

A STUDY OF MID-DAY MEAL SCHEME IMPLEMENTATION IN NALGONDA DISTRICT FOR IMPROVING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

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ABSTRACT

The erstwhile State Government of Andhra Pradesh launched the cooked Mid-Day Meal (MDM) Programme in 2003 to all primary school children in Government, local body and Government Aided Schools. The State is also implementing the MDM scheme in the high schools covering students of 9th and 10th classes from 2008 with the State budget. Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) is being implemented by the Department of School Education, Government of Andhra Pradesh in the State. The researcher studied schools of three mandals (Nadigudem, Munagala and Kodad) in Nalgonda district of A.P by using normative survey method. Students, teachers and head teachers responded to this research study. The researcher selected 'stratified random method' for sampling. The present study consists of a total of 12 schools from three mandals. The study found that majority of the schools are receiving poor quality of rice from the government; there is no safe drinking water for MDM, no proper distribution of bills, lack of training for administrators. The enrolment and attendance improved and classroom hunger avoided due to MDM programme.

Introduction

Education is that which makes one's life in harmony with all existence and thus enables the mind to find the ultimate truth which gives us the wealth of inner light and love and gives significance to life- Rabindranath Tagore

In India, The School Lunch Programme (SLP) was first introduced in Madras by the Corporation for children belonging to poor families. SLP was introduced in some parts of Kerala in 1941 followed by Bombay in 1946. Uttar Pradesh commenced the programme on a voluntary basis in 1953. Many a programme with assistance from international agencies such as UNICEF, FAO and WHO became available. Cooperative of American Relief Everywhere (CARE) initiated its assistance to mid-day meals programme (MDMP) in 1961 in the States of Kerala and Tamil Nadu. It began supply of food

commodities under PL480 TITLE II programme. During the first year of operation it benefited 2.4 million children. In 1990-91, 17 State governments were running the MDMP for primary school children of 6-11 age group. Twelve States conducted the programme with their own resources. Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan implemented the programme with CARE assistance and discontinued the scheme after CARE withdrew its support. The Sixth All India Educational Survey, jointly conducted by the NCERT and NIC, reported in August 1998 that out of 735771 schools in the country covering all school stages 187016 (25.42 per cent) had MDMP. Out of 22553505 beneficiaries were studying in rural schools. Totally 59.02 and 40.98 per cent girls were among the beneficiaries, 147647(27.92 per cent) primary schools and 33757(24.28 per cent) higher secondary schools were operating the MDMP.

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In the primary schools 13669720 were benefiting from the scheme. Among them 83.79 per cent were in rural schools and 16.21 per cent were in urban schools, 21.93 per cent of the beneficiaries belong to SC and 16.66 per cent belong to the ST categories, 61.41 per cent were from other categories. Among them, 57.78 per cent were boys and 42.22 per cent were girls. In upper primary schools 7073280 students were taking advantage, 60.38 per cent were boys and 39.62 per cent girls, 71.28 per cent were in rural schools and 28.72 per cent in urban schools.

Programme for Nutritional Support to Primary Education (NPNSPE) has been implemented since the year 1995-96. NPNSPE envisaged a full coverage in a phased manner over a period of three years. The programme covered 2499 blocks during 1995-96, 4426 blocks during 96-97 and 5451 blocks during 1997-98. By December 31, 1998, it covered 504 districts.

It was expected to cater to 974.5 lakh students across 6.85 lakh schools. The programme provided the States with the option of giving nutritional support in the form of following alternatives:

- Cooked meal (100 gms per day for 200 school days)
- Pre-cooked meal
- Three kgs of wheat or rice per child per month for 10 months

Presently, cooked meals are served in Gujarat, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry. In Delhi and Chandigarh, processed food is distributed. In the rest of the States or UTs, foodgrains are being distributed.

At the request of UNICEF, the Operations Research Group (ORG) conducted an evaluation study of the impact of NPNSPE in 1999. The study adopted a multi-stage sampling procedure and selected 10 States,

25 districts, 50 blocks, 397 villages and 397 schools as its sample. It covered 1795 students and 1227 receiving MDM, 404 eligible but not receiving and 164 never enrolled students. In all, 3164 parents were contacted. Of them, 1069 parents were of children receiving MDM, 930 parents of children not receiving MDM and 1105 parents of children who never enrolled or dropped out.

There was limited variation in the attendance pattern of students during the pre-programme period. The students with 80 or more per cent of attendance rose from 59 to 64 between 1994-98. The proportion of boys having an attendance of 80 per cent or more was marginally higher as compared to girls.

