



A STUDY ON THE ROLE OF CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY IN MARKETING CIVIL SUPPLY PRODUCTS IN SALEM AND NAMAKAL DISTRICTS

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Introduction

Every one of us knew that India got independence on 15.08.1947. Till independence the administration of the government was with British. As India was ruled by British for more than two hundred years, we could not develop ourselves in all sectors. Further due to lack of adequate development in industry, science and technology and also poor literacy rate prevailed at the time of independence most of the people in India were not able to generate income to their family to meet the basic requirements like food, shelter and also the cloth. Most of the people in our country (more than 65 percent of its total population) residing in rural area and also depending on agriculture and allied industries of agriculture, when there is any rainfall failure or due to some other reasons, the farmers could not get income from the land. This led to poverty, starvation and sometimes famine in some of the areas. By considering the problems of the rural public and some of the weaker section in the urban area, the then governments started to supply the ration items at a concessional rate to all the families who are having ration card. The civil supply products are normally distributed through the co-operative stores, societies which are functioning in the particular area. In almost all places this system is followed. In Tamilnadu also the public distribution are handed over to co-operative societies in the areas concerned. From the beginning onwards the civil supply products are supplied to all the ration cardholders.

There is a separate set of employees are employed by the government for supplying civil supply products. Further in all villages the sales men and one supporting staff for weighing the goods are instructed to supply the goods regularly in every month. The co-operative banks regularly distribute the ration products received from civil supply department to all card holders irrespective of the community, caste and area. It is reported that most of the public have complaint about the performance of the employees of the public distribution system. They say that the quantity purchased or received from ration shop is not according to the weight prescribed. Further most of the public feel inconvenient to go ration shop because of the ill treatment by the employees in the civil supply department. Further it is felt by the village people that the civil supply products are not distributed to the respective card holders of the particular ward evenly. But nobody can deny the facts which prevailing in the civil supply system. Though there is proper supervision over the workers of the civil supply department and also the co-operative societies in various regions, we could not prevent malpractices in the public distribution system. For example in many occasions the civil supply backs were caught by the police particularly in Karala border. Further sugar and other material are sold directly to business people in bulk quantity by the civil supply workers. Many incidents were witnessed to the above statement. There is no purpose or special motive in blaming anybodies in this regard. But the state government should ensure proper distribution of ration item to all the people evenly without any partiality. Every one of us has the responsibility to monitor this system. When we refer the issues to the authorities concerned we are not able to get right solution to solve the problem in the public distribution system. The workers in co-operative societies should understand the responsibilities in distributing the civil supply products.

Normally they shift the responsibility to the seniors or sometimes to subordinates in the civil supply distribution department. When we realize and consider the issues the following questions were raised in the minds of the normal man.

1. Where it starts?
2. Who is responsible for the issues?
3. What are the real causes for the problems?
4. How it can be rectified?

To get the right solution for the above question it is necessary to have a thorough research in the public distribution system and the performance of the co-operative society with regard to civil supplies. By keeping the above views in mind the researcher has chosen the topic "A STUDY ON THE ROLE OF CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY IN MARKETING CIVIL SUPPLY PRODUCTS IN SALEM AND NAMAKAL DISTRICTS"

Statement of the Problem

The ultimate aim of the Civil Supply Office is to distribute the civil supply products at concessional rate or at free of cost based on the policy of the government. As per the direction of the government it is distributed through the co-operative societies in the particular village or town, etc. Regarding the price the government frames policy after considering various



factors prevailing particularly in rural areas of the state. In this regard the employment, income generation and the buying powers of the public in rural areas are given due consideration by the government before fixing the price for the civil supply products. In this juncture every one must know that the entire goods and commodities allocated to the public distribution system must reach all the people or citizen without any discrimination. But in reality what is going in this ration shop. Rice, sugar and other products in civil supplies are sometimes sold out to the business people in bulk quantity which leads to shortage of civil supply material for distributing to all the ration card holders. District supply office has to take responsibility to supply the civil supply products to the card holder in time. The co-operative societies in the particular area have additional responsibility in maintaining the ration shop in all villages and also in urban areas. In Tamilnadu there is prescribed system and policy for distributing the civil supply

