

PERCEPTION OF FAIR PRICE SHOP'S DEALERS TOWARDS PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

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ABSTRACT

The PDS (Public distribution System) network in India is executed by the accomplishment of certain steps which include procurement, storage, movement, distribution and sale of food grains. It works with the prime intent to procure food grains from the farmers at remunerative price, thereafter distributing them to the consumers at affordable price through a network of FPS (Fair Price Shops) or ration shops. The FPSs play an important role in the retail distribution of essential commodities under PDS and the success of distribution system to a greater extent depends on the working of FPSs. This paper deals with the perceptions and problems faced by Fair Price Shops dealers with the functioning of FPSs in three districts of Punjab. The present study was undertaken in Mohali, Sangrur and Mansa districts of Punjab. For collecting data, the dealers of 90 FPSs (26 rural areas dealers and 64 urban areas dealers) were selected from these three districts by using random sampling.

KEYWORDS: Public Distribution System, Fair Price Shops, Punjab

INTRODUCTION

The most important medium of ensuring Food Security to the population undertaken by the Governmental Policies at the micro-scale is the Public Distribution System (PDS). It is primarily a social welfare and antipoverty programme of the government of India and It has been recognized as a permanent feature of the Indian economy for the supply and distribution of essential commodities. India offers an efficient systematic network of PDS through a chain of Fair Price Shops (FPS) functioning both in rural and in urban areas. With an association of around 460 thousand Fair Price Shops, PDS serves to offer better in the rural regions than in the marketplace. The programme functions with the novel objective to offer incentive price to the farmers, thus regulating persistent supply of food grains and also, subsidizing the utilization. India presents a rich programme of PDS with the prime aim to maintain an efficient allocation system of providing fundamental food commodities to the weaker, marginalized and the vulnerable sections of the society at reasonable price, hence, defending them with practices like adulteration, price rise, under weighment, etc., usually employed by the common vendors. Rice, wheat, sugar, edible oil, kerosene, etc are the commodities distributed under the PDS Programme. The Government of India (GOI), both at the Central as well as at the State Level, is investing ample monetary funds on the mentioned system together with heavy machinery to make it valuable to the public and ease them with price, quality and quantity security. The PDS has been in operation through a network established by the Food Corporation of India (FCI), 1965, which functions to procure and hold stocks of food grains, making the distribution every

month throughout the nation (Mr. K. Thulaseedharan Nair, 2008). It provides an important link between the producers and consumers by making available goods and services at a right place, at right time and at a right price (Kulwant Singh Pathania, 2005).

The PDS Network in India is executed by the accomplishment of certain steps which include procurement, storage, movement, distribution and sale of food grains. It works with the prime intent to procure food grains from the farmers at remunerative price, thereafter distributing them to the consumers (particularly the identified and targeted sections within the region) at affordable price and maintenance of food stocks to provide food security and price stability to the citizens. Both Central and State Government are involved in the identification of beneficiaries, while the Central Government acquires the food grains from the farmers at MSP (Minimum Support Price) and vends it to the State at CIP (Central Issue Price). Furthermore, it also shares the duty to transport the grains from the central warehouse to the state god owns. However, the State functions by distributing these supplies to the consumers through a network of FPS (Fair Price Shops) or ration shops (PRS, 2013). Thus, PDS covers a network of around 5.13 lakh FPS that strives to provide 16 crore households the monthly food essentials at subsidized price (PRS, 2013). Moreover, FPS can be categorized into various types based on the type of ownership they hold: i) FPS controlled and supervised by the State Civil Supplies Corporation, ii) FPS managed by the Cooperative Societies, iii) FPS under the private proprietorship, and iv) FPS controlled by Panchayat. This must be the largest public network of its type in the world currently distributing roughly 50-55 MMT of grains annually through FPSs. The National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013 also relies on this vehicle to deliver food security to 67 percent of population (75 percent rural and 50 percent urban) with an estimated distribution of about 61.4 MMT of grains, mainly rice and wheat (Gulati and sains, 2015).

In Punjab, a well-organized Public Distribution System (PDS) is maintained in the State through network of 19705 Fair Price Shops and 7421755 cardholders constitute AAY, BPL, ADS and APL cards in 2015. As per the present Govt. policy 350 ration cards are required for opening a fair price shop in the urban areas and 300 ration cards or 1500 units in the Rural areas. Whenever the number of ration cards exceeds 700 in urban areas a second ration depot can be opened in that area. The total number of BPL families in the State in 2015, is limited to 11.87 lakh (8.77 lakh rural and 3.10 lakh urban) which is about 28% of the families in the State. Thus, the State Government had launched Atta Dal Scheme w.e.f. 15.08.2007, about 14 lac economically weak families with below Rs 30,000 p.a and in the year of 2015-16, 27.4 lac families with below Rs 60,000 p.a. family income had been identified as beneficiaries of this scheme. These beneficiary families had been issued special blue ration cards for distribution of wheat and dals.