National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) conducted the sixth all India Educational Survey (1998) which revealed that out of 7, 35,771 schools in the country covering all school stages, 1,878,016 (25.42 per cent) had mid-day meal programme. Out of 2, 25, 53,505 beneficiaries, 78.41 per cent were studying in rural schools, 59.02 per cent of boys 40.98 per cent of girls were among the beneficiaries. And 27.92 per cent of primary schools, 24.28 per cent of secondary schools were operating the mid-day meal programme.

United Nations International Education Forum (UNICEF) conducted a research review on mid-meal programme by using multi-stage sampling procedure in 1999. It revealed that the coverage of the programme was poor in Madhya Pradesh, moderate in Gujarat, good in Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. The level of awareness of the provision of mid-day meal programme at school was high among all parents, but awareness of 80 per cent attendance for eligibility for MDM was low among parents and children too.

National Institute of Public Cooperation & Child Development (2006) conducted a study on Mid-Day Meal Scheme in Karnataka.

The institute surveyed all the schools which provide mid-day meals in Karnataka. The study report indicated that the Mid-Day Meal scheme improved the school attendance in majority of the schools and reduced absenteeism, reduced dropout rate, especially in the primary school stage. In addition, the report observed that the mid-day meal scheme fostered a sense of sharing and fraternity and paved way for social equity.

Josephine & Raju (2008) studied the Mid-Day Meal Programme in Andhra Pradesh. The study revealed that the programme reduced dropout rate and shown improvement in retention, and effectively alleviated classroom hunger. It curbed teacher absenteeism and narrowed social distances. Sharing of common meal enhanced socialisation and reduced prejudices. It mobilised women self-help groups for effective implementation of MDM.

Andhra Pradesh

The Government of Andhra Pradesh launched cooked Mid-Day Meal Programme in 2003 to all primary school children in government, local body and aided schools. Subsequently it was extended to children enrolled under Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS), Alternative & Innovative Education (AIE) centres and Madrasas / Maqtabs and NCLP schools. The State has also been financing and implementing the MDM in the high schools covering students of 9th and 10th classes from 2008. Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) is being

implemented by the Department of School Education, Government of Andhra Pradesh.

Commissioner cum Director School Education is the nodal officer for the implementation of the mid-day meal scheme in the State. The department of school education is responsible for planning, implementation and monitoring of the scheme in the State. It also coordinates with other participating agencies like Food & Civil Supplies, FCI, Panchayati Raj, Health and Urban Development. The Andhra Pradesh State Civil Supplies Corporation is the nodal agency for lifting the foodgrains from the FCI and supplying to the schools through Mandal Level Storage points and fair price shops. The PAB-MDM approved Central assistance for 59.98 lakh children (38.76 in primary and 21.22 lakh in upper primary) studying in 78,716 schools (59,023 primary and 19,693 upper primary). The State covered all the approved 59,023 primary schools and 19,693 upper primary schools and serving mid-day meal to 38.76 lakh children in primary (class I-V) and 21.22 lakh children in upper primary (class VI-VIII).

Nutrition Content under MDM Scheme:
a) 450 kcal and 12g of protein which is derived from 100g of foodgrains (rice/wheat), 20g of pulses, 50g of vegetables and 5g of oil for children studying in primary classes and

b) 700 kcal and 20g of protein, which is derived from 150g of foodgrains (rice/wheat), 30g of pulses, 75g of vegetables and 7.5g of oil in upper primary classes.

Quantity of Food

S. No.	Items	Quantity per child per day	
		Primary	Upper Primary
1	Foodgrains	100g	100g
2	Pulses	20g	30g
3	Vegetables (leafy also)	50g	75g
4	Oil & fat	5g	7.5g
5	Salt & condiments	As per need	As per need

Engagement of Cook Cum Helpers

- One cook-cum-helper may be engaged in a school having up to 25 students, two cooks-cum-helpers for schools having 26 to 100 students, and one additional cook-cum-helper for every additional 100 students w.e.f. 01.04.2010.
- Provision for payment of honorarium to cook-cum-helper @ ₹ 1000 per month i.e. ₹ 750 and ₹ 250 per month as Central and State share, respectively.

Implementing Agencies

- In rural areas-DWCRA/Self-Help-Groups/SEC/other agencies like temple, NGOs of proven track record, charitable trusts/group of parents (in this order of preference) are identified by the MROs in rural areas.
- In urban areas, community development societies (CDS)/NGOs/urban SHGs/DWCUA/SEC/other agencies like temples/NGOs of proven track record/charitable trusts/group of parents (in this order of preference) are identified by a committee headed by the MRO.

