

Indiramma bhojanam and annapurna canteens: A study on food security initiative in Telangana

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Abstract

This paper examines the role of Indiramma Canteens in Hyderabad, Telangana, in providing affordable and nutritious food to economically weaker sections of the urban population. The scheme offers breakfast and lunch at a highly subsidised price of Rs. 5, thereby reducing the food expenditure burden on poor households. It also contributes to food security, saves the time of working women, and daily wage workers students and urban poor. The study assesses the socio-economic benefits of the scheme along with its financial implications and implementation challenges for urban finance.

Keywords: Indiramma bhojanam, annapurna canteens, food security, affordable food, subsidised meals, economically weaker sections, urban poor, Telangana, urban finance, social welfare scheme, nutritional security, Hyderabad

Introduction

Indiramma canteens in Hyderabad represent an important urban welfare initiative aimed at providing affordable and nutritious food to economically weaker sections of society. By offering meals at a highly subsidised price, the scheme helps reduce household food expenditure and supports daily-wage workers, women, and students and other vulnerable groups. This study examines the socio-economic significance of Indiramma canteens and their implications for food security, household welfare and urban public finance in Telangana. As the earlier Annapurna scheme was renamed as Indiramma scheme.

Indiramma canteens and food security in Hyderabad

The GHMC Standing Committee approved an annual operational expenditure of 15.33 crores for the breakfast initiative, with the cost of each breakfast estimated at 19, of which the beneficiary contributes 5 and GHMC provides a subsidy of 14/. An infrastructure of 11.43 was also approved for food kiosks and related facilities. The programme was subsequently launched in Hyderabad in September 2025, with approximately 150 Indiramma canteens and reported daily beneficiaries of around 30,000. The lunch programme also continues to provide cooked meals at 5, making the canteens an important social-security mechanism for low-income urban households.

From the perspective of women and child welfare, the significance of Indiramma canteens lies mainly in their contributions to household food security and reduction of food expenditure. Lower expenditure on meals can potentially release a part of the limited household income for education, healthcare and other essential requirements. However, Indiramma canteens should be distinguished from child-specific nutrition programmes implemented through anganwadi centres and schools. Thus, the canteens can appropriately be regarded as an urban poverty-alleviation and food security intervention which indirectly supports the welfare of women and children in vulnerable households.

Indiramma canteens in Hyderabad are at present are being implemented by HKM charitable trust under the food provision scheme by ISCON temple, Hyderabad.

Beneficiary contribution is 5/- and GHMC is 14/-for tiffin and for lunch beneficiary contribution is 5/- and GHMC contribution is 83/-

Research Methodology and case studies

Participant observation method has been applied to observe the maintenance and implementing units of the canteens. Some of the canteens have been visited by the researcher. Oral information has been collected by consulting the beneficiaries.

Case studies

1. Srinivasa, a canteen manager to run the Kothi located Hyderabad canteen. He explained that he gets Rs. 3000/- per morning and 3000/-per evening shifts per month. He maintained cooking and serving the urban poor timely and neat maintenance and good food to the customers.
2. Ramu, Gandhi Bhavan, Hyderabad centre managing well with preparing and serving food and tiffins. He gets every month an amount of Rs. 2000/- as salary.
3. Narasimha the Canteen manager at Gunfoundry Indiramma canteen which is located at Gunfoundry, was contacted. He explained that daily except Sunday, 60-80 customers take tiffin and they served upma, puri, vada and dosa were served for 5 Rs. each item.
4. At Secunderabad Canteen Good and delicious food and tiffins are being prepared and served. At lunch each meal is served at the cost of Rs. 5/-Gobi, cabbage, alu curries are served hot to the satisfaction of the consumers. Some beneficiaries expressed that these items are tasty. Rasam dal and sambar are served hot. Tiffin time is 7 to 9 morning and lunch time is 12.00 AM to 2.30 PM

Health and hygiene should be maintained with appropriate care. Due to a large number of customers some times neatness is not maintained in some canteen centres. Proper location is of utmost important. Nutritious food should be served which is absent in many cases. Health and nutritious food should be maintained in some cases.

Suggestions

Since these units are run by GHMC and Charitable trusts, it is better to make an integrated food security through combining all these food units and along with Angavadis and mid-day meals should be enacted in the states, women and child welfare schemes being run by the Government and Endowment trusts.

The overall mechanism is to evolve a reasonable food policy to help rural population also along with Urban customers.

Conclusion

The study envisages that Indiramma canteen centres should be well implemented and be extended to all the villages in the state of Telangana. This would coincide with Anganwadi social welfare food protection to poor and vulnerable at the times of droughts and long time absence of rains. To support the researcher's views, some photographic evidence has been attached at the end of this study.



Source: Field survey

Photographic evidence

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