highest in Odisha (4.9%) followed by Gujarat (4.4%), Maharashtra (3.2%) and Tamil Nadu (3.00%).

Table-4
Importance of ICDS for Urban Households Across Different Consumer Expenditure Classes.2004-05

States	Percentage of urban households with at least one member benefiting from ICDS			
	Bottom 30% of the MPCE Classes	Middle 40% of the MPCE Classes	Top 30% of the MPCE Classes	All Classes
Andhra Pradesh	2.2	0.8	0.00	1.0
Assam	0.4	1.1	0.00	0.5
Bihar	0.2	0.00	0.00	0.00
Gujarat	10.8	4.5	2.4	4.4
Haryana	5.00	3.7	1.6	3.00
Karnataka	2.5	1.5	0	1.1
Kerala	9.9	6.8	2.7	5.3
Madhya Pradesh	3.1	2.4	0.3	1.32
Maharashtra	9.9	3.1	0.4	3.2
Odisha	6.9	3.2	3.5	4.9
Punjab	0.1	0.1	0.00	0.1
Rajasthan	0.00	0.2	0.3	0.2
Tamil Nadu	4.6	3.4	1.8	3.00
Uttar Pradesh	0.5	0.00	0.00	0.09
West Bengal	2.7	1.2	0.4	1.2
India	3.2	1.9	0.7	1.8

Thus, it is found that utilization of ICDS in urban areas of different state is not encouraging by considering household across different social groups and different consumer expenditure classes.

Conclusion

It is concluded from the above analysis that the attempt made by Govt. through Public Food Delivery System (PFDS) by using the instruments like PDS, MDMS and ICDS to provides food security to urban population of India has been changing its shape & modus operandi as per the need of time, intensity of the problem and also specific steps have been taken to curb the problem of food insecurity. But in many states the benefit of program is far away from the reach of its target group. In PDS, urban beneficiary household of rice in Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Assam and in case of wheat beneficiary household of Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Odisha, Bihar are lagging behind in getting benefit. So far as MDMS is concerned urban household of Assam, Bihar, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and in ICDS urban beneficiary household of states like Assam, Bihar, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Haryana are not taking the benefit from respective programs.

Policy Recommendation

- Steps may be taken to attract the beneficiary household of urban area towards PFDS by the help of local bodies, NGOs, elected members etc.
- As less number of urban household in top deciles of MPCE classes are availing the benefits, steps may be taken either to exclude the non responding urban households from the service area or measures may be taken to increase their participation in the program.
- Specialized work force for each program/scheme considering the nature of the target group and types of service, may go a long way in making PFDS successful
- Awareness among beneficiary may be created to fill the communication gap.

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