The efficiency and success of distribution system to a greater extent depends on the working of FPSs as the fair price shops are the centre of the functioning of PDS. The FPSs play an important role in the retail distribution of essential commodities under PDS. Thus, access to the PDS facilities depends on a variety of factors, among which management, organization And viability of fair price shops are of crucial significance. Fair Price Shop is a medium of making PDS items available to the ultimate needy consumers. To study the views and the opinions of dealers regarding the feasibility of FPS is of utmost importance.

In Punjab, Fair price shop owners expressed their dissatisfaction with an indefinite strikes in years of 2013 and 2015 to demand compensation for distributing subsidized food grain scheme and stopped to distribute subsidized items including food grain to Below Poverty Line families or kerosene during these strikes. In 2013, with the coverage of 26,000 fair price shops across the state, the Punjab government started the New Atta Dal scheme to distribute wheat at Rs 1 per kg

and pulses at Rs 20 per kg to supply double the beneficiaries under this scheme from 15 lakh to 30 lakh families. Thus, for bearing administrative and transportation expenses for distribution of ration under the new Atta-dal scheme, the shop owners demanded Rs 20,000 per month as fixed compensation (PTI, CHd, Dec 2013). In 2015, Fair price shop owners have stopped distribution of subsidized food grain under the National Food Security Act, demanded commission for the same. The states like Haryana, Delhi and even Union Territory Chandigarh were provided commission of Rs 48 per quintal, Rs 70 per quintal and Rs 50 per cent quintal respectively to their depot holders but in Punjab, due to lack of such commission and transportation and labour charges, fair price shop owners engaged themselves in black marketing. (PTI, chd, 2015). There fore, this paper deals with the profile and functioning of FPSs and analysis the perception of fair price shop's dealers towards Public Distribution System (PDS) and the constraints faced by Fair Price Shops (FPSs) meant to deliver essential commodities to the households in Punjab state.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature review presents a detailed account of investigation already made in the past respective of the associated topic of study. Thus, the current literature attempts to showcase the collage of all the earlier findings on the Public Distribution System made in India as well as in abroad. Hence various research studies related to Public Distribution System are as following:

Sharma Anuradha (1997) presented detailed study of the organizational management system of PDS along with that of Fair Price Shops functional in the Jammu province of Jammu and Kashmir. The research explicated the main characteristics of PDS including the efficiency it holds within the rural region, FPS execution system, the customers' opinion along with the functional nature of distribution scheme both at the Central as well as at the State Level. The findings checked up the precision attained between the promises given and the reality achieved by the PDS, and further demonstrated certain measures to provide confrontation to all the drawbacks encountered.

Pathania Kulwant Singh (2005) enquired both the qualitative and quantitative characteristics of PDS administration within the state of Himachal Pradesh under his study named as "Public Distribution System, Status, Challenges and Remedial Strategies". He revealed that the ratio of BPL families within the region was higher than 70 percent, thus, the deprived class were unable to meet their basic needs of life. Black-marketing, hoarding and inflation practices further served as a bane for the destitute class and made their life more miserable and troubled. Therefore, he requested the governmental policies and the administrative class to acquire strict attitude and take serious steps towards the abolition of these malpractices and suggested the launch of mobile FPS in the remote areas so as to successfully cater the needs of the needy class.

D. Ananda (2008) framed the research title as "State Response to Food Security: A Study of the PDS in Anantapur District of Andhra Pradesh" where he enquired the working efficacy of PDS in the respective region of the state. He pen-down the opinion and views of the consumers considering the quality, amount, rate and the services offered by the vendor as the key points. Moreover, he provided suggestions to provide modification in the current system of distribution so that the future self can be benefitted.

Kumar Parmod (2010) conducted his research within six different states of India, which included Delhi, Uttrakhand, Kerala, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand to inquire the effectiveness of the PDS scheme under the title "Targeted Public Distribution System: Performance and Inefficiencies". The study demonstrated serious role played by

Delhi and Uttarakhand in the interest of the poor where almost 98 percent beneficiaries received 38 kg of cereals. On the other hand, Maharashtra and Kerala covered nearly 96 percent households. Both Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand were not impressive enough in terms of targeting households and making distribution of foodgrains possible. The learnings highlighted the criteria adopted to classify the BPL and AAY families from the entire population and made a detailed inspection of the quality and the quantity of food essentials allocated under FPS.

Devi V. Jaisudha (2012) compiled the study with the title “A Study on the Public Distribution System in Kanyakumari District Tamil Nadu” where she attempted to examine the requirements of ration card holders and checked whether they were satisfied with the running system of PDS in Kanyakumari region. Further, inquiry on the opinion of FPS owners with other concerned officials was made and the services offered by them to the identified beneficiaries were thoroughly inspected. The findings aimed to provide aid to the government policies in reforming the current PDS system so as to make it more impressive and effective.

Kavita (2014) in her research work of “Public Distribution System in Haryana: An Evaluation” provided prime weightage to predict the SES (Socio Economic Status) of the deprived people in the referred state. The study aimed to represent the perceptions, the opinions, the satisfaction level and the hurdles encountered by the identified classes and the FPS proprietors. The complaints recorded pointed both towards the policy and the execution troubles, like food commodities deliverance, population reach, subsidy level and under-weightment, bogus ration cards, deteriorated quality, absence of stocks, non deliverance of food essentials, etc. respectively.

