



CORRUPTION IN PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

V.
CHANDRASEKARAN

ASST. PROF. OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, POST GRADUATE DEPT. OF PUBLIC ADMN., ARIGNAR ANNA GOVT. ARTS & SCIENCE COLLEGE, KARAİKAL-609 605.

ABSTRACT

This article focuses towards the corruption in public distribution system. The chain of corruption in the public distribution system begins at the sourcing stage itself. Some of the products that are sourced by the government for public distribution find its way into the open market. Then, there are issues related to obtaining a ration card and the quality of service at the ration shops. It creates a high impact to the country's education, occupation, living style and humanity. This study has been conducted through Self Help Groups in Karaikal District, Union Territory of Puducherry. The Researcher has undergone this study by adopting research techniques. This article dealt about the way of corruption in PDS and how to control the corruption and to improve the quality of the material.

KEYWORDS

PDS, Corruption,

INTRODUCTION:

Public Distribution System in India is a Food Security system to our people. It is established by the Government of India under Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and State Governments in India, it distributes subsidised food and non-food items to the people living in below poverty. Major commodities distributed such as rice, wheat, sugar and kerosene, through a Public Distribution Shops also known as Ration Fair Price Shops established in several States across the Country. However, the food grains supplied by the ration shops are not enough to meet the consumption needs of the poor or are of inferior quality. The average level of consumption of PDS grains in India is only one kg per person. In Urban areas, the PDS failed to serve the poorer sections of the population effectively.

The targeted PDS is costly and gives rise to much corruption in the process of extricating the poor from those who are less needy. Today, when compare to China, India has the largest stock of grains in the world and government spends Rs.750billion per year, it is almost 1% of GDP, yet 21% remain undernourished. In our country, as of date we have 5million fair price shops are operating to distribute the subsidised food.

Our Central and State Governments shared the responsibility of regulating the PDS in our country. While the Central government is responsible for procurement, storage, transportation and bulk allocation of food grains, State governments hold the responsibility for distributing the same to the consumers through the established network of Ration shops. The State government is also responsible for operational responsibilities including allocation and identification of families in below poverty line, issue of ration cards, supervision and monitoring the functioning of ration shops. A BPL Card holder should be given 35kg of rice or wheat and the card holder above BPL should be given 15kg of food grain as per the norms of PDS. However, there are concerns about the efficiency of the distribution process.

CORRUPTION IN PDS:

Several schemes have increased the number of people aided by public distribution system, but the number is still extremely low. Poor supervision in fair price shop and lack of accountability by the citizen has spurred a number of intermediaries who consume a good proportion of the stock meant for the poor. There is also no clarity as to which families should be included in the BPL list and which excluded. The stock assigned to a single family cannot be bought in instalments. This is a decisive barrier to the efficient functioning and overall success of PDS in India.

Many BPL families are not able to acquire ration cards either

because they are seasonal migrant workers or because they live in unauthorised colonies. A lot of families also mortgage their ration cards for money. Lack of clarity in the planning and structuring of social safety and security programs in India has resulted in the creation of numerous cards for the poor and limited information about the overall use of cards for the poor and limited information about the overall use of cards has discouraged BPL families from registering for new cards and also increased illegal creation of new cards by such families to ensure maximum benefit for the family members.

NEED OF PDS:

Poverty and associated hunger is a curse and every civilized society endeavors to alleviate extreme manifestations of poverty in their own way. Every country tries to do it-be it an economic giant and torch-bearer of the free markets like USA or a small happy go lucky Jamaica.

In India, a country of around 900 million people, of which around one third lived in poverty as per 1986-87 estimates, any programme seeking to achieve such a goal will require vast sums of subsidy and it, therefore, becomes imperative that it is utilized in the most cost effective manner so that it helps poor households to attain adequate levels of food security in the true sense. An important question that arises is whether, in the present scenario, when availability of subsidy is greatly constrained by overall fiscal deficit, can we continue to fritter away whatever amount of food subsidy we can mobilize? Since we simply cannot do this, we just cannot continue with a PDS which consumes none-too-small Rs 30000 million subsidies annually, but allows it to be available to anybody who wishes to draw on it, irrespective of whether he is poor or rich.

The present PDS can hardly be described as a safety net. Each and every Indian and also some ghost card holders, presently constitute the unorganized crowd that jostles under the ungainly net, nobody knowing who is able to receive the shelter under it or who, requiring such shelter badly, is being kept out or pushed out. As explained earlier, in this vast country, with millions of poor, we cannot dispense with the net altogether; there is therefore, no option but to mend the net, erect it afresh with only the needy households under it.

