
Impact of Public Distribution System in Haryana**Sarika Suri, Research Scholar****Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak****ABSTRACT**

The Public Distribution System is one of the most important elements in India's safety net systems for more than sixty years. It is one of the main vehicles through which Government of India delivers 'Food Security' to the vulnerable people of the country. The aim of the research paper is to assess the effectiveness of Public Distribution System in Haryana. For this purpose, a survey was undertaken to assess the ground reality of Public Distribution System at beneficiaries level in four districts of Haryana, viz, Panchkula, Mewat, Bhiwani and Panipat. These four districts were selected from each of the four divisions of Haryana on the basis of per capita income above and below the State average income. The study tries to unravel different issues with regard to implementation of Public Distribution System in the State. This research evaluates the effectiveness of Public Distribution System in Haryana. The study describes the responses of the beneficiaries and their satisfaction with regard to the timeliness and accessibility of the system. The study used percentage method to estimate the effectiveness of Public Distribution System and its indirect benefits as a window for the poor to escape poverty. The findings of the study suggest that there are a lot of bottlenecks on the way to gain the desired objectives of the Public Distribution System, even so, it has great relevance in the field of food security to the poor and marginalized. The Haryana government has taken a number of initiatives to make the system pro-poor by innovating Public Distribution System. The study draws strong conclusions in favour of Public Distribution System as an effective tool in serving the vulnerable sections of the State. The study also established that, the effectiveness of Public Distribution System has improved over time.

Keywords: Food Security, Poverty, Public Distribution System.

INTRODUCTION

Public Distribution System (PDS) is a national food security system, established by the Government of India, under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and managed jointly with the state governments of India. It is a major intervention focused at providing food security to all the poor, specifically the vulnerable sections of society. It is recognized as a permanent feature of the strategy to control price, reduce fluctuations and achieve equitable distribution of essential goods.¹

Individuals can live without economic, political and social needs but not without biological needs like food, water. Food is one of the basic needs of people and every government should take care of providing food security to its citizens in terms of the availability and accessibility whenever required. Table 1.1 reflects the most recent available data on poverty ratio at All-India level and of Haryana for the year 2011-12. The percentage of BPL population in 2011-12 was 25.70 per cent in rural areas, 13.70 per cent in urban areas and 21.9 per cent (around 27 crore population) for the country as a whole. Despite good economic performance, the percentage of BPL population in Haryana for the year 2011-12 has been estimated as 11.64 percent (19.42 lakhs) in rural areas while 10.28 per cent (9.41 lakhs) in urban areas.²

Table 1.1**Percentage of BPL Population in Haryana and India (2011-12)**

Haryana			India		
Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
% of persons					
11.64	10.28	11.16	25.70	13.70	21.92

Source: Planning Commission, 2014

In Haryana, 51.29 per cent of the workforce is engaged in agriculture sector. However, in 2006-07 and 2011-12, agriculture's contribution to the State Gross Domestic Product has reduced from 21.89% to 19.88%.³

The Indian States Hunger Index (2008) ranks Haryana at 5th out of 17 states, which according to the index refers to "alarming" food security situation. The Hunger Index establishes strong association between the hunger and the percentage of the population below the poverty line since poverty is often the root cause of insufficient food intake, child malnutrition, and child mortality. Table 1.2 shows the three basic constituents of the hunger index, i.e., underweight children below five years, the under-five mortality rate, and prevailing under nourished population. Haryana records, 39.7% of children under five who are underweight, the proportion of undernourished at 15.1% and under-five mortality about 5.2%. It is relevant to mention here that Haryana ranked first among all states in 1994 but in 2008 it stood at 5th rank on the Indian State Hunger Index. According to the Hunger index, inspite of Haryana's good economic performance, it has not been able to reduce hunger.⁴

Table 1.2**Underlying Components of India State Hunger Index and India State Hunger Index Scores**

Prevalence	Undernourished population	Underweight children <5 years	Under-5 mortality	Rank	Score
Haryana	15.1	39.7	5.2	5th	20.01

Source: India States Hunger Index, 2008

As stated by, India Human Development Report 2011, in terms of Human Development Index, Haryana slipped two places down to ninth position in 2007–8 from the seventh position in 1999–2000.⁵ The pace of improvement of the state is of concern. With these circumstances it is necessary to have targeted policies to improve the starvation and under nourishment situation. Thus, PDS, a strong public policy, exists as the concluding option of food security to the vulnerable section in the state.