Objectives of the Study

- To know about the perception of fair price shop's dealers towards Public Distribution System (PDS)
- To study the constraints faced by Fair Price Shops dealers

Research Methodology and Findings

The Present study is empirical in nature and has been studied by using primary and secondary data. Survey method was followed for this study. The present study was undertaken in Mohali, Sangrur and Mansa districts of Punjab, an agricultural state in Northwest India. For collecting data, the dealers of 90 FPSs (26 rural areas dealers and 64 urban areas dealers) were selected from these three districts by using random sampling. 90 respondents were visited with the help of food supply officials of Punjab. Punjab is situated in north-west of India and has an area of 50,362 km². According to 2011 census, the population of Punjab is 27,704,236 and literacy rate is 76.70 percent. According to 2011 census, Mansa district has a population of 7, 68,808 with a sex ratio of 880 female for every 1000 males and a literacy rate of 62.8 percent. Where as Mohali and Sangrur districts have the population of 986,147 and 16, 54,408 The literacy rate of Mohali district is 84.9 and Sangrur is 69.95 percent. The following tables explain the detail of FPSs and Cardholders in the state.

Table 1: (Details of Fair Price Shops/No. of Ration Cards in the Punjab State in 2015)

Sr. No.	Name of District	Fair Price Shops	No. of Ration Cards				
			AAY	BPL	ADS	APL	Total Cards
1	Amritsar	2128	9143	23154	98714	530430	661441
2	Barnala	376	4207	18422	24384	125412	172425
3	Bathinda	771	5543	8431	87432	319207	420613
4.	Faridkot	489	3148	3745	49659	155220	211772
5.	Fatehgarh Sahib	348	1912	6003	31151	116747	155813

6.	Fazilka	731	12756	18968	60267	171702	263693
7.	Ferozepur	765	9715	16075	41732	170913	238435
8.	Gurdaspur	1360	5130	23514	110430	283620	422694
9.	Hoshiarpur	901	8770	5799	95624	343266	453459
10.	Jalandhar	1805	7115	15188	83071	476076	581450
11.	Kapurthala	435	4140	9979	43530	166804	224453
12.	Ludhiana	2282	8230	3378	136976	735514	884098
13.	Mansa	543	5705	9644	50641	153900	219890
14.	Moga	580	3556	7543	36100	215109	262308
15.	Pathankot	555	2603	11325	38661	123002	175591
16.	Patiala	1462	9745	21611	83128	379491	493975
17.	Rupnagar	374	2027	7361	37896	146347	193631
18.	Sahibzada Ajit Singh Nagar	384	2384	5968	41263	184992	234607
19.	Sangrur	1448	9143	39013	68135	289280	405571
20.	Saheed Bhagat Singh Nagar	262	916	4836	34371	137557	177680
21.	Sri Muktsar Sahib	773	10494	9764	91231	197781	309270
22.	Taran Taran	933	6689	18789	74691	158717	258886
Total		19705	133071	288510	1419087	5581087	7421755

Source: Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Department of Food and Public Distribution Government of India, Department of Food & Civil Supplies

The above table reveals that in the year 2015, there were 19705 fair price depots and consumer societies working in the state to provide essential commodities to the consumers. Out of these, 2282, 2128 and 1805 maximum ration shops were in Ludhiana, Amritsar and Jalandhar and 262, 348, 374 were in Saheed Bhagat Singh nagar, Fatehgarh Sahib, Rupnagar respectively. There were 133071 AAY, 288510 BPL, 1419087 ADS and 5581087 APL ration cards in Punjab.

Field Survey

A survey was conducted in three districts (Sangrur, Mansa and Mohali) of Punjab to analysis the perception of fair price shop's dealers towards Public Distribution System (PDS). This paper has been prepared to analysis the managerial aspects of Fair Price Shops through the dealers of 90 FPSs (26 rural areas dealers and 64 urban areas dealers) have been studied and makes an attempt to analyze the opinion of dealers from both urban and rural areas regarding the working of FPSs in the state. There are sets of factors related to the operations and viability of fair price shops. These are number of cards attached to each retail outlet, delivery management of PDS items, rating the quality of goods, dealers opinion regarding the quality of ration goods, behavior of customers and officials etc. The following table explained the total no. of rural and urban dealers of fair price shops.

i) Region –Wise Distribution of Respondents

Table 2: Geographical Region

Area	Rural	Urban	Total
No. Of Respondents	26	64	90
Percentage	(28.9)	(71.1)	(100.0)

Source: As per Survey

The above table indicates that there are 90 (100 percent) total depots holders which constitute 26 (28.9percent) from rural areas and 64 (71.1 percent) from urban areas. Thus, it is noticed from the above table that there are total 90 respondents of three districts Mansa, Sangrur and Mohali. The table-2 reveals the different occupation of FPS employees in

both rural and urban areas of Mansa, Sangrur and Mohali. These respondents are from different occupations; Business, service, Agriculture and others.