In the earlier period everything was in a systematic manner which must followed by all government officials. The employees in co-operative societies must know their responsibilities in distributing the civil supply products at right time without any delay regularly in every month. But in many areas the co-operative societies should not follow a systematic time to open the ration shop and distribute the materials. They normally fix their own convenient to open the shop and supply the civil supply goods to the card holder based on the card number allotted to them. They do not bother about the working conditions of the village people. Further it was properly intimated to the public in any of the means of communication otherwise the co-operative should have a fixed time for supplying the civil supplies in months. But it is not followed by the employees and workers of civil supply department and co-operative societies.

Significance of the study

As per the report, there are many drawbacks in the public distribution system already followed in Tamilnadu. Hence, the goods are not properly distributed to the entire card holders. The ruling government and official concerned must try to monitor the fit falls in the existing system. But it is not done so. Weighing of civil supply products by the workers or employees in the co-operative store is one of the issues which are frequently faced by all the public in almost all ration shop. The workers and official are not concerned about the practical issues in the public distribution system. In this regard even the NGOs also keep mum to bring out the issues to the officials concerned.

The performance of civil supply workers and employees are questionable in many issues. The public must have awareness about all these issues. The government should monitor the system. But at present it is not concentrated. Hence, the research related to the title "A STUDY ON THE ROLE OF CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY IN MARKETING CIVIL SUPPLY PRODUCTS IN SALEM AND NAMAKAL DISTRICTS" is inevitable in nature. In this research the researcher will identify the role of the co-operative societies, responsibilities of the employees in civil supply, the problem faced by the respondents, causes for the problems and also the remedial measures to solve the issues in the civil supply which will the authorities concerned to distribute the civil supply products with out and discrepancies.

Objectives of the study

The following objectives have been framed to do the research work effectively and find out the result of the research work successfully.

1. To know the existing practices followed for distributing the civil supply products in the study area
2. To identify the role of co-operative societies in distributing the civil supply products in the study area.
3. To evaluate the performance of the civil supply workers in distributing the ration items
4. To know the satisfaction level of the public with regard to the services of workers in PDS
5. To find out the problems faced by the public (respondents) in getting the civil supply products evenly and regularly.
6. To find out the remedial measures to solve the issues and offer recommendations to the needy to distribute the civil supply goods without any discrimination.

Research Methodology

Research Design

Descriptive research was conducted in this study to make the research effective and useful to the needy.

Collection of data

Both the primary and secondary data were collected in this research work

Primary Data

In order to fulfill the objectives set, a sample study was carried out with the help of a well framed questionnaire. The questionnaire was prepared with the guidance of the experts in the relevant field. Necessary corrections were made in the

questionnaire to complete the research work successfully. A pilot was also conducted to verify the questionnaire is useful for the successful completion of the project. The respondents for the study were selected on the basis of varying background, based on their age, gender, dwelling place, educational qualification, monthly income and so forth, from the study area of Salem and Namakkal. The questionnaire was given to the respondents to provide the required data as and when the researcher explained each and every question to the respondents.

A noteworthy feature was that all the seven hundred (700) respondents filled the questionnaire with much zeal. This was due to the high involvement the members of the respondents those who buy goods under public distribution system. Primary data was collected from the sample respondents from the population by way preparing a questionnaire. The questionnaire was prepared with the guidance of the experts in the relevant field. Necessary corrections were made in the questionnaire to complete the research work successfully.

Secondary data

Secondary data was collected from internet, the journals and magazine and records published in the related topics.

Sample Selection

The population for the study is the public who availed the civil supply products based on ration in Salem and Namakkal districts. As the population for the study is numerous in the study area, the respondents were selected at random by using convenient sampling method from the study area. Among the total population 700 respondents were selected. In both the districts the respondents were selected from all the Taluks of the districts. The respondents consist of both the male and female.