The PDS in Haryana is created to fulfill the primary requirements of the vulnerable sections who cannot rely upon market only to buy essential items. For the execution of PDS, a huge amount of subsidy is released by the Centre and the State. Therefore it is necessary that the Public Distribution System works at its best. However, Public Distribution System is not a perfect system as it has been facing

several teething problems. There are problems relating to inclusion and exclusion errors, leakage of food grains, procurement trends, financial feasibility of the system. Table 1.3 sums up trends in availability, procurement and distribution of grains in Haryana in the past ten years.^{6,7,8,9.}

Table 1.3**Production, Procurement, Distribution and Leakage of Food Grains**

	2004-05	2009-10	2011-12
Production (Figures in Lac MT)	90.63(W) 43.50 (R)	113.60(W) 54.37(R)	115.78(W) 56.38(R)
Procurement (Figures in Lac MT)	51.15(W) 15.17(R)	69.24(W) 26.36 (R)	69.28(W) 29.66 (R)
Allocation by central govt. (Figures in MTs)	---	482,565(W) ---	553,217(W) ---
Lifting by state govt. (Figures in MTs)	---	471,728.2(W) ---	516,077(W) ---
Distribution (Figures in %)	4.02(W) 0.07(R)	19.85(W) 0.02(R)	17.26(W) 0.89(R)
Diversion (Figures in %)	82.7(W) ---	26.0(W) 0.0 (R)	49.0(W) ---
Subsidy (in Rs)	3, 28,65,000	415,142,092	315,671,007

Source: Khera (2011), Rahman (2014), Dreze & Khera (2015) and Gulati & Saini (2015)

It is evident from the Table 1.3 that decentralized procurement proved to be more successful in case of wheat than rice. The centre allocates grain to states. The difference between off-take of grains by state from FCI and total distribution to beneficiaries by FPS provides a calculation of the quantity of diverted grain. In the light of these facts, it becomes imperative to make an in depth study of the effectiveness of Public Distribution System. It was with this intent that the research work was undertaken. The justification for taking Haryana lies in the fact that there exists no other previous state level detailed study on Public Distribution System.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To study the benefits derived by below poverty line families out of public distribution system.

SAMPLING PROCEDURE

To analyze the effectiveness of PDS in Haryana four districts were selected from each of the four divisions of Haryana on account of per capita income above and below the state average income. Administratively, the four divisions of Haryana State are Ambala, Gurgaon, Hisar and Rohtak division.¹⁰ From the Ambala division, Panchkula district was selected on account of highest per capita income; from Gurgaon division, Mewat district was selected on account of lowest per capita income; from Hisar division, Bhiwani district was selected on account of highest per capita income and from Rohtak division, Panipat district was chosen on account of lowest per capita income. Thus two districts were selected from above the state average income and two from below the state average income.

After the selection of districts, blocks/towns were chosen for the study on the basis of maximum rural/urban population. The researcher listed all the blocks of the selected four districts. Two blocks, from each district, having maximum rural population were pinned down for the research. Similarly, the researcher listed all the towns of selected four districts. One town, from each district, having maximum urban population was pinned down for the study. The researcher listed all the villages/wards from each selected block/town where fair price shop existed. Then all villages were arranged in an alphabetical order. Randomly two villages and two wards have been picked from each selected block/town. The researcher took the list of beneficiaries availing Public Distribution System facilities from District Food & Supply Department or fair price shops of selected 16 villages and 8 wards. Beneficiaries were selected randomly from the list. A total of 2200 questionnaires were distributed to the beneficiaries in the selected villages/wards of the chosen four districts. In each district, 550 questionnaires were distributed out of which 350 questionnaires were distributed in rural areas while 200 in urban areas. Out of a total of 2200 questionnaires, distributed in selected four districts, 1696 responses were received. Again out of the responses received it was found that 82 were incomplete or defective and hence had to be rejected. Thus, from Panchkula district 402 questionnaires, from Bhiwani district 406 questionnaires, from Mewat district 405 questionnaires and from Panipat district 401 questionnaires were received in complete shape. In order to have congruence, it was decided to choose only 400 responses from each district. Hence, finally 1600 responses (400 from each district) were selected to constitute the sample. Of the total responses selected, 62.31 per cent beneficiaries' belonged to rural areas while 37.69 per cent to urban areas.

TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION

To achieve the objective of the study, questionnaire was prepared to elicit responses from the beneficiaries. The questionnaire gathered information regarding timely availability of commodities; convenience of working timings of fair price shop; services rendered by fair price shop; entitlement, availability and quantity received from fair price shop, adequacy of entitlement; quality and retail price of commodities received from FPS, behaviour of dealer, overall satisfaction from functioning of FPS and suggestions for improving the functioning of public distribution programme in the State.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Any meaningful study on the Public Distribution System needs to focus its attention on various factors that affect the degree of utilization and the access for the beneficiary. In this section, an attempt has been made to examine the information gathered from the beneficiaries. For doing the requisite analysis, statistical tool, percentage, was applied. Analysis of the responses of the beneficiaries revealed the following:

Table 1.4**Beneficiaries' Responses Regarding Timely Availability of Commodities****Source:** Primary Data**Table 1.4**

displays responses of beneficiaries on a question 'Whether the items are available in time in the fair price shop.' It was found that 64.25 per cent respondents of Panchkula district, 54.50 per cent respondents of Mewat district, 62.25 per cent respondents of Bhiwani district, and 63.25 per cent respondents of Panipat district feel that the PDS commodities are available in time. 38.94 per cent

Statement		Districts								Total (N=1600)	
		Panchkula (N=400)		Mewat (N=400)		Bhiwani (N=400)		Panipat (N=400)			
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Ration commodities available in time in the Fair Price Shop	No.	257	143	218	182	249	151	253	147	977	623
	%	64.25	35.75	54.50	45.50	62.25	37.75	63.25	36.75	61.06	38.94

respondents of the sample revealed negative responses and complained of non-availability of commodities in time in the fair price shop. They stated that this resulted in wastage of their time and money leading to their dissatisfaction. It also resulted in strained relations and mutual distress between them and the dealers.

Table 1.5**Beneficiaries' Responses Regarding Convenience of the Working timings of the FPS****Source:** Primary Data

Statistical information in Table 1.5 exhibits beneficiaries' response on a question of 'Whether the working timings of the fair price shop are convenient.' It is observed from the table that 43.25 per

Statement		Districts								Total (N=1600)	
		Panchkula (N=400)		Mewat (N=400)		Bhiwani (N=400)		Panipat (N=400)			
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Working timings of the FPS convenient	No.	227	173	196	204	202	198	209	191	834	766
	%	56.75	43.25	49.0	51.0	50.50	49.50	52.25	47.75	52.13	47.87

cent respondents of Panchkula district, 51.0 per cent respondents of Mewat district, 49.50 per cent respondents of Bhiwani district and 47.75 per cent respondents of Panipat district felt that the present

working hours of the fair price shop were not convenient to them. Majority of the respondents stated that inconvenient working timings of the fair price shop lead to their dissatisfaction. It also resulted in strained relations between them and dealers and thus mutual distress. Since the fair price shop worked only for a limited time, it lead to heavy rush and mismanagement of the crowd in procuring the ration items. The beneficiaries further stated that the working timings of fair price shop were dependent on the whims of the dealers. It was analyzed by the researcher while visiting the sampled districts in Haryana that the orders released by Haryana government regarding shop timings of the fair price shop were not followed properly.

Table 1.6**Beneficiaries' Responses Regarding Quality of Commodities Received from FPS**

Commodities		Districts								Total (N=1600)			
		Panchkula (N=400)		Mewat (N=400)		Bhiwani (N=400)		Panipat (N=400)					
		satisfactor Y	Un satisfactor	satisfactor Y	Un satisfactor	satisfactor Y	Un satisfactor	satisfactor Y	Un satisfactor				
Wheat	No.	252	148	216	184	229	171	241	159	938	662		
	%	63.0	37.0	54.0	46.0	57.25	42.75	60.25	39.75	58.63	41.37		
Pulses	No.	225	175	186	214	206	194	209	191	826	774		
	%	56.25	43.75	46.50	53.50	51.50	48.50	52.25	47.75	51.62	48.38		

Source: Primary Data

Table 1.6 reveals the picture regarding the 'Quality of commodities received from FPS.' It is perceived from the above table that 58.63 per cent beneficiaries of the sample were satisfied with the quality of wheat received from the fair price shop. Similarly, 51.62 per cent beneficiaries were satisfied with the quality of pulses. On the other hand, 41.37 per cent beneficiaries described the quality of wheat as poor while 51.62 per cent beneficiaries were not satisfied with the quality of pulses received from FPS. In spite of poor quality, beneficiaries stated that they bought ration from the fair price shop mainly because of the lower price of the commodities as compared to the price of similar commodities prevalent in open market. This is the instance of those beneficiaries who are in the low income brackets. Since it is almost impractical to adulterate sugar and kerosene, beneficiaries' opinion on the quality of these supplies was not asked for.