ii) Occupation -Wise Distribution of Respondents

Table 3: Occupation

Occupation / Region	Rural No. of Percentage Respondents	Urban No. of Percentage Respondents	Total No. of Percentage Respondents
Agriculture	6 (23.1)	5 (7.8)	11 (12.2)
Service	6 (23.1)	4 (6.3)	10 (11.1)
Housewife	3 (11.5)	6 (9.4)	9 (10.0)
Business	3 (11.5)	10 (15.6)	13 (14.4)
Others	8 (30.8)	39 (60.9)	47 (52.2)
Total	26 (100.0)	64 (100.0)	90 (100.0)

Source: As per Survey

The sampled data revealed that out of total 90 respondents, 47 (52.2 percent) respondents were also involved in other jobs, constitute 30.8 percent respondents, were rural and 60.9 percent respondents were urban, in three district Mansa, Sangrur and Mohali of Punjab. Whereas 13(14.4 percent) respondents were business man, constitute 11.5 percent were rural and 15.6 percent were urban depots holders in Mansa, Sangrur and Mohali districts. In addition to it, 11 (12.2 percent) respondents were farmers, constitute 23.1 percent rural and 7.8 percent urban. Only 10 (11.1) and 9 (10.0) employees were service man and housewives respectively.

iii) Number of Family Cards in the Fair Price Shops

The number of family cards served by the FPS is determined by population density of the area, serving capacity of the FPS and the agency running the FPS. Table-8 presents the classification of the sample respondents based on number of family cards in the FPS.

Table 4: Responses Regarding Total Cards Served

No of Ration Cards	Rural No. of Percentage Respondents	Urban No. of Percentage Respondents	Total No. of Percentage Respondents
Below 200	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
200-300	13 (50.0)	15 (23.4)	28 (31.1)
300-400	3 (11.5)	12 (18.8)	15 (16.7)
Above 400	10 (38.5)	37 (57.8)	47 (52.2)
Total	26 (100.0)	64 (100.0)	90 (100.0)

Source: Field Survey

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentages of dealers of Fair Price Shops.

The value of chi-square $X^2 = 6.096$

The table value at 5 percent to .05= 5.99 with 2 degree of freedom

The data in above table shows that 28 (31.1 percent) of fair price shops from both urban and rural areas serving 200-300 ration cards. Whereas 3 (11.5 percent) of the fair price shops in rural areas and 12 (18.8 percent) of fair price shops in urban areas are serving 300-400 ration cards. On the other hand, 10(38.5 percent) of the fair price shops in rural areas and 37(57.8 percent) of the fair price shops in urban areas are serving more than 400 ration cards. The null hypothesis

is rejected after applying the χ^2 , as the calculated value 6.096 is greater than the table value 5.99 at 5 percent significance level with 2 degree of freedom. It can be inferred that there is a significant difference in registered ration cards in the urban and rural fair price shops, with the shops in the urban areas serving a little more number of ration cards.

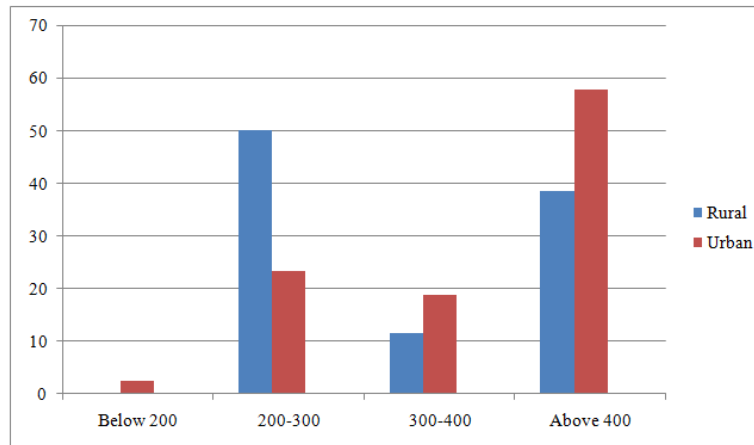


Figure 1.1: Total Cards Served

iv) Delivery Management of PDS Items

The following table shows the opinion of dealers in respect of time taken in the delivery of placed order of goods by the stockiest.

Table 5: Responses Regarding Delivery Management of PDS Items

Delivery Time	Rural No. of Percentage Respondents	Urban No. of Percentage Respondents	Total No. of Percentage Respondents
Within 1 days	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
2-3 days	1 (3.8)	5 (7.8)	6 (6.7)
4-5 days	3 (11.5)	8 (12.5)	11 (12.2)
More than 5 days	22 (84.6)	51 (79.7)	73 (81.1)
Total	26 (100)	64 (100.0)	90 (100.0)

Source: Field Survey

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentages of dealers of Fair Price Shops.