Sampling design

Status of the study area	Classification			Total
	Urban	Semi-urban	rural	
Taluks	43	48	28	119
Municipalities	52	45	57	154
Town Panchayats	61	56	77	194
Panchayats	59	71	103	233
Total	215	220	265	700

Study Period:The study period for the research work covers 3-year period starting from October 2013 to September 2016

Study Area:Salem and Namakkal districts are being one of the districts which are having more acres of cultivable land and depending more on industry and on agriculture income in Tamilnadu. Further the Salem and Namakkal districts have adequate development in the industrial sectors. The public in the district suffers lot for getting the civil products from ration shop. These districts' areas are very familiar to the researcher as also research is hailing from Salem district. Hence the research selected Salem and Namakkal districts for his research work.

Statistical Tools:The collected data were analyzed and interpreted properly to find the result of the research work. Further to know the association between two variables in deciding the particular issues statistical tools like simple percentage, chi-square, rank correlation, ANOVA, Factor analysis and H test were applied.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Mother Tongue

Mother tongue is the first language that an individual learn to speak as a child. A survey was undertaken to know the mother tongue of the respondents. Table No.1 shows the mother tongues of the respondents.

Table no.1table showing the mother tongue of the respondents

Serial No	Mother tongue	No of respondents	% of the respondents
1	Tamil	560	80.00
2	Telugu	045	06.43
3	Malayalam	014	02.00
4	Kannada	035	05.00
5	Hindi	021	03.00
6	Others(specify)	025	03.57
	Total	700	100

Source: Primary data

Interpretation

From the above table it is inferred that among 700 respondents, 80 % of the respondents informed that their mother tongue is Tamil, 6.43% of the respondents told that Telugu is their mother tongue, 2.00 % of the respondents stated that their mother tongue is Malayalam, 3.00 % of the respondents conveyed that their mother tongue is Hindi, and 5% of the respondents speak kannada ,while the remaining 3.57% of the respondents, speak other languages

Marital Status

The formal union of a man and a woman, by which they become husband and wife, is called marriage. It is a combination of two or more elements. The marital status of an individual binds a man in spending the time where he or she has to be. Further after marriage the necessities of the individuals' increases, both the men and women are able to take a decision in solving the problems. Table No.2 reveals the marital status of the respondents.

Table no.2 ,table showing the marital status of the respondents

Serial no	Marital status	No of respondents	% of the respondents
1	Unmarried	127	18.14
2	Married	470	67.14
3	Divorce	39	05.57
4	Widow	44	06.29
5	Destitute	20	02.86
	Total	700	100

Source: Primary data

Interpretation

A survey was undertaken to know the marital status of the respondents, the survey clearly exhibits that among 700 respondents 67.14% of the respondents are married, 18.14% of the respondents are unmarried, 6.29% of the respondents have lost their spouse, and 5.57 % of the respondents are divorce whereas the remaining 2.86% of the respondents are destitute.

AGE: Age is one advancing years of individuals from their birth. The age plays a vital role in decision making of the individuals. Further depending on the age each individual gives their opinion on a particular issue. Age factors have much influence on the desires of the individuals. So in this research a survey is undertaken to know the age group of the respondents. Table no.3 shows the age group of the respondents.

Table no.3,table showing the age group of the respondents

Serial no	Age group	No of respondents	% of the respondents
1	18-25 years	207	29.57
2	26-35 years	278	39.71
3	36-45 years	160	22.86
4	Above 46 years	55	07.86
	Total	700	100

Source: Primary data

Interpretation

The above table depicts that among 700 respondents ,39.71% of the respondents belong to the age group of 26-35 years, 29.57 % of the respondents belong to the age group of 18-25 years, and 22.86 % of the respondents belong to the age group of 36-45 years while the remaining 7.86% of the respondents belong to the age group of above 46 years.

