



## **Attitude of Consumers towards Public Distribution System in Tisaiyanvilai**

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### **Introduction**

Public Distribution System (PDS) is an Indian food security system. Established by the Government of India under Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food, and Public Distribution and managed jointly with state governments in India, it distributes subsidized food and non-food items to India's poor. Major commodities distributed include staple food grains such as wheat, rice, sugar, and kerosene, through a network of Public distribution shops, also known as Ration shops established in several states across the country. Food Corporation of India, a Government-owned corporation, procures, maintains the Public Distribution System.

In terms of both coverage and public expenditure, it is considered to be the most important food security network. 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 1 Kg per person / month. The PDS has been criticized for its urban bias and its failure 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, India has the largest stock of grain in the world besides China, the government spends Rs.750 billion (\$13.6 billion) per year, almost 1 percent of GDP, yet 21% remain undernourished. Distribution of food grains to poor people throughout the country is managed by state governments. As of date there are about 4.99 lakh Fair Price Shops (FPS) across India.

A Public Distribution shop also known as Fair Price Shop (FPS), part of India's Public Distribution System established by Government of India, is a kind of shop in India which is used to distribute rations at a subsidized price to the poor. As of date there are about 4.99 lakh Fair Price Shops (FPS) across India.

Locally these are known as "ration shop" and chiefly sell wheat, rice, kerosene and sugar at a price lower than the market price. However, other essential commodities may also be sold. These are also called Fair Price Shops. For buying items from this shop one must have a ration card. These shops are operated throughout the country by joint assistance of central and state government. No doubt the items from these shops are much cheaper but are of poor quality.

Ration shops are now present in most localities, villages' towns and cities. India has 478,000 shops constituting the largest distribution network in the world. The introduction of rationing in India dates back to the 1940s Bengal famine. This rationing system was revived in the wake of acute food shortage during the early 1960s, prior to the Green Revolution. Public Distribution System is primarily a social welfare and antipoverty programmed of the Government of India. Essential commodities like rice, wheat, sugar, kerosene and the like are supplied to the people under the PDS at subsidized prices.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Public Distribution System is an Indian food security system which aims at providing basic food commodities to the poor people who cannot afford to purchase at normal retail rates. The poor people, many a time, find it difficult to secure their ration commodities from the PDS outlet. This is because the PDS hardly operates according to the convenience of the poor.

The PDS outlets are open only for a few days in a month and the poor people are expected to secure their rations during those few days. When the customers approach public distribution system they face various problems Viz., low quality product, under weighing, time delay etc. In addition to these the customers are facing non availability of products at the end of the month owing to artificial scarcity. This study attempts to overwhelm all the difficulties faced by the consumers of public distribution systems in order to strengthen the food security system.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The present study is undertaken with the following objectives:

- ❖ To know the socio - economic status of the consumers in Tisaiyanvillai area.
- ❖ To examine the level of satisfaction of the consumers towards Public Distribution System in Tisaiyanvillai area.
- ❖ To analyse the problems faced by the consumers from the Public Distribution System in Tisaiyanvilai area.
- ❖ To study the relationship between demographic variables and level of attitude of consumers in Tisaiyanvilai area.
- ❖ To give various suggestions for the improvement of service in Public Distribution System outlet.

### **Scope of the study**

The study has been undertaken from the point of view of consumers who have ration card. In this study the researcher has attempted to study on the attitude consumer towards Public Distribution System in Tisaiyanvilai area.

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### **Methodology of the study**

The present study has been based on both primary and secondary data. The primary data were collected from the consumers through interview schedule in Tisaiyanvilai. An interview schedule has been prepared after pre-testing. The secondary data were collected from the various newspapers, books and websites.

### **Limitations of the study**

The limitations which the researcher faced in the study are the following:

- ❖ Though large number of consumers is involved to buy commodities in Public Distribution System outlet, this study is based on the opinion and views of 110 respondents only. So, the findings and suggestions of this study may not be suitable to all the consumers.
- ❖ The study area was confined to Tisaiyanvilai. Hence the conclusion derived from this study may not be applicable to other places.
- ❖ This study has been made within a short period.
- ❖ The results and conclusions of the study are mainly based on the information provided by the consumers in the form of questionnaire and direct interview.

