

Food Security – Targeted Public Distribution System: Some Observations

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Abstract: *In India, since the planning period number of development programmes had been undertaken by the Government of India. But the development activities are not implemented properly due to many loopholes in the existing system. Even today many people are away from primary needs like food shelter and cloths and other amenities for a better living. The ministry of food and agriculture department has announced 232 million tones of food grains produced by the agriculture sector in the 2010-11 and around 40 million tons food grains are stored in the ware housing corporation for a proper distribution of food to the needy people. And at the same time, 26 percent people are still under the below poverty line it is announced by the Planning Commission of India. And the expert committee under the Chairmanship of Suresh Tendulkar has announced 39 percent people are under the BPL. In this regard the researchers expressed their views on the TPDS, National Food Policy and the role of policy makers, rulers and the civil societies. Finally the researchers are strongly felt that the policy makers, Administrators and the Civil Societies should be work at the gross root level for the food security of the BPL.*

Introduction

Food security as defined as ‘to provide the basic food needs to the people at long run basis and it should be useful for the physically and economically development in all seasons around the year’ by FAO. Nutritional must be avail for all people to better livelihood and is should be sufficient available and at the same time it must be long time and sustainable, these are depend on the purchasing power of the BPL families.

It is established fact that a remarkable percentage of people are unable to get proper food in the developing countries like India. Among the primary needs food occupied the first place, for better lively hoods the quality of nutritional food is necessary in any where in the globe. According to Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) out of 790 million people, 34 million people are not avail the nutritional food in 1996-97. According 2003-4 estimations 14 percent of world population are suffering from lack of nutritional food, this problem is more in developing nations i.e. 17 percent, where as in the developed nations are only 2.5 percent. In India around 20 percent are under the low level of nutrition food is reported in 2001-03. The planning commission estimated that the BPL is around 26 percent, among them 18 percent are suffering from the food security problem in the country.

The FAO, has recommended food grains with quality nutrition’s levels to the extent of 440 grams per day per person. But in India 462.7 grams in 2003-4 it is better than previous years, it is 395 grams in 1950-51, during the planning era availability of food grains were improved, but at the same time balanced nutrition food items are not available like pulses, eggs meet etc. the availability of pulses 35.8 grams per day per person in 2003-4, but the optimum level of pulses is around 50 grams is required, in 1951 the availability of pulses is around 60 grams, it is noted that the pulses availability is degraded in the planning period. Why the cereals availability improves and why the pulses are degraded? In the planning period the Government of India has been introduced a number of activities to improve the food grains production through the green revolution and new agriculture strategy, due to this the food grains production are increased at 4 times and only one time improvement in the aspect of pulses, at the same time the population is 3

times increased, in this regard the availability of pulses are not in sufficient in the country. And at the same time green revolution was adversely effect in the case of pulses production.

Methodology

This paper is based on the secondary source of data, the data were collected from reputed journals, books, edited articles and some publications and the some source of internet is also used. The data were analyzed by the researcher through their observations and presented their self opinions which are relating to objectives like, historical perspective of food security in India, the role of Public Distribution System (PDS) to ensure the food security for the needy people and finally how the food policy has been implemented in India. The paper is also some limitations like it is not micro level study, it is purely based on the secondary source, and at the same time the data representation is also meager. The findings or observations are also meager due to the findings are not generalized for the research purpose. It is only an analysis about the policy perspectives, its implementations and the major problems and challenges.

Historical Perspective of Food Security

Beginning of 19th century, India has self sufficient in the aspect of food grains, according to poverty estimation committee in 1880 there are 5.16 million tones of production surplus in every year in the country. In between 1890 -1899 India has 3.5 million tones of food grains exported to other countries in every year. Up to 1921 this favorable condition had continued, it is no doubt about up to 1921 India had self sufficient in the food grain availability and in the production also. The issue of food security is arise after 1921 onwards, due to the reasons of one is over population, since 1921 the Indian population growth at rapid change. Second one is India had divide first time in 1937, Burma farmed as new country from India, then after the Bengal drought conditions are effected in 1943. The second time India had divided as India and Pakistan in the time of independence 1947, in second time India had lose 16 percent of the population and 31 percent of the area, that the area is very fertile soil due to this we lose the production capacity of the food grains. Due to this India has imported food grains on the condition of PL 480 in the following years 1948-49, 1957-58, 1963-64, 1964-65, and 1965 – 66 for these five years around 26 million tones imported.