Table No 4,Association Between Occupational Status And Satisfaction Regarding The Approaches Of Workers In The Co-Operative Bank In Civil Supply

Factor	Calculated value ²	Table value	DF	Remarks
Occupation	15.448	15.507	8	Insignificant

It is obvious from the above table that the calculated chi-square value is less than the table value and the result is not significant at 5% level of significance. Hence the hypothesis "occupation of the respondents and the response regarding the satisfaction about the approaches of the workers in the co-operative bank with regarding the civil supply work are associated does not hold well. From the analysis, it is concluded that there is no relationship between the occupation of the respondents and their response in regarding the satisfaction about the approaches of the workers in the civil supply work.

Table no.5, Native Place And Satisfaction Regarding The Facilities In The Ration Shop

Sl.No	Native Place	SATISFACTION LEVEL						Total	
		Low		Medium		High			
		Count	Column %	Count	Column %	Count	Column %	Count	Column %
1.	Urban	33	23.7	23	13.6	85	21.7	141	20.1
2.	Semi urban	52	37.5	67	39.6	161	41.1	280	40.0
3.	Rural	54	38.8	79	46.8	146	37.2	279	39.9
	Total	139	100	169	100	392	100	700	100

The above table clearly depicts that the percentage of high response in regarding the satisfaction about the facilities in the ration shop was opined by the respondents who are living in semi urban area as the highest (41.1) and the same was lowest (21.7) by the respondents. Who are staying urban area. The percentage of medium level response on in regarding the satisfaction about the facilities in the ration shop was opined as the highest (46.8) by the respondents who are having rural as their native and the lowest (13.6) by the respondents from urban area. On the other hand the percentage of low-level response in regarding the satisfaction about the facilities in the ration shop was opined as the highest (38.8) by the respondents, who stay in rural area and the same was the lowest (23.7) among the respondents whose native place is urban.

In order to find the relationship between native of the respondents and response regarding the satisfaction about the facilities in the ration shop, a chi square test was used and the result of the test is shown in the following table

Table no.7, association between native place and native place and satisfaction regarding the facilities in the ration shop

Factor	Calculated value ²	Table value	DF	Remarks
Native place	8.006	9.488	4	Insignificant

It is obvious from the above table that the calculated chi-square value is less than the table value and the result is not significant at 5% level of significance. Hence the hypothesis “native of the respondents and the response regarding the satisfaction about the facilities in the ration shop are associated does not hold well. From the analysis, it is concluded that there is no relationship between the native of the respondents and their response regarding the satisfaction about the facilities in the ration shop

Findings

Major findings of the study are listed below:

1. Universal coverage is the hallmark of PDS in Tamil Nadu. Only the Government owned Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation, Cooperatives and women SHGs alone are involved in running FPS. More than 93 percent of FPS is run by cooperatives.
2. Salem district has the largest number of FPS, which was followed by Coimbatore district, and Chennai North.
3. More than 2 percent of cards in circulation were found bogus during the years 2001-2003 and the problem was high in Coimbatore district, which was followed by Chennai North.
4. The difference between State’s average open market price and PDS issue price of rice was more Rs.6 over the years, in contradiction to this annual off-take of rice has come down while food subsidy incurred by the State has increased from Rs.874 crores to 1240 crores.
5. While compared to Namakkal and Salem, the coverage of cardholders and FPS was high in Coimbatore district.
6. The distribution pattern of PDS articles shows that the distribution of rice and wheat was high in Salem district while kerosene was high in Coimbatore district.
7. In all the commodities, in all the sample districts, there was difference between commodities allotted and distributed; particularly the difference was high in rice.
8. The district wise and respondents’ category wise analysis showed that in all sample districts, the percentage of female respondents was high.
9. Middle age groups have close relationship with FPS.
10. The study found that majority of the respondents in the entire sample districts were literates and diploma level education (technical) was found high in Coimbatore district.
11. The study found that majority of the sample respondents was married. Further, family cards were viewed beyond PDS requirements.
12. It was found that sample respondents in all sample districts had higher level of exposure to mass media.