### **Data analysis and Interpretation**

In this chapter the researcher has analysed the profile of the consumers of public distribution system. The data has been collected from the public distribution system consumers using interview schedule and in turn they are tabulated, analysed and represented in the form of percentages. And also the researcher has used some statistical tools for measuring the level of attitude of consumers towards Public Distribution System in Tisaiyanvilai area.

### **Gender Wise Classification of the Respondents**

The data relating to gender wise classification of the respondents is presented in table 1.7.1

**Table 1.7.1 - Gender Wise Classification**

| <b>Gender</b> | <b>Number of respondents</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Male          | 54                           | 49                |
| Female        | 56                           | 51                |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>100</b>                   | <b>100</b>        |

#### **Source: Primary data**

The table 1.7.1 shows that out of 110 respondents, 49 percent of the respondents are males and 51 percent of the respondents are females.

Hence it is concluded that majority of the respondents are female.

**Gender and Level of Attitude of Consumers**

The following table 1.7.2 shows the relationship between gender and attitude of consumers.

**Null Hypothesis**

There is no relationship between Gender and level of attitude of PDS consumer

**Table 1.7.2 - Gender and Level of Attitude of Consumers**

| <b>Gender/level of attitude</b> | <b>High</b> | <b>Medium</b> | <b>Low</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|---------------------------------|-------------|---------------|------------|--------------|
| Male                            | 32          | 15            | 7          | 54           |
| Female                          | 24          | 21            | 11         | 56           |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>56</b>   | <b>36</b>     | <b>18</b>  | <b>110</b>   |

Degree of freedom = 6

Calculated value = 3.11

Table value at 5% level = 5.991

To examine the relationship between the gender and the level of attitude of PDS consumers’ opinions the researcher has applied chi - square test.

Since the calculated value is less than the table value at 5% level of significance, it is accepted. Hence the gender does no influence the attitude of PDS consumers I accepted.

Therefore, it can be concluded that there is not significant relationship between the gender factor and the level of the attitude of PDS consumers.

**Income wise Classification of the Respondents**

Table 1.7.6 shows the income wise classification of the PDS consumers.

**TABLE 1.7.6 - Income Wise Classification**

| <b>Income</b>       | <b>Number of respondents</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Below Rs.15,000     | 62                           | 57                |
| Rs.15,001-Rs.25,000 | 30                           | 27                |
| Rs.25,001-Rs.35,000 | 8                            | 7                 |
| Above Rs.35,000     | 10                           | 9                 |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>110</b>                   | <b>100</b>        |

Source: Primary data

It is seen from the table 1.7.6 that out of 110 respondents, 57 percent of the respondents are in the income level below Rs.15,000, 27 percent of the respondents income between Rs.15,001 - Rs.25,000, 9 percent of the respondents are in the income level above Rs.35,000 and 7 percent of the respondents income are between Rs.25,001 - Rs.35,000.

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Hence it is concluded that most of the PDS consumers earn income below Rs.15,000 per month.

### Size of the family

The family size of the PDS consumers is presented in the following table 1.7.10

**Table 1.7.10 - Size of the Family**

| Size            | Number of respondents | Percentage |
|-----------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Upto 3 members  | 43                    | 39         |
| 4 - 6 members   | 42                    | 38         |
| Above 6 members | 25                    | 23         |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>110</b>            | <b>100</b> |

### Source: Primary data

An analysis of the table 1.7.10 reveals that out of 110 respondents surveyed, 39 percent of the respondents have up to 3 members, 38 percent of the respondents have 4 - 6 members and 23 percent of the respondents have above 6 members in their family.

Hence it is concluded that most of the respondents have upto 3 members.

### 1.1.1 The Consolidated Result of Chi - Square Test

In order to analyze the relationship between demographic variables and level of attitude of the PDS consumers, Chi - square test has been applied.

### Null hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between demographic variables and level of attitude of the PDS consumers.

