

Notification No: F.NO.COE/Ph.D.(Notification)/533/2023

Date of Award: 28/03/2023

Name: Mir Aadil Ashraf

Topic: THE ROLE OF E-GOVERNANCE IN PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM: A STUDY OF BUDGAM, GANDERBAL AND SRINAGAR DISTRICTS IN JAMMU & KASHMIR

Department: Political science

Supervisor's Name: Dr. Pooja Paswan

FINDINGS

- The data for NFSA act is based on the census of 2011 so it doesn't include the population increase.
- Centre has given a fixed percentage quota of people to be covered under the new food security act. It should have given much flexibility to the states to issue new ration cards over time.
- Priority and Non-Priority households consider individuals as a basic unit while AAY considers family as a basic unit(two different approach)
- NFSA is neither targeted nor universal and thus giving rise to the identification problems in addition of the cost of subsidy. Targeted approach will always suffer from identification problem. It is a difficult task to resolve. A better working strategy will be to go for full coverage coupled with taxation reform and account for increased subsidy.
- No sample of food-grains was kept in the FPSs(Even the dealers were not shown the samples).
- In PHH and NPHH, an individual person is made the basic unit for receiving the essential commodities while as in Antyodaya Anna Yojana family has been kept as the basic unit.
- The posts of Kanda man are vacant in all the three districts of Central Kashmir.

- Most of the FPS dealers do not know how to use the POS machine properly. Most of them had technological anxiety.
- Rice is a staple food of Jammu and Kashmir and on average a single Kashmiri consumes around 12 kgs a month while as the NFSA only provides 5kg. Hence there is a deficit of 7 kgs. apart of the deficit was compensated with MMSFES(Mufti Mohammad Sayeed food entitlement scheme- state government scheme). However the deficit still remains

- The food grains that are being provided through Mufti Mohammad Sayeed food entitlement scheme to PHH,NPHH & AAY are sold to the beneficiaries at the cost of NPHH. Hence demeaning the overall concept of subsidised food grains. The food grains provided to the AAY, the population under Mufti Mohammad Sayeed food entitlement scheme Should be sold at the same rates as of NFSA.

- New ration cards are not being issued and those issued earlier are based on the census of 2011. Since the increased population has not been included in the NFSA, they buy their share of food grains from the open market. The projected population of J & K is estimated to be around 1.52 crore in 2021

- The quality of food grains provided through the public distribution system is not up to the mark and due to this certain percentage of population prefer to buy their monthly requirement from the open market.

- Due to the restrictions on internet, the entire system of Public Distribution was turned into the offline/ manual mode.

- Most of the FPS's are located in the market so maintaining the Queue is not an easy task.

- Most of the FPS's do not have any electricity connection. hence they charge the weighing machine at home and then use it at the fair price shop. this does not guarantee that it will work all day. once the battery is low, manual weighing procedure is practiced.

- Some FPS are located far and thus have less network coverage and due to this the particular sim card used in the POS machine do not operate and hence they have to make use of Wi-Fi connection.
- The identification for targeted household is done according to the norms set by Sachin committee and hence a section of poor people are left outside the cover zone.

- In most of the FPS's, the Display Board was not present.

- Inspections are not made regularly by the department of CAPD.

- There seems no growth in continuing the FPS and hence dealers look for options like diversion and others sources of corruption.
- No receipt rolls are provided to the ration shop dealer.
- There is no involvement of Gram Panchayat with respect to public distribution system.
 - No direct involvement of CAPD officials with the public. completely no liaison at all.
- No State food commission in Jammu and Kashmir.
- It was observed that the display boards along with sale rates were not mentioned at any of the shops visited. There is absence of vigilance mechanism in the State at the ground level. It was incumbent upon the shopkeeper to get a utilization certificate verified by the Sarpanch but it was found that many of the Sarpanchs were unaware of the fact and some of them sign it without verifying it in advance.
- It was found that most of the FPS do not keep a complaint book or an inspection register at FPS. If at some FPS the registers were found then the registers were freshly made after the visit of the committee.
 - Majority of the population do not check the details and other relevant information regarding PDS online.
- Moreover according to the officers of the Department of CA&PD only limited amount of vehicle / TA / DA was given to them for conducting inspections in Government Go-downs and FPS. Hence, they spent money out of their pocket and avoid regular inspections.
- There is also a provision in NFSA, 2013 that every State Government shall constitute a State Food Commission for the purpose of monitoring and review of implementation of the Act. But till date there is no State Food Commission in the State of Jammu and Kashmir
- No sample of food-grains was kept in the FPSs (Even the dealers were not shown the samples)
- On one side, head of the ration card should be a female but on the other side not every women possess a bank account.
 - The posts of Kanda man are vacant in all the three districts of Central Kashmir.

- Banks are not in every village and people had to visit the bank to make enquiries about their cash transfer and spend a day or two of wages to withdraw their entitlement.