

A Study on the Effect of Subsidy on Household Food Consumption in Western Tamil Nadu

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One of the major socio-economic problem which India has been facing, since her independence, is poverty, which in turn, is caused by lack of adequate economic opportunities to a sizable of her population. Studies on food consumption provide ample evidence that at least 30 per cent of the population is either undernourished or malnourished, indeed a staggering magnitude. In Tamil Nadu, the Public Distribution System (P.D.S.) of food and Non-food and the Free Meal Scheme (FNMS) are the two major programmes covering the entire population, comprising children and old under its fold. The overall objective of the present study is to estimate the effect of food subsidy in household food consumption. The study relates to selected urban and rural centres if one taluka each from the Western region of Tamil Nadu comprising Coimbatore and Feriyar districts. The study concludes that the Noon Meal Scheme plays a pivotal role to help enhance the enrolment of rural and urban low income group children in primary schools besides improving their health and stature. Further, that low income group households and middle income groups to a extent benefit by the PDS.

Introduction

One of the major socio-economic problems, which India has been facing, since her independence, is poverty, which in turn, is caused by lack of adequate economic opportunities to a sizeable section of her population. Studies on food consumption provides ample evidence that atleast 30 per cent of the population is either undernourished or malnourished, indeed a staggering magnitude. Food consumption and nutrition issues have assumed greater importance in the Government policies as is evidenced by several food and nutritional programmes, which include public distribution of food items at subsidised rates, free meal programme, food for work programme, minimum needs programme and the like. The approach