The nature of this issue is basically caused by three angles first one is production aspect second one is qualitative and third one is low level of purchasing power of BPL families in the country. These three aspects are crucial to analyze the nature of the food security issue in the country.

For the first phase 1921 - 1971 period of 50 years India has faced the food grain production problem, the production levels are up and downs due to various reasons. In this regard India has imported food grains in the following years 1948-49, 1957-58, 1963-64, 1964-65, and 1965 – 66 for the five years around 26 million tones imported by the PL 480.

In the qualitative angle, majority of BPL families dose not avail the nutrition's levels of food items like cereals, lipases, milk and eggs etc. are needed for optimum level of food. The availability of cereals is more than the sufficient levels but other nutritious are not in the sufficient, due to lack of production.

After 3rd plan India has introduced the new agriculture policy it is called as green revolution, due to the implementation of green revolution the production of food grains were

improved but the cost of production also raised. This situation has resulted the prices of food grains hike and it is effected the purchasing power of common man, it is the new dimension of the food security problem.

India has face the food scarcity since 1921 to till day due to the certain reasons, India entered in the second stage of demographic theory, since 1921 to 1981 the population was raised 251 millions to 683 millions at present 1210 millions reported in 2011 census. The high growth rate of population is the main problem of food scarcity in our country.

After independence India has introduce the five year planes, during the planning period the number of development activities were practically implemented due to this the productivity and per capita income has increased to Rs. 255 in 1951 and Rs. 36,000 in 2009-2010 and the production of food grains are raised from 49 million tones to 220 millions and the poverty ratio is decreased to 50 per cent of 26 per cent. The production of food grains had improved but at the same time even 18 per cent of Indians are face the food security problem. It is interesting to note that supply of food grains dose not compete the demand of food grains, due to the over population and at the same time distribution system dose not work at proper way. The low level of supply destroyed the food grains by the pest and rats, marketable surplus are low due to self consumption of producers. The traders are creating the black market for higher profits these are supply side of forces. Due to the implementation of Green Revolution the production of food grains were improved but the cost of production also raised, it leads the prices of food grains hike, due to this reason the purchasing power of BPL families are in down trap. All together leads to the food insecurity in our country

Food Policy in India

Before 1942 the British Indian Government dos not take any precautionary steps to over take the food problem in the county. After Bengal drought condition in 1943 the first time this issue is focused by the British Indian Government. Then the government stated the Grow More Food Grains for poor it is a slogan by the estimates committee, but it not implemented at gross root level like an action plane. In 1959 ford foundation committee also review the food grains problem; they had also advice the Government 'there is a need of 100 million tones of food grains production in the country. To over take the problem of food grain production the Government of India has introduced the green revolution during 1960s. The following targets are adapted to the food policy of India.

In the part of food policy the government has insisted the structural activities like implementation of land reforms, enter into wholesale business in the aspect of food grains in 1957 by the recommendations of Ashoke Mehatha, new agricultural policy,(Green Revolution) establishment of FCI in 1965, Central Where Housing Corporation and State Where Housing Corporations are also started in the same year Agricultural Price Commission is also established in 1965 year, In decade of 1960s The PDS has introduced it is an important measure to control the supply food grins for the needed people and it was extended to hill areas in 1985. Among these, the PDS is an important role to provide the food security to the needy sections in the country. The main objectives of PDS, to provide the primary need of food grains to the BPL families at subsidy prices, to provide the sufficient quantity and to identify the BPL families through the use of proper methodology.

The PDS has changed as the name of Revamped Public Distribution System in 1992 January and in 1996 December it was change as Targeted Public Distribution System.