13. It was found that sample respondents had higher level of contacts with change agents, especially NGOs.
14. It was found that majority of the respondents, in all categories, in all districts had membership with PACB for more than 5 years.
15. It was found that by virtue of their participation in cultural, social and political organizations, sample respondents enjoyed position in the Board of Management of PACB or in running FPS.

Suggestions

The following suggestions are made to make the PDS more effective based on the findings of this study.

1) More Role for Women SHGs to run FPS The role of women SHGs were widely appreciated not only in micro credit but also in running the FPS. The reasons quoted were for business viability of FPS as well as attracting the participation of users of PDS. At the same time women SHGs need training to handle the system more effectively. By giving proper training they may be involved widely in running the FPS.

2) Vigilance Committees The role of vigilance committees should be made transparent, accountable and responsible. Wide publicity must be given on the role of these committees and the particulars of officers' in-charge of the committees. In this study it was found that the round the clock control room established specially for monitoring PDS at the office of the Joint Registrar of Cooperative Societies, Salem and Namakkal district have given positive results. These facilities available at district headquarters should be made known to the public.

3) Role of FPS The role of FPS cannot be restricted with the distribution of rationed articles alone, both in the context of business viability as well as safeguarding the poor against spiraling price of essential commodities. Hence, FPS should concentrate on non-controlled articles also. At the same time they should be competitive enough in attracting the consumers.

4) Distribution of Family cards Family cards are used not only for purchasing requirements at FPS but also as an identity card for the family. The problems of bogus cards as well as not-issuing the cards to genuine cases were widely reported during the study. This problem should be viewed seriously.

5) Role of Cooperatives in PDS FPS has brought more problems to cooperatives in some cases, while they were the salary providers to employees of cooperatives in some cases. This aspect need a separate study to define the role of cooperatives in PDS as well as to make use of cooperative network to make the PDS more effective.

6) Bogus Cards It was found that, 386614 bogus cards were detected during raids during the years 2013-2016. Effective coordination between local bodies, revenue authorities and lead and link societies will alone be able to solve this problem. Above all the employee of the PDS retail outlet should be made responsible for eradicating the problem of bogus cards. As the maximum number of cards per ration shops is 1000, the PDS retail outlet personnel could early detect and prevent bogus cards. Also the support of local PDS Vigilance Committees may also be used in connection.

Conclusion

Universal coverage is the hallmark of PDS in Tamil Nadu. State Government is making all efforts to make the PDS more effective by ensuring the availability, affordability and accessibility of PDS articles to the poor. The network of PDS consists of 28132 FPS covering 1.52 lakh family cards. Here, Cooperatives have been given more role in running FPS. The emerging role of SHGs in PDS is widely appreciated. Moreover, they enjoy the participation and involvement of entire village in running FPS. Hence, FPS run by SHGs are found cost effective and trouble free. The difference between State's average, open market price and PDS issue price of rice was more than Rs.6, but at the same time, off-take of PDS have come down, in contradiction to this food subsidy incurred by state have increased over the years. Sample districts wise analysis shows that the problems of bogus cards were high in Coimbatore district. There were differences between allotment and disbursement of PDS articles. The participation of women and middle-aged respondents were found high in all sample districts. Lack of information on the non-availability of ration-articles was major reason for not lifting articles during certain times.

The non-controlled articles available at FPS were not attractive, as they lack competitive advantage; sample respondents opined that non-availability of non-controlled articles was the major problem. Hence, irrespective of category of respondents opined that to control the open market price, non-controlled articles too should be supplied through FPS, in addition to making available the entitlements of individual consumers for their purchase. Further, this is the major suggestion given by the sample respondents to make PDS more effective. This shows that to make the system more viable and effective, the participation of people is important. In this context the best practices of some women SHGs may be emulated and the role of local bodies in running FPS may be strengthened. Above all the present system of universal system of PDS should be continued as it has control over the market prices of essential commodities.



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