PITFALLS OF CORRUPTION IN PDS:

The general study reveals about several shortcomings in the form of corrupt the system of PDS. The defects are:

- Consumers may receive inferior quality of food grains in ration shop; it may be increased day by day.
- Fraudulent dealers replace good supplies received from the

- Food Corporation of India with inferior stock and sell FCI stock in the black market.
- Fair price shop owners act unlawfully to create large number of bogus cards to sell food grains in the open market.
- Many ration shop dealers resort to malpractices, illegal diversions of commodities, holding and black marketing due to the minimum salary received by them.
- Numerous malpractices make safe and nutritious food inaccessible and unaffordable to many poor thus resulting in their food insecurity.
- Identification of households to be denoted status and distribution to granted PDS services has been highly irregular and diverse in various States.
- Regional allocation and coverage of fair price shops are unsatisfactory and the core objective of price stabilization of essential commodities has not met.
- Fair Price Shop dealers indulge malpractices in inappropriate weighting the materials.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study about the types of ration cards.
- To study about the roots of corruption in PDS.
- Controlling mechanisms to minimize corruption in PDS.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research Design is always considered as the “Blueprint” of research. The researcher has selected descriptive type of design for the research. It outlines the roots of corruption in PDS and measures to control the corruption.

UNIVERSE AND SAMPLING

The researcher has collected the information from the Municipal Office, Karaikal. The total universe of sampling is 750nos. The sampling technique adopted for the study is lottery Method.

TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION

The tool adopted for data collection is Interview Schedule. The reason is because most of the respondents are not well versed in their education. Thus, the researcher has undergone data collection through interview method. The data collection itself has taken more than 15 days.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

**TABLE - 1
TABLE SHOWING ABOUT THE RATION CARDS**

Sl. No.	The ration cards	No. Of respondents	Percentage of the respondents
1.	AAY	18	18%
2.	BPL	44	44%
3.	APL	38	38%
4.	NONE	-	-
	TOTAL	100	100

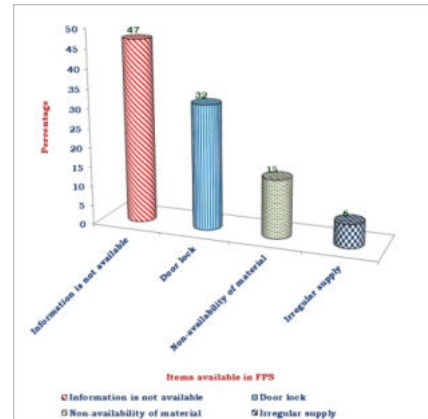
By analyzing the above table, 44% of respondents using BPL ration card, 38% are using APL cards and 18% are using AAY cards. It indicates that majority of the people are falling in the low income group.

**TABLE - 2
TABLE SHOWING ABOUT THE OPINION OF QUANTITY PROVIDED**

Sl. No.	The quantity requirement	No. Of respondents	Percentage of the respondents
1.	Satisfied	24	24%
2.	Highly satisfied	-	-
3.	Dissatisfied	76	76%
4.	No comment	-	-
	TOTAL	100	100

The above table clearly indicates that 76% of the respondents are dissatisfied with the quantity of the goods supplied and 24% are satisfied with the quantity provided by the FPS. It shows that the quantity is not sufficient to the respondents.

**DIAGRAM-1
BAR DIAGRAM SHOWING ABOUT THE REASON FOR NOT PURCHASING GOODS IN TIME**



The above diagram clearly indicates s that 47% of them expressed that information is not available. 32% are not getting goods because FPS door is locked. 15% said that non-availability of good and 6% are told that irregular supply of goods.

**TABLE NO. 3
TABLE SHOWING ABOUT THE BALANCE PROVISIONS ARE SUPPLIED TO WHOM**

Sl. No.	Balance provision	No. Of respondents	Percentage of the respondents
1.	Returned to office	33	33%
2.	Sold in black market	46	46%
3.	Given at free of cost	7	7%
4.	Other ways	14	14%
	TOTAL	100	100

The above table indicates that majority of them expressed that it is sold in black market, 33% of them told that it is returned to office, 14% of them expressed that they may take to their own purpose and 7% of them told that it will be given free to the poor people. By overall, nearly half of them expressed that it was sold in black market.