**Table 1.7.5 - Consolidated Result of Chi - Square Test**

| S.No | Factors            | Degree of freedom | Calculated value | Table value at 5% level | Difference in perception |
|------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1    | Gender             | 2                 | 3.11             | 5.991                   | Not significant          |
| 2    | Age                | 6                 | 9.92             | 12.592                  | Not significant          |
| 3    | Marital status     | 2                 | 21.94            | 5.991                   | Significant              |
| 4    | Educational status | 8                 | 11.14            | 15.507                  | Not significant          |
| 5    | Monthly income     | 6                 | 7.1              | 12.592                  | Not significant          |

### Source: Primary data

From the above table 1.7.11 it is clear that calculated value is less than the table value at 5% level of significance, there is not significant relationship between

the demographic variables like age, gender, educational status and monthly income and level of attitude of the PDS consumers. But there is a significant relationship between marital status and attitude of the PDS consumers.

### 1.1.2 Satisfactory Level with Functioning of the PDS Outlet

The table 1.7.18 shows the respondents' satisfactory level with functioning of the PDS outlet.

**Table 1.7.6 - Satisfactory Level with Functioning of the PDS Outlet**

| Sl. No | Satisfactory level                 | No. of respondents (W) | Value (X) | WX         |
|--------|------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------|------------|
| 1      | Highly satisfied                   | 40                     | 5         | 200        |
| 2      | Reasonably satisfied               | 26                     | 4         | 104        |
| 3      | Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | 18                     | 3         | 54         |
| 4      | Somewhat satisfied                 | 17                     | 2         | 34         |
| 5      | Very dissatisfied                  | 9                      | 1         | 9          |
|        | <b>Total</b>                       | <b>110</b>             | <b>15</b> | <b>401</b> |

**Source: Primary data**

$$\text{Weighted average} = \frac{WX}{W} = \frac{401}{110} = 3.6$$

From the above table 1.7.18 out of 110 respondents it is inferred through weighted average method that the respondents are satisfied with functioning of the PDS outlet.

### 1.1.3 Satifation with Free Rice

The details of the respondents' satisfaction with free rice are depicted in table 1.7.7

**Table 1.7.7 - Satifation with Free Rice**

| Satisfaction | Number of respondents | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Yes          | 91                    | 83         |
| No           | 19                    | 17         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>110</b>            | <b>100</b> |

**Source: Primary data**

From the table 1.7.20 reveals that out of 110 respondents surveyed, 83 percent of the respondents are satisfied with free rice in PDS outlet and only 17 percent of the respondents are not satisfied with free rice in PDS outlet.

Hence, it is concluded that majority of the respondents are satisfied with free rice in PDS outlet.

### 1.7.8 Ranking to Respondents' Preference for Commodities

The following table 1.7.21 shows the ranking to respondents' preference for commodities.

**Table 1.7.8 - Ranking to Respondents' Preference for Commodities**

| Sl. No | Reasons      | Rank       |            |            |            |            |            | Total Score | Rank |
|--------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|------|
|        |              | I          | II         | III        | IV         | V          | VI         |             |      |
| 1      | Kerosene     | 150        | 115        | 80         | 51         | 30         | 10         | 436         | II   |
| 2      | Rice         | 120        | 95         | 96         | 30         | 28         | 23         | 393         | III  |
| 3      | Sugar        | 180        | 125        | 72         | 45         | 26         | 9          | 457         | I    |
| 4      | Wheat        | 102        | 110        | 80         | 51         | 32         | 18         | 392         | IV   |
| 5      | Oil          | 72         | 55         | 64         | 78         | 56         | 17         | 342         | V    |
| 6      | Dal          | 36         | 50         | 48         | 75         | 48         | 33         | 290         | VI   |
|        | <b>Total</b> | <b>660</b> | <b>550</b> | <b>440</b> | <b>330</b> | <b>220</b> | <b>110</b> | <b>2310</b> |      |

**Source: Primary data**

By using the weighted ranking method the table 1.7.21 reveals that most of the respondents prefer to buy sugar. They give first rank to sugar. The second rank is given to kerosene. Third, fourth, fifth and sixth ranks are given to rice, wheat, oil and dal respectively.

So it is concluded that majority of the respondents prefer to buy sugar in PDS outlet.

### 1.7.9 Expectations from Public Distribution System

The following table 1.7.23 shows the respondents' expectations from public distribution system.

