



A STUDY ON OPINION OF STUDENTS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MIDDAY MEAL PROGRAMME IN TELANGANA STATE

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Abstract

The purpose behind the MDMS was to enhance enrolment, retention and participation of children in primary schools, simultaneously improving their nutritional status. The MDMS was revised and universalized in September 2004 and central assistance was provided at the rate of Re. 1.00 per child per school day for converting food grains into hot cooked meals for children in classes' I-V in government, local body, and government aided schools. Mid Day Meal Programme has its effect on progress of functioning of schools and learning of students. Many states have implemented the programme with enthusiasm and with many innovations. The adoption of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) as a National Policy, has contributed to this. Also, a number of Self Help Groups (SHG) and other women's groups are active and several NGOs are willing to participate. The media is, at present, highlighting the need for strengthening such programmes. In consonance with the National Policy, MDM encourages social interaction between different communities and thus contributes to social equity.

KeyWords: *mid-daymeals, SarvaShikshaAbhiyan, primaryeducation*



Interduction Of Mid-Day Meal Programme

In India school children (6-14 years) form about 20% of the total population. Free and compulsory education up to the age of 14 years is the constitutional commitment. It is estimated that about 40% of children drop out of primary school. National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau (NNMB) surveys (2000) indicate that about 70% of these children are undernourished and there is about 30% deficit in energy consumption and over 75% of the children have dietary micronutrient deficit of about 50%. Poor enrollment and high school dropout rate are attributed to the poor nutritional status of the children compounded by poor socio-economic conditions, child labour and lack of motivation.

Nutrition support to primary education is considered as a means to achieve the objective of providing free and compulsory universal primary education of satisfactory quality to all the children below the age of 14 years by giving a boost to universalisation of primary education through increased enrollment, improved school attendance and retention and promoting nutritional status of primary school children simultaneously. With children from all castes and communities eating together, it is also a means of bringing about better social integration.

The National Programme of Nutritional Support for Primary Education—*NPNSPE* (i.e. the national Mid Day Meal Scheme—*MDMS*) was initiated by India in the year 1995. Since then the number of states providing cooked meals rose sharply from early 2002 onwards, after a Supreme Court order (dated 28 November 2001) directed all state governments to introduce cooked mid-day meals in primary schools (NAC, 2004). The MDMS dates back to 1925 when Madras Corporation developed a school lunch programme. After Independence, school-feeding programme commenced in the state of Tamilnadu during the year 1956 and got impetus under MG Rachachandran in the year 1982.

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A) OBJECTIVES of mid-day meal programme

- Improving the Nutritional status of children.
- Encouraging poor children on classroom activities
- Providing Nutritional support for children.

B) BENEFITS OF “MDMS”

The MDMS has many positive attributes such as

- a. Promoting school participation;
- b. Preventing classroom hunger;
- c. Facilitating the healthy growth of children;
- d. Intrinsic educational value;
- e. Fostering social equality;
- f. Enhancing gender equity; and
- g. Ensuring psychological benefits.

In order to ensure transparency and accountability, it is required to display the following information suo-moto:

- a. Quality of food grains received, date of receipt;

- b. Quantity of food grains utilized;
- c. Other ingredients purchased, utilized;
- d. Number of children given mid day meal;
- e. Daily Menu; and
- f. List of community members involved in the programme

C) Essential Quality Norms For Mid-Day Meal Programmes

(1) Nutritious hot cooked meal: Nutritious, cooked meals should be provided throughout the year. The menu should offer variety to sustain the interest of children and to enhance the nutritional value of the meal.

(2) Micronutrient supplementation: All mid-day meal programmes should include a "micronutrient supplementation" component (as well as mass deworming if needed), to address common micronutrient deficiencies among children.

(3) Adequate manpower: Every school should have trained staff to provide mid-day meals with no interference to the normal school routine. Each school should have at least a cook and a helper. All cooks should undergo training on nutrition, hygiene, maintenance of accounts, and other essential skills.

E) Important Precautions In Making Mid-Day Meals

- Ensure proper cooking of rice.
- Use only potable water.
- Clean the vegetables and other provisions thoroughly before they are cooked.
- Use only aluminums or steel vessels.
- Maintain utmost hygiene and cleanliness in the whole process of cooking.
- Members of Village Committee must supervise the cooking as well as feeding process.
- Responsible members of Education Committee must test the food before it is served to the children and the Headmaster or a nominated teacher must eat food with the students.

MID DAY MEAL IN TELANGANA STATE

- The aim of the Program is to provide nutritional support to schoolchildren in order to improve retention and this achieves total literacy in the state. Government of Telangana had introduced the Mid Day Meal Programme in 1982 on an experimental basis in all the Abhyudaya Pradhamika Patasalalu. The programme did not sustain due to financial constraints. On 15 August 1995 Government of India launched the National Programme for Nutritional support to Primary Education. Under this programme each child was provided 3kgs rice per month for 10 months in a year. In 2001, the Government of Telangana introduced the cooked Mid Day Meal Programme in all Government, Local body and Government Aided primary Schools. Subsequently it was extended to children enrolled under Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Alternative & Innovative Education (AIE) Centres. Under this scheme, an amount of Rs.402.85 Crores has been provided during 2006-07 for covering 68.00 Lakhs of children. Children enrolled in Government, Local Bodies, Private Aided Primary and Upper Primary schools are provided with the nutritional support. Care is taken to ensure provision of minimum 300 calories and 8 to 12 grams of protein for child per day. Govt. of India is providing rice free of cost @ 100 grams per child per working day. Conversion cost is paid to the identified implementing agencies towards cooking cost.
- The Scheme has been revised in June 2006 to ensure provision of midday meal of adequate nutritional value and provide additional central support to States/UTs. Central assistance is provided to States/UTs for the following components:-
 - 1) Free food grains of 100 gms (rice/wheat) per child, per school a day
 - 2) Cooking assistance @ Rs1.50 per child per school day.
 - 3) Reimbursement of transportation cost @ Rs.75 per quintal.
 - 4) Assistance for management, monitoring and evaluation @ 1.8 per cent of 1) to 3).

NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

The State of **Karnataka** introduced the provision of cooked meals in June 2002. Since then it has successfully involved private sector participation in the programme. One of the successful ventures is **Akshaya Patra**, which started with freshly cooked meals from ISKCON temple in Bangalore. The Foundation gets a corpus from the State government but meets a major share of its costs with donations from private corporations and individuals in the city. A new privately funded programme named Akshaya Patra School Meal Initiative, which has been started by Akshaya Patra Foundation (TAPF) is now a national programme. It is spread over six states, namely: Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Orissa—with 14 locations within these states. It caters to nearly 9.1 lakh children

Naandi Foundation Midday meal programme: Naandi Foundation, is one of the largest and fastest growing social sector organizations in India working to make poverty history. In its effort to eradicate poverty it has been working in the fields of Child rights, Education, Sustainable livelihoods, Midday meal and Safe Drinking water since last decade. The Naandi Foundation provides mid-day meal to more than a thousand government schools in Andhra Pradesh and about a thousand in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

Importance Of The Study

The mid-day meal scheme is finally taking root across the country, with the Supreme Court fixing January 2005 as the deadline to provide cooked meal to pupils up to Class V and the ones covered by the Education Guarantee Scheme and the Alternative and Innovative Education Centers in government, local body and government-aided schools in all States and Union territories.

But the implementation of mid-day meals is a great task. Some of the state governments reached their goals by implementing some policies.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

- This study focused on the implementation of the mid-day meal programme in Telangana state. Here also the students facing lots of problems in mid day meal programme (e.g. Thirty students in the Anantapuram Government Primary and Middle School in Chittoor district have been eating just rice and sambhar -

with only tomatoes and no vegetables - for a whole week. The reason: the government has not provided the money for the last three months.)

- There is a need to prepare Midday Meal under hygienic conditions and to maintain high standards of quality. Hence the members of the Gram Panchayat, Mothers Committee, School Management Committees and members of the Self Help Groups are made to understand the significance of Mid Day Meals Programme and to prepare food maintaining high standards of hygiene. Ultimately it is to ensure that the targeted children enjoy the recipes.
- So, the researcher made a study to know the opinions of the students on implementation of the mid day meal programme.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To know the importance of the midday meals
2. To know the students opinion on the midday meal
3. To know the quality of midday meals program
4. To know the implementation of midday meals
5. To know the demerits in implementing midday meals.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

1. There is no significant difference of opinion on mid-day meal programme with respect to gender
2. There is no significant difference of opinion on quality of mid-day meal programme with respect to age
3. There is no significant difference in implementation of mid-day meal programme with respect to medium
4. There is no significant difference in satisfaction on mid-day meal programme with respect to locality

Methodology of Research

The success of any research depends on the selection and utilization of proper research method. The method selected should be feasible, Pre-planned and well under-stood. It should always be appropriate to the problem under investigation and the kind of data necessary for its solution.

Population

The finite and in-finite number of individuals, members or units, in the universe is called population. A population refers to any collection of specified group of human beings or of non- human entities such as objects educational institutions, time units, geographical areas etc. In present study the IX standard students of Telangana state were considered as population from this population sample was drawn.

Sample

A small representative proportion of the population which posses all the characteristics of population is called a sample.

Characteristics of a good sample:

- It should be representative of entire population.
- It should be adequate.
- It should be homogenous
- It should be free from bias.

150 samples were drawn from the population for the present study.

Collection of Data

The Researcher personally visited the schools and administered the tool to each of the respondents. A closed rapport was built with the respondents in order to extract genuine responses from them. The respondents were ensured that their responses would be kept strictly confidential and will be used only for research purpose. After building good rapport with the respondents and taking prior appointment and fixing up the time. The questionnaire was given and after giving sufficient time. The questionnaire was collected back from the respondents. The researcher explained the purpose of the study and clarified doubts regarding the items of the tool

Conclusion

The Mid-Day Meal Programme is being implemented in Telangana State from 2003 onwards. Providing free Midday meal to children studying in Primary and upper Primary Schools is an endeavor to meet the goal of Universal Elementary Education. Government of India is providing rice free of cost. The Programme covers children studying in Primary and Upper Primary Government, Local

Bodies, Aided, Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative Innovative Education Centres and Madrassas. Apart from rice and Sambar, schools children enjoy in different regions in different ways like vegetable pulao, pongal, lemon rice, tamarind rice, khichidi and butter milk rice with egg/banana twice a week. Most of the students getting benefit with this programme. The government of Telangana State allowed secondary school students also to under this programme.

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