**TABLE - 4
TABLE SHOWING ABOUT THE QUANTITY PURCHASED IN BLACK MARKET**

Sl. No.	Quantity purchased in black market	No. Of respondents	Percentage of the respondents
1.	Less than 5 kgs	2	2%
2.	5kgs – 10 kgs	5	5%
3.	10 kgs – 15 kgs	20	20%
4.	Not purchased	73	73%
	TOTAL	100	100

The above table denotes that how much quantity is purchased in the black market by the respondents. By analyzing this table, 73% of them are not purchased in the black markets. Among the purchase of black market, majority of them purchased through black market up to 10kgs to 15kgs. 5% of them told that they may get 5kgs to 10kgs in the black market. Only 2% of them expressed that they may get less than 5kgs in black market.

**TABLE - 5
TABLE SHOWING ABOUT TO ERADICATE THE CORRUPTION**

Sl. No.	The corruption	No. Of respondents	Percentage of the respondents
1.	Avoid duplication of cards	30	30%
2.	Get materials regularly	21	21%
3.	Report to high officials	13	13%
4.	Monitor the activities of FPS	36	36%
	TOTAL	100	100

By analyzing the table, 36% of the respondents told that monitoring the activities of FPS is best thing to eradicate the corruption. 30% of them expressed that to avoid duplication of cards and 21% of the respondents suggest getting material have to be supplied on time. Only 13% of the respondents indicate that to report higher officials about the corruption in FPS.

It shows that the respondents want to control corruption only by people participation. And they felt that duplication of cards is the lead to corruption.

TABLE - 6
TABLE SHOWING ABOUT THE OPINION ABOUT THE ROLE OF OFFICERS

Sl. No.	The opinion about the officers of civil supply	No. Of respondents	Percentage of the respondents
1.	Satisfactory	59	59%
2.	Not satisfactory	41	41%
3.	No opinion	-	-
TOTAL		100	100

This table dealt about the opinion towards their performance in FPS. 59% of them expressed that it is satisfactory and 41% of them told that they are not performing at satisfactory level. By overall, the officers are not performing their duty with utmost care.

MAJOR FINDINGS:

- Majority (44%) of the respondents are using BPL ration card.
- 76% of the respondents are dissatisfied with the quantity of the goods supplied.
- 47% of them expressed that about the goods supplying in the shop is not informed in time.
- Majority of them expressed that the balance goods will be sold in black market.
- 73% of them are not purchased in the black markets.
- 36% of the respondents told that monitoring the activities of FPS is best thing to eradicate the corruption.
- 59% of them expressed that it the role of officers in civil department is satisfactory.

SUGGESTIONS:

The researcher by his own findings, he wants to list out certain recommendations to improve the Public Distribution system without corruption: The recommendations are:

- i) Regular supply of good quality grains has to be ensured.
- ii) To find out the right family for BPL Card holders and improvement in its design and durability.
- iii) Enlarging the basket of PDS commodities to enhance its utility as also to improve economic viability of FPSs.
- iv) Introduction of a more effective Management Information System.
- v) A number of new FPS to be opened so that physical access of beneficiaries is improved;
- vi) Special campaign to be mounted by the state governments to cancel the bogus entitlement cards and to issue new cards to households found to be without them;
- vii) Set up vigilance committees of local people with substantial representation of women for each FPS at the village level and also at higher levels.

CONCLUSION

Respondents gave positive feedback about the functioning of the Fair Price Shops in terms of timing and opening but were largely dissatisfied with the attitude of the distributors. The complaint that persisted within both the groups was about the quality of grains that was provided to them. It was unanimously agreed that the quality of the product ranged from poor to average and was a major reason for switching over to open markets. This call for attention from the stakeholders at different levels to ensure that the quality of the product is maintained and it has been found to directly relate to the utilization of commodities. To control this corruption, we are the people of nation should work together to fight against it. The election procedure should be change.

References:

1. Sanjeeb mukherjee/ New Delhi
2. Sharmila Gondkar / article in csr
3. Asadha, 1929 National Sample Survey Organization
4. D.J. Venkatesh & Tarun Kartick "corruption in Public Distribution System makes holes in the pockets of common man"
5. Khera, Reetika (2011) "The UID project and welfare schemes", economic and political weekly, 26 feb
6. Tara Kaul 18 nov 2013 "Estimating the nutritional impact of the food security Bill"
7. Raj Singh 21 Jan 2015 "Causes, consequences and cures of corruption in India"
8. Insight N.13: march 2010 " Empowering women through self-help groups"