Nalgonda District

As of 2011 India census, Nalgonda had a population of 135, 163. Males constitute 51 per cent of the population and females 49 per cent. Nalgonda has an average literacy rate of 87.08 per cent, higher than the national average of 59.5 per cent, male literacy is 92.23 per cent, and female literacy is 81.92 per cent. In Nalgonda, 11 per cent of the population is under 6 years of age.

In 2006, the Indian government named Nalgonda one of the country's 250 poorest districts (out of a total of 640). It is one of the thirteen districts in Andhra Pradesh currently receiving funds from the Backward Regions Grant Fund Programme (BRGF).

Need and Importance

The 93rd Amendment bill makes education for children in the 6-14 years age

group a fundamental right. The government should introduce the right incentives to attract the children to the school instead of burdening the parents with the fundamental duty of providing education opportunities to their children.

The mid-day meal programme for the children was initially viewed as an act of charity. Over a period of time it came to be considered as an item of "child welfare". Still later it was regarded as a component of child development and ushered in nutritional approach. In the context of extensive poverty, illiteracy, lack of awakening and want of popular demand for formal school education, the mid-day meal programme for the school child assumed certain level of significance.

Educational researchers and planners are obliged to suggest ways to maximise the returns on public investment in basic education and when the returns on certain programmes are not satisfactory, they should suggest alternative strategies for fulfilling the national aspirations and goals in this respect.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the implementation of mid-day meal Scheme with reference to three mandals of Nalgonda district (A.P) to improve school attendance.
2. To study the differences among three mandals regarding mid-day meal scheme implementation in their schools.
3. To elicit the perceptions of teachers, students and parents on mid-day meal scheme implementation to improve school attendance.
4. To assess the quality views in relation to various components for better implementation of mid-day meal scheme.

Methodology of the Study

In view of the objectives and nature of the study, the researcher selected 'stratified random method' for sampling. The present study consists of a total 12 schools from three

mandals, from each mandal four villages were selected. From each village 1 head teacher (HM), 5 teachers, 5 students and 5 parents were selected randomly.

Then a total of 12 HMs, 60 teachers, 60 students and 60 parents were selected in the study included by rural and urban; male and female; SC/ST/BC/OC and different educational qualifications. The researcher selected the 'Normative survey method' for the present study. This method gathers data from a relatively large number of samples, provides the information useful to the solution of local problems and it is concerned not with the characteristics of individuals but with characteristics of the whole population or a sample.

With prior permission of the school, the researcher visited the schools. Questionnaires were given to the head teachers, teachers, students and parents. Researcher explained the purpose of the study and clarified doubts for filling up the questionnaire. Observations were recorded by the researcher at the time of data collection. The tools were designed after deep study of review of literature related to present topic, question items are prepared and discussed with the experts.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The opinion elicited from the HMs and their responses with percentages on MDM scheme in the schools are presented.

Table 1 : Quality of Foodgrains (rice) Received for the Mid-Day Meal Scheme in the School

S. No.	Name of the Mandal	Responses of the HMs				Total
		Very Good	Good	Average	Poor	
	Kodad	-	-	2 (50%)	2 (50%)	4 (100%)
	Munagala	-	-	1 (25 %)	3 (75 %)	4 (100%)
	Nadigudem	-	1 (25 %)	2 (50 %)	1 (25 %)	4 (100%)
	Total	-	1 (8.3%)	5 (41.7 %)	6(50%)	12 (100%)

Table1 reveals that 50 per cent of the schools are receiving poor quality of rice from the government, 41.7 per cent of the schools are receiving average quality of rice and only 8.3 per cent of the schools received good quality of rice for MDM scheme in the school.

The same Table indicates that in Kodad mandal, 50 per cent of the schools are receiving average quality of rice, 50 per cent of the schools are receiving poor quality of

rice; In Munagal mandal, 75 per cent of the schools are receiving poor quality of rice and 25 per cent of schools average, whereas, 25 per cent schools of Nadigudem mandal are receiving good quality of rice to the schools but 50 per cent of schools in the same mandal are receiving average quality of rice, 25 per cent of schools are receiving poor quality of rice. School head masters also take responsibility regarding the quality of rice.

Table 2 : Kitchen Facility Available in the School

S. No.	Name of the Mandal	Responses of the HMs		Total
		Yes	No	
1.	