The value of chi-square $\chi^2 = 0.506$

The table value at 5 percent to .05= 5.99 with 2 degree of freedom

It is clear from the above table that the majority of 73 dealers (81.1percent) of fair price shops both in rural as well as urban areas are getting delayed delivery within more than 5 days. 79.7 percent dealers from urban areas and 84.6 percent from rural areas fall under this category due to bad condition of transportation. Whereas 11.5 percent from rural areas and 12.5 percent from urban areas are getting delivery within 4-5 days On the other hand, only 3.8 percent dealers of rural areas and 7.8 percent dealers of urban areas get quick delivery within 2-3 days. It concludes that majority of dealers both in rural and urban areas get delivery more than 5 days. Since the calculated value of χ^2 (0.506) is less than the table value 5.991 at 5 percent significance level with 2 degree of freedom. It indicates that there is no significant difference in orders

placed by dealers and delivery made thereof in rural and urban areas.

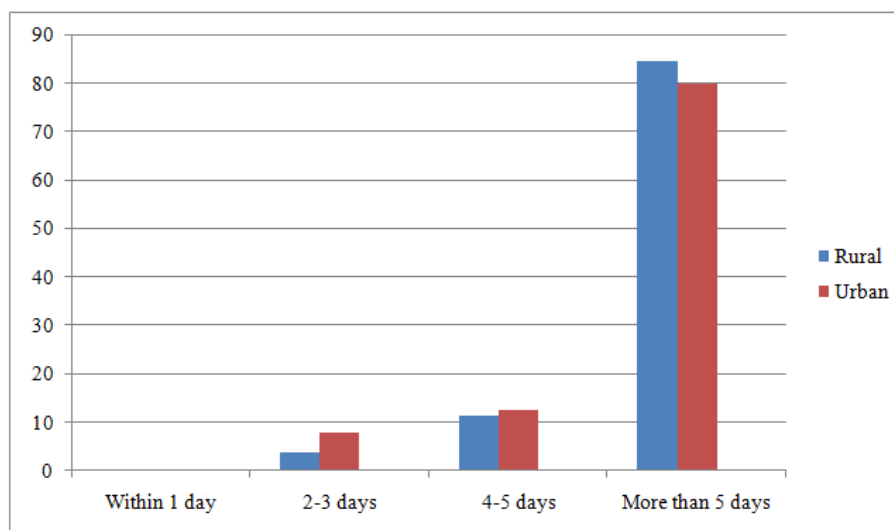


Figure 1.2: Delivery Management

v) Responses Regarding Rating the Quality of Goods

The following table shows the quality of ration items wheat, pulses and kerosene, supplied by depots holders to the ultimate needy customers. Poor and unaccepted quality of the commodities supplied leads to non-drawl of entitlements or even using the supply for cattle feed which result in subsidy leakage to the government.

Table 6: Responses Regarding Rating the Quality of Goods Supplied to Consumers

Quality of Goods	Rural No. of Percentage Respondents	Urban No. of Percentage Respondents	Total No. of Percentage Respondents
Very Good	1 (3.8)	2 (3.1)	3 (3.3)
Good	14 (53.8)	12 (18.8)	26 (28.9)
Average	7 (26.9)	18 (28.1)	25 (27.8)
Bad	4 (15.4)	12 (18.8)	16 (17.8)
Very Bad	0 (0.0)	20 (31.3)	20 (22.2)
Total	26 (100.0)	64 (100.0)	90 (100.0)

Source: Field Survey

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentages of dealers of Fair Price Shops.

The value of chi-square $X^2 = 16.164$

The table value at 5 percent to .05= 9.49 with 4 degree of freedom

The above table shows that 28.9 percent of the dealers from the both rural and urban areas have found that the good quality food grains supplied to consumers, whereas only 3.8 percent dealers from rural areas and 3.1 percent dealers from urban areas have stated that they have been supplied very good quality of food grains. 26.9 percent dealers from rural and 28.1 percent from urban areas have average satisfaction level with the quality of products. While, 15.4 percent of the dealers of rural areas and 18.8 percent of the dealers of urban areas have registered the complaint of the bad quality of wheat and pulses. Remaining 31.3 percent of the dealers of urban areas are highly disappointed over the quality of wheat and pulses supplied to consumers under PDS. The null hypothesis is rejected after applying the X^2 , as the calculated value

16.164 is greater than the table value 9.49 at 5 percent significance level with 4 degree of freedom. It can be inferred that there is a significant difference in the quality of food grains wheat, pulses supplied to consumers in the urban and rural areas of Punjab. It is concluded that majority of dealers from rural area have admitted that they are selling good quality of goods under PDS in the state of Punjab.