Table 1.7**Beneficiaries' Responses Regarding Quantity of Commodities Received from FPS**

Statement		Districts								Total (N=1600)	
		Panchkula (N=400)		Mewat (N=400)		Bhiwani (N=400)		Panipat (N=400)			
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Regularly receive full quota of commodities from the FPS	No.	243	157	202	198	237	163	232	168	914	686
	%	60.75	39.25	50.50	49.50	59.25	40.75	58.0	42.0	57.13	42.87

Source: Primary Data

Statements		Districts								Total (N=686)	
		Panchkula (N=157)		Mewat (N=198)		Bhiwani (N=163)		Panipat (N=168)			
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Supplies did not reach the FPS	No.	116	41	159	39	127	36	121	47	523	163
	%	73.89	26.11	80.30	19.70	77.91	22.09	72.02	27.98	76.24	23.76
Lack of information about opening of the FPS	No.	104	53	142	56	120	43	111	57	477	209
	%	66.24	33.76	71.71	28.29	73.62	26.38	66.07	33.93	69.53	30.47
Supplies got finished by the time you went to buy	No.	102	55	136	62	108	55	105	63	451	235
	%	64.97	35.03	68.69	31.31	66.26	33.74	62.50	37.50	65.74	34.26
Ration dealer refused to give full quota	No.	27	130	51	147	42	121	36	132	156	530
	%	17.20	82.80	25.76	74.24	25.77	74.23	21.43	78.57	22.74	77.26
Black marketing by the dealers	No.	75	82	68	130	66	97	87	81	296	390
	%	47.78	52.22	34.34	65.66	40.49	59.51	51.79	48.21	43.15	56.85
Heavy rush	No.	35	122	41	157	59	104	48	120	183	503
	%	22.30	77.70	20.70	79.30	36.20	63.80	28.57	71.43	26.68	73.32

If no, then main reasons for not getting quota in time:

Source: Primary Data

Table 1.7 displays beneficiaries' responses regarding 'Regularly receive full quota of rationed items from the FPS.' It is revealed that 60.75 per cent respondents of Panchkula district, 50.50 per cent respondents of Mewat district, 59.25 per cent respondents of Bhiwani district and 58.0 per cent respondents of Panipat district received their entitlement regularly. However, 42.87 per cent respondents of the sample revealed negative responses and stated that they never got their full entitlement/quota of rationed items. They complained of short supply of stock of rationed items by the FPS dealers as the latter said that no stock had been received. They stated that FPS dealer made false entries in their ration cards without actually giving the commodity. The researcher also analyzed that everything seems satisfactory on ration card but the execution is faulty. In fact, the PDS suffers from many bottlenecks as adumbrated here from the stage of opening of FPS to the stage of actual issuing of ration to the ultimate beneficiary.

Table 1.7 further reveals the responses of beneficiaries for not getting quota in time.

Non-availability of commodities and lack of information about opening of the FPS were the main reasons stated by the beneficiaries. 43.15 per cent respondents who did not receive full entitlement of rationed items confirmed that their entitlement was either been sold in the open market or given to someone else by the FPS dealer. However 26.68 per cent respondents of the sample stated reasons such as heavy rush and mismanagement of the crowd in procuring the ration items.

Table 1.8

Beneficiaries' Responses Regarding Adequacy of the Entitlements

Source: Primary Data

Statistical information in Table 1.8 reflects beneficiaries' response on a question of 'Adequacy of

Commodities		Districts								Total (N=1600)	
		Panchkula (N=400)		Mewat (N=400)		Bhiwani (N=400)		Panipat (N=400)			
		Adequate	Not Adequate	Adequate	Not Adequate	Adequate	Not Adequate	Adequate	Not Adequate	Adequate	Not Adequate
Wheat	No.	281	119	259	141	217	183	226	174	983	617
	%	70.25	29.75	64.75	35.25	54.25	45.75	56.50	42.75	61.44	38.56
Sugar	No.	105	295	95	305	89	311	83	317	372	1228
	%	26.25	73.75	23.75	76.25	22.25	77.75	20.75	79.25	23.25	76.75
Pulses	No.	234	166	219	181	205	195	213	187	871	729
	%	58.50	41.50	54.75	45.25	51.25	48.75	53.25	46.75	54.43	45.56
Kerosene	No.	185	215	147	253	154	246	168	232	654	946
	%	46.25	53.75	36.75	63.25	38.50	61.50	42.0	58.0	40.87	59.13

present entitlement.' It is evident from the table that inadequacy is quite prominent in case of sugar.