Reviews on PDS and Food Security

According to SuryaNarayana, observations 44.00 percent of rural and 56.00 of urban people depend on TDPS for food grains. And another observation by Prof R. Radhakrishna through PDS the poverty ratio is decreased by 1.7 percent in the national level and 3.2 per cent in the state of Andhra Pradesh. If one rupee per day transfer to the poor families the burden of Central Government is only 5.37 crores to be needed. Through the TPDS there are 65.2 million people has been benefitted and every BPL family to got the 25 kg rice or wheat at the rate of Rs. 5.65 and 4.15 respectively.

According to the M S Swaminathan Research Foundation Team in 2010 clearly stated that PDS could be improved and made more effective through certain policy interventions and reform. It had also been maintained that if PDS is to address the issue of food security at the household level, the ration must be on a per capita basis and not on a per household basis.

Food subsidy has been around or less than 1 per cent of GDP, and given the importance of food and nutrition security from both the rights perspective and a human development viewpoint. In our country the food subsidy is a meager amount but it is around 10 per cent of their GDP in the developed countries. The Government should increase the percentage of food security to the backward of the marginalized sections of the society

According to planning commission of India, pre estimation of BPL and AAY cards are 11.08 crores as on 31.03.2010, the distribution of food grains under TPDS to BPL and AAY families is 35 kg per family per month. But the distribution is family criteria not per head it is also lead to insecure to the total family to the some of days in the month.

S Ayyappan (2009) argued that with the 2.3 per cent of land and 18 per cent of global share of population we are achieve by 2009 , about 12 percent wheat, 21 percent paddy, 25 percent pulses, 10 percent fruits, 22 percent sugarcane and 16 percent milk of global production. But the question is why the India is 64th rank in global hunger index by UNDP report 2010. And at the same time the poverty ratio is around 27 percent by the PCI. I think the production of agriculture could not reach the needy people due to the system drawbacks of governments and the public representatives.

In India the number of Government programmes has implemented for the food security and food access like TDPS, AAY, ICDS, MDM, NREGS and self-employment programmes etc. these are increased the access of food and nutrition levels to the needy people and some social safety programmes in India have helped in improving incomes as well as it providing protection to the population, especially to the vulnerable sections of the country. But the implementation of the schemes and programmes are not reached the some the area and sections like hill and countryside in India due to that sections and areas are insecure even to day. However, there are lots of gaps and inefficiencies in the social protection programmes.

Some Suggestions to Overcome the Food Insecurity in India

1. To control the extended of drought conditions, and avoid the malnutrition's in the availability of food grains.
2. To maintain the stabilized price policy for the consumers and as well as producers.
3. To announced the supporting price for the control of food grains production fluctuations and to provide the modern inputs to the farmers.

4. The government must be collecting the food grains with procurement prices.
5. The procurement food grains should be distributed to the BPL families at the subsidy prices.
6. The government should be maintaining the buffer stocks.
7. Access to food can be increased through employment due to growth in labour intensive sectors and/or through social protection programmes.
8. There is need of improvement in women's empowerment, education, health, safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene.
9. To create the rural institutions for better utilization of resources like land, water, marketing of agricultural and non-agricultural products, credit, technology, and infrastructure are needed for better governance.
10. The government employment programmes should be based on labour intensives techniques these are very much useful for unskilled and illiterate poor people.

Summing up

Since independence India has many policies and programmes were implemented these were given some significant results but the fruits are limited due to this even in the 21st century we are facing so many evils like illiteracy poverty, unemployment, inequalities, regional disparities, political imbalances, implementation of land reforms, low agricultural productivity, in security of social and economic conditions, access to food and insecurity of food, empower of women and social all the troubles are still India is facing today. Food security and the PDS are the main theme in the present paper. The problem of food insecurity is resulted some of issues like poverty, malnutrition unhealthy, unrest physical imbalances of the human body etc. However, food insecurity and malnutrition continue to be high. The problem is with both design and implementation of the programmes. The focus of reforms can now be shifted to more efficient delivery Public Distribution System. It has been recognized that better governance is very important for effective functioning of food-based programmes in India. Social mobilization, community participation and decentralized approach are necessary in the present existing TPDS. In Indian agricultural productivity is very low when compared with rest of the world nations. There is a need of strong agricultural infrastructural facilities for the better involvement and to get higher yield of in agriculture sector.

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