**Table 1.7.9 - Expectations from Public Distribution System**

| Sl. No | Expectations             | Rank       |            |            |            |            | Total score | Rank |
|--------|--------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|------|
|        |                          | I          | II         | III        | IV         | V          |             |      |
| 1      | Good quality             | 125        | 140        | 66         | 36         | 10         | 377         | I    |
| 2      | Adequate quantity        | 150        | 80         | 84         | 36         | 14         | 364         | II   |
| 3      | Easy availability        | 90         | 60         | 60         | 58         | 28         | 296         | IV   |
| 4      | Timely delivery          | 75         | 80         | 57         | 36         | 38         | 286         | V    |
| 5      | Extending operating days | 110        | 80         | 63         | 54         | 20         | 327         | III  |
|        | <b>Total</b>             | <b>550</b> | <b>440</b> | <b>330</b> | <b>220</b> | <b>110</b> | <b>1650</b> |      |

**Source: Primary data**

By using the weighted ranking method the table 1.7.23 reveals that most of the respondents expect good quality. They give first rank to good quality. The second rank is given to adequate quantity. Third, fourth and fifth ranks are given to extending operating days, easy availability and timely delivery respectively.

So it is concluded that majority of the respondents expect good quality of commodities from PDS outlet.

### **1.8 Findings**

- ❖ Half of the respondents are females.
- ❖ Majority of the respondents belong to the age group of 21 - 30 years.
- ❖ Gender does not influence the level of attitude PDS consumers.
- ❖ Most of the respondents are married.
- ❖ One third of the respondents have studied upto higher secondary.
- ❖ Most of the respondents earn the income level of below Rs.15,000.
- ❖ One third of the respondents are doing own business.
- ❖ There is no significant relationship between the demographic factors like age, gender, educational status and monthly income and level of attitude PDS consumers but there is significant relationship between the marital status and level of attitude PDS Consumers.
- ❖ Majority of the respondents are living in rural area.
- ❖ Most of the respondents are living in joint family.
- ❖ Majority of the respondents have upto 3 members.
- ❖ Most of the respondents are using the ration card for 21 - 30 years.
- ❖ Most of the respondents buy all commodities from PDS outlet.
- ❖ Half of the respondents say that PDS outlet opens for 3 - 4 days
- ❖ One third of the respondents feel that fake information has been entered.
- ❖ Half of the PDS dealers have indifferent attitude.
- ❖ Half of the respondents say that quality of commodities in the PDS outlet is average.
- ❖ Most of the respondents are satisfied with functioning of the PDS outlet.
- ❖ Two third of the respondents spend time for buying commodities from PDS outlet for 31 - 60 minutes.
- ❖ Majority of the respondents are satisfied with free rice in PDS outlet.
- ❖ Most of the respondents prefer to buy sugar.
- ❖ Major part of the respondents is satisfied with the services of PDS outlet.
- ❖ Most of the respondents expect good quality of the commodity from PDS outlet.
- ❖ Most of the respondents have availed free commodities from PDS outlet.
- ❖ Most of the respondents feel that the quality of commodity is less.
- ❖ Majority of the respondents say that most preferred commodity is sugar.



### **1.9 Suggestions**

The following are the suggestions recommended from this study to various beneficiaries like Public Distribution System and Public Distribution System consumers.

- ❖ The Public Distribution System should offer quality products to the consumers.
- ❖ The Public Distribution System should be opened six days in a week.
- ❖ The Public Distribution System should ensure the availability of product throughout the month.
- ❖ The Public Distribution System consumers should not sell the ration products in the open market. The government should take necessary steps.

### **1.10 Conclusion**

The Public Distribution System is one of the important elements of the Government's Food Security System. It is very useful not only to poor people buy also middle class people. So it plays a vital role among public. People can get all commodities in low price. They feel that all commodities are better. They are also highly satisfied with functioning and services of Public Distribution System. At the same time they still encounter some problems such as non-availability of commodities, less operating time, artificial scarcity, under weighting, improper response of the dealer and over written entries. So the government should take necessary steps to avoid irregularities in maintaining Public Distribution System outlet.