About 76.75 per cent respondents expressed that the quantity of sugar received is insufficient and the fulfillment of its requirement is mostly met from the market. The situation is quite dismal and calls for enhancement of sugar quota. About 54.43 per cent respondents considered the pulses quota sufficient to meet the normal requirement of their families. Most of the cardholders felt that the present quotas should be raised. Their keenness seemed to be most for sugar and the least for wheat.

Table 1.9**Beneficiaries' Responses Regarding Behaviour of Fair Price Shop Dealer**

Statement		Districts								Total (N=1600)	
		Panchkula (N=400)		Mewat (N=400)		Bhiwani (N=400)		Panipat (N=400)			
		Satisfactor Y	Not Satisfactor	Satisfactor Y	Not satisfactor	Satisfactor Y	Not satisfactor	Satisfactor Y	Not satisfactor	Satisfactor Y	Not satisfactor
Behaviour of FPS dealer	No.	375	25	354	46	359	41	366	34	1454	146
	%	93.75	6.25	88.50	11.50	89.75	10.25	91.50	8.50	90.87	9.13

Source: Primary Data

Table 1.9 displays the responses of beneficiaries regarding the 'Behaviour of fair price shop dealers' towards them. 93.75 per cent respondents of Panchkula district, 88.50 per cent respondents of Mewat district, 89.75 per cent respondents of Bhiwani district and 91.50 per cent respondents of Panipat district complemented the behavior of the dealer as satisfactory while remaining 6.25 per cent respondents of Panchkula district, 11.50 per cent respondents of Mewat district, 10.25 per cent respondents of Bhiwani district, and 8.50 per cent respondents of Panipat district came out strongly and described the behaviour of dealers as bad. They further stated that bad behaviour resulted in strained relations and mutual distress between them and the dealers and lead to their dissatisfaction. It may be pointed out that the level of off-take by the beneficiaries depends partly on the dealers' behaviour. Thus the behaviour of FPS dealer is important in determining the effectiveness of the PDS.

Table 1.10**Beneficiaries' Responses Regarding Satisfaction from the functioning of the FPS**

Statement		Districts								Total (N=1600)	
		Panchkula (N=400)		Mewat (N=400)		Bhiwani (N=400)		Panipat (N=400)			
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Satisfied with the functioning of the local fair price shop	No.	266	134	227	173	241	159	248	152	982	618
	%	66.50	33.50	56.75	43.25	60.25	39.75	62.0	38.0	61.37	38.63

Source: Primary Data

If no, then reasons for dissatisfaction against the fair price shop

Statements		Districts								Total (N=618)	
		Panchkula (N=134)		Mewat (N=173)		Bhiwani (N=159)		Panipat (N=152)			
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Non-opening of the depot on all working days	No.	61	73	97	76	76	83	65	87	299	319
	%	45.52	54.48	56.07	43.93	47.80	52.20	42.76	57.24	48.38	51.62
Inconvenient shop timings	No.	53	81	89	84	68	91	57	95	267	351
	%	39.55	60.45	51.44	48.56	42.77	57.23	37.50	62.50	43.20	56.80
Inadequate & irregular distribution	No.	92	42	114	59	109	50	102	50	417	201
	%	68.66	31.34	65.90	34.10	68.55	31.45	67.10	32.90	67.48	32.52
Under weighment	No.	49	85	61	112	56	103	52	100	218	400
	%	36.57	63.43	35.26	64.74	35.22	64.78	34.21	65.79	35.28	64.72
Heavy rush	No.	23	111	26	147	39	120	31	121	119	499
	%	17.17	82.83	15.03	84.97	24.53	75.47	20.40	79.60	19.26	80.74

Source: Primary Data

Data in Table 1.10 highlights the responses of beneficiaries regarding 'Overall satisfaction from the functioning of the local fair price shop.' As disclosed from the table, 66.50 per cent respondents of Panchkula district, 56.75 per cent respondents of Mewat district, 60.25 per cent respondents of Bhiwani district and 62.0 per cent respondents of Panipat district were satisfied with the functioning of FPS. Respondents of Panchkula district were most satisfied followed by the respondents of Panipat and Bhiwani districts. It is also revealed that the respondents of Mewat district were least satisfied. The complaints of the beneficiaries arose on account of host of factors ranging from the routine type to the serious ones.