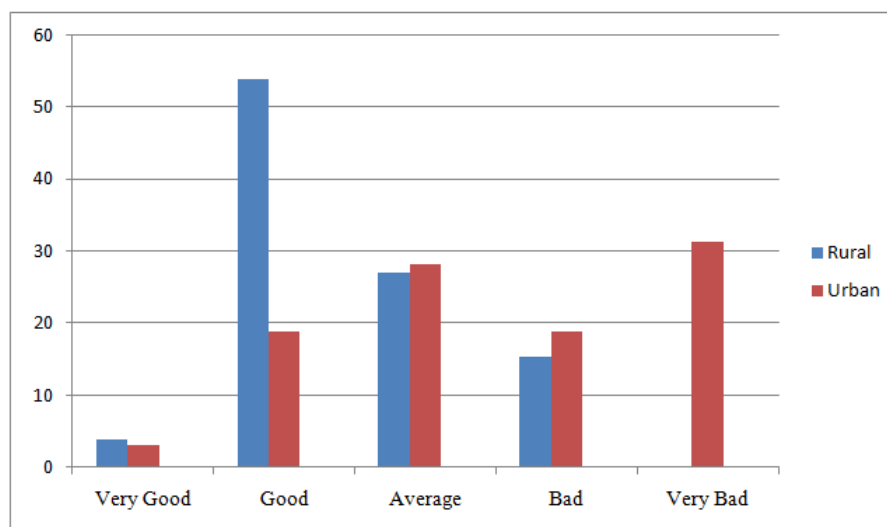


Figure 1.3: Quality of Goods

vi) Behaviour of Consumers

The data presented in the following table shows the opinion of rural and urban dealers in respect of the behavior of consumers during the delivery of PDS products.

Table 7: Responses Regarding Rating the Behaviour of Consumers

Behaviour of Consumers	Rural No. of Percentage Respondents	Urban No. of Percentage Respondents	Total No. of Percentage Respondents
Very Polite	1 (3.8)	2 (3.1)	3 (3.3)
Polite	12 (46.2)	22 (34.4)	34 (37.8)
Indifferent	7 (26.9)	36 (56.3)	43 (47.8)
Rude	6 (23.1)	4 (6.3)	10 (11.1)
Total	26 (100.0)	64 (100.0)	90 (100.0)

Source: Field Survey

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentages of dealers of Fair Price Shops.

The value of chi-square $X^2 = 8.748$

The table value at 5 percent to .05 = 7.81 with 3 degree of freedom

The above table explain that the majority of the dealers 47.8 percent from both rural and urban areas have stated that their consumers behave indifferently as perceived by 26.9 percent from rural areas and 56.3 percent from urban areas. 46.2 percent of rural areas dealers and 34.4 percent of urban areas dealers have found the behavior of their consumers is polite. While only 3.8 percent of rural dealers and 3.1 percent of urban dealers are very polite according to dealers. On the other hand, 23.1 percent of rural dealers and 6.3 percent of urban dealers have complained regarding the rude behavior of the consumers. Since the calculated value $x^2(8.748)$ is greater than the table value 7.81 at 5 percent significance level with

3 degree of freedom. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted with the inference that the dealers of urban areas have different views from the views of dealers in rural areas regarding the behaviour of their consumers. It indicates that the consumers are more polite in the rural areas and very indifferent in urban areas. The dealers of urban areas have more complaints of rude behavior as compared to the rural area's dealers. During their interview, they admitted that sometimes, consumers abuse them, threaten them at the time of non availability of ration items and at the time of bad quality of ration items.

Behaviour of Consumers

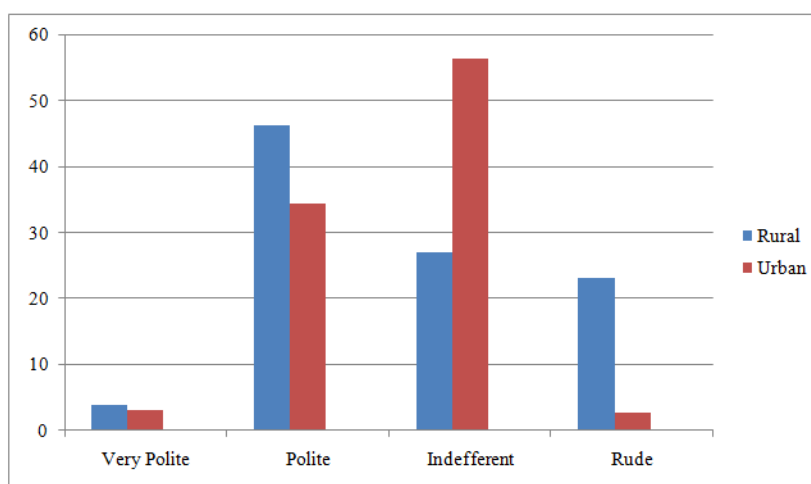


Figure 1.4: Behaviour of Consumers

vii). Behaviour of Govt. Officials

The following table shows the opinion of dealers in respect of behavior of Govt. Officials at the time of release of rationed items or at the time of inspection.

Table 8: Responses Regarding Rating the Behavior of Govt. Officials

Behaviour of Govt Officials	Rural No. of Percentage Respondents	Urban No. of Percentage Respondents	Total No. of Percentage Respondents
Very Polite	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Polite	16 (61.5)	24 (37.5)	40 (44.4)
Indifferent	7 (26.9)	36 (56.3)	43 (47.8)
Rude	3 (11.5)	4 (6.3)	7 (7.8)
Total	26 (100.0)	64 (100.0)	90 (100.0)

Source: Field Survey

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentages of dealers of Fair Price Shops.