Table 1.10 further reveals multiple reasons for dissatisfaction of beneficiaries against the fair price shop. The major reason exhibited by the beneficiaries was the non-maintenance of adequate stock of rationed items for distribution in the fair price shop by the dealer. 67.48 per cent respondents stated that the dealer never maintained adequate stock of commodities for distribution in the FPS. As a result, they never got their full entitlement/quota of rationed items. They also complained of short supply of stock of commodities by the fair price shop owners as the latter said that no stock had been received.

As evident from the Table 1.10, beneficiaries also revealed negative responses regarding the opening of the fair price shop. 48.38 per cent respondents stated that less/non-opening of the fair price shops lead to their dissatisfaction. This resulted in wastage of their time and money and that too without procuring ration. It is relevant to mention here that this is the breachment of guidance of respected Supreme Court which requires the distribution of Public Distribution System commodities to the beneficiaries throughout the month during the stipulated time.

Responses of the beneficiaries in the Table 1.10 also disclose complaints regarding 'Inconvenient shop timings.' It is observed from the table that 43.20 per cent respondents felt that the present working hours were not convenient to them and lead to their dissatisfaction. They further stated since the fair price shop worked only for a limited time, it lead to heavy rush and mismanagement of the crowd in procuring the ration items.

It is also reflected from the same table that beneficiaries stated dissatisfaction due to the absence of standard weights and electronic weighing scales. 35.28 per cent respondents of the sample complained that the dealers deceive them in weight and measures. They stated under-weightment of items, use of defective weight measures and also varied weighing methods by the fair price shop dealers. It was also analyzed by the researcher that the quality service was not provided to the beneficiaries by the fair price shop dealers. Thus, analysis of the responses of the beneficiaries revealed that on the whole the respondents of Panchkula district were most contented followed by the respondents of Panipat, Bhiwani and Mewat district.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. Important findings emerging from the analysis of the data are presented below. Exclusion and inclusion errors were found in the State. A large number of poor people had been ejected from the Below Poverty Line list and many non-poor had managed to get Below Poverty Line or even Antyodaya Anna Yojana ration cards.
2. It is revealed that the relevance of Public Distribution System for the State is still higher since the poor people in order to fulfill their dietary needs seek assistance from the government. Thus it is important to identify such people who require food assistance. It was discovered that majority of beneficiaries showed their strong preferences for the items distributed under PDS despite the various drawbacks in it. They feel that PDS provides them essential commodities at fair prices and thus serves as a safety net.
3. It is revealed from the analysis that PDS operations resulted in leakages of the meagre supplies to unintended channels, non-availability of entitlements with FPS dealers in collusion with

supply authorities, irregular supplies, inferior quality of grains and restrictions on draws according to beneficiaries' capacity and convenience. At some places, it is revealed that the entitlement is much less than the requirement of the families. Thus, PDS was playing only a marginal role in meeting the full nutritional requirement of those families.

4. The interpersonal relation between the dealers and beneficiaries were found to be strained at times, thus affecting the working of FPS in rural and urban areas. These arise on account of host of factors leading to mutual distrust and dissatisfaction among beneficiaries.

CONCLUSION

India's PDS is one of the biggest welfare programmes globally with the primary aim of improving food and nutrition security of socially and economically deprived segments in the country. Though it managed to survive through the innumerable challenges over decades, Public Distribution System is facing intense scrutiny in the midst of neo-liberal ideas of replacing it with alternatives such as food stamps, cash transfers, etc. The present study made an attempt to analyze the effectiveness of PDS in improving the economic gain of have-nots to subsidized items. The study used percentage method to estimate the effectiveness of Public Distribution System and its indirect benefits as a window for the poor to escape poverty. Through this the impact of Public Distribution System in serving the weaker sections of society were worked out. The findings suggest that there are a number of hindrances in meeting the cherished objectives of PDS, even then it has great importance in providing food security to the weaker sections. The Haryana government is striving hard to remove the constraints and make the Public Distribution System pro-poor by innovating PDS. A pilot project was started in 17 districts of Haryana by issuing smart cards in place of ration cards which is a first of its kind project in the country. With the above findings, the study draws strong conclusions in favour of Public Distribution System as an effective tool in serving the vulnerable sections of the State. The study also established that, the effectiveness of Public Distribution System has improved over time. However, persisting imperfections in the system still pose substantial challenges to be tackled from time to time. This necessitates proactive and systematic attempts to continually improve the functioning so that Public Distribution System works more efficiently and effectively and maintains its glory in the coming years.

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