The value of chi-square $X^2 = 6.397$

The table value at 5 percent to .05= 5.99 with 2 degree of freedom

The above table shows that the majority of dealers, 26.9 percent from rural areas and 56.3 percent from urban areas have found that the behaviour of the officials of government indifferent. 61.5 percent of the dealers of rural areas and 37.5 percent of the dealers of urban areas have explained that the officials behave politely with them. On the other hand, 11.5 percent of rural dealers and 6.3 percent of urban dealers have complained of rude behaviour of the government

officials. Since the calculated value (6.397) of chi-square is greater than the table value 5.99 at 5 percent significance level with 2 degree of freedom. therefore, alternative hypothesis is accepted after rejecting the null hypothesis. It indicates that there is significance difference between the opinion of dealers of urban and rural areas so far as the behaviour of government employees and officials is concerned. It is observed through the study that dealers in urban areas have more complaints about the rude behaviour of government officials and employees. While the dealers of rural areas are not fully happy with the behaviour of government officials and employees, but the situation is better than that of the dealers of urban areas.

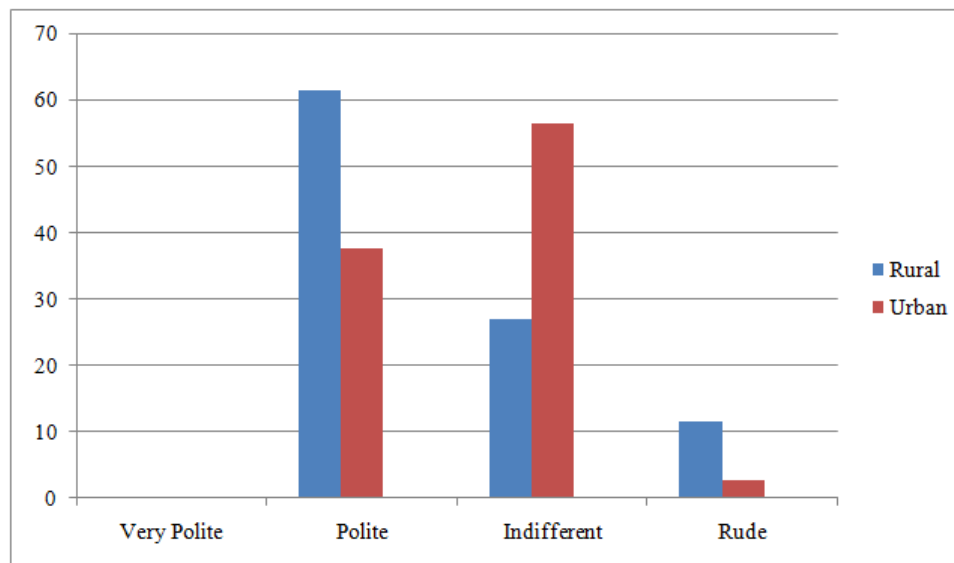


Figure 1.5: Behaviour of Govt Officials

Viii) Regarding Hurdles in Providing a Better Service to Customers

In this study another attempt is made to find out the response of dealers of FPS regarding the hurdles in providing a better service to customers. The responses of various dealers regarding hurdles are ranked by Garrett's ranking method.

Table 9: Dealers Responses Regarding Hurdles in Providing a Better Service to Customers

Responses of Dealers/ Ranks		1	2	3	4	Total
1. Inadequate commission	Rural	26 (100)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	26 (100)
	Urban	61 (95.3)	0 (0.0)	3 (4.7)	0 (0.0)	64 (100)
2. Excessive Paperwork	Rural	0 (0.0)	8 (30.8)	18 (69.2)	0 (0.0)	26 (100)
	Urban	0 (0.0)	30 (46.9)	34 (53.1)	0 (0.0)	64 (100)
3. Non-availability of stocks	Rural	0 (0.0)	18 (69.2)	8 (30.8)	0 (0.0)	26 (100)
	Urban	3 (4.7)	34 (53.1)	27 (42.2)	0 (0.0)	64 (100)
4. None	Rural	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	26 (100)	26 (100)
	Urban	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	64 (100)	64 (100)

Source: Field Survey

The percentage position of each rank is converted into scores using Garrett table. Table 16.1 shows the scores for the response of various dealers according to Garrett's ranking for prioritizing response of them regarding the hurdles in providing a better service to customers. The above table reveals the various views of dealers regarding the problems of dealers to provide better services to their customers. Thus the respondents have been asked about these reasons.

Table 9.1: Garrett's ranking on Responses of the Dealers Regarding the Hurdles in Providing a Better Service to Customers

S. No.	Responses of the Dealers Regarding the Problems of Dealers	Garrett's Mean Score	Rank
1	Inadequate commission	72.04	1
2	Excessive Paperwork	50.3	3
3	Non-availability of stocks	52.48	2
4	None	27	4

Source: primary Data

It is observed from the above table that, inadequate commission has been ranked 1st with the largest mean score of 72.04. Non-availability of stocks and excessive paperwork are ranked 2nd and 3rd with mean score of 52.48 and 50.3 respectively. Responses have been generated with respect to the problems of dealers to provide better services to their customers. Responses have been generated with respect to the hurdles in providing better services to their customers. The total respondents of rural areas and 95.3 percent respondents of urban areas have admitted that Inadequate commission is the main hurdle in providing better services to their customers and the same have been given first rank. 18 respondents (69.2 percent) of rural areas and 34 respondents (53.1 percent) of urban areas have given second rank to Non-availability of stocks in time. Then again the same percent of respondents from both areas have given third ranks to excessive paperwork. Fourth rank is given by 100 percent of the respondents of rural and urban areas to many others reasons involve in this process. Some dealers revealed that due to corrupt supervisors compel them to indulge in black marketing and unfair practices etc.

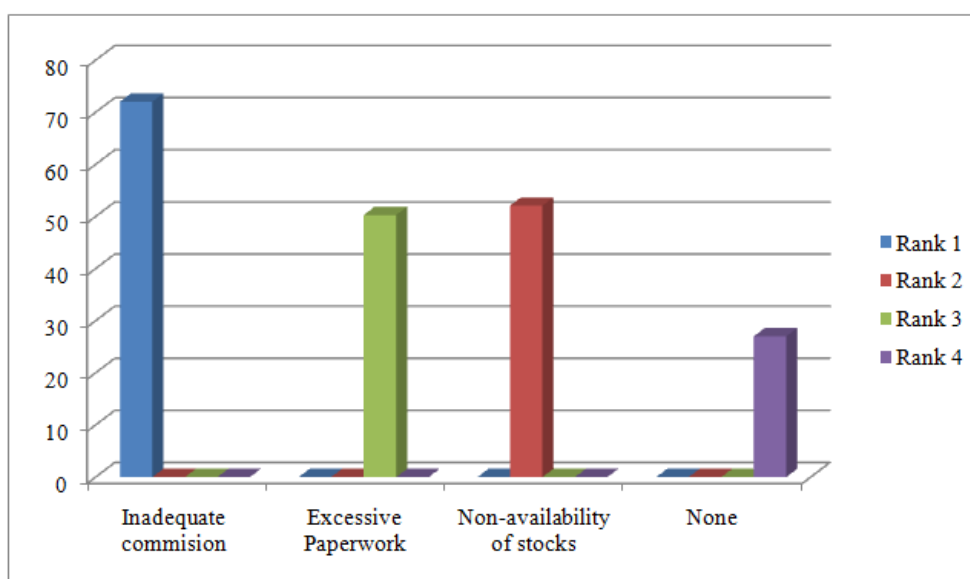
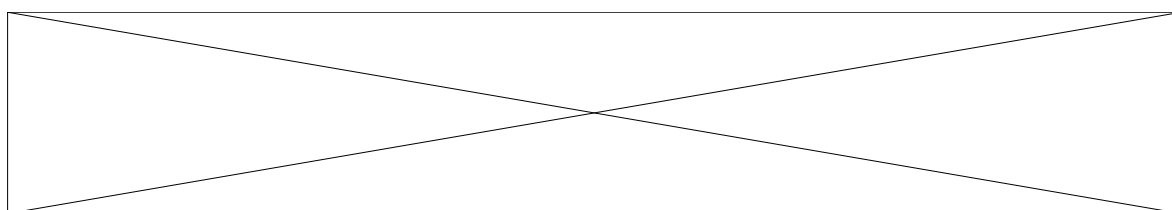


Figure 1.6: Hurdles in Providing a Better Service

CONCLUSIONS

The present study analyzing the functioning of public distribution system, in three district Mansa, Sangrur and Mohali of Punjab. There were 90 (100 percent) total depots holders which constitute 26 (28.9percent) from rural areas and 64 (71.1 percent) from urban areas. out of total 90 respondents, 47 (52.2 percent) respondents were also involved in other jobs, constitute 30.8 percent respondents, were rural and 60.9 percent respondents were urban. 10(38.5 percent) of the fair price shops in rural areas and 37(57.8 percent) of the fair price shops in urban areas are serving more than 400 ration cards. The majority of 73 dealers(81.1percent) of fair price shops both in rural as well as urban areas are getting delayed delivery within more than 5 days and 79.7 percent dealers from urban areas and 84.6 percent from rural areas fall under this category due to bad condition of transportation. It is concluded that majority of dealers from rural area have admitted that they are selling good quality of goods under PDS in the



State of Punjab But they admitted that sometimes, consumers abuse them, threaten them at the time of non availability of ration items and at the time of bad quality of ration items. While the dealers of rural areas were not fully happy with the behavior of government officials and employees, but the situation was better than that of the dealers of urban areas. The total respondents of rural areas and 95.3 percent respondents of urban areas have admitted that Inadequate commission is the main hurdle in providing better services to their customers and the same have been given first rank. Therefore, most of all the dealers suggested to increase the commission or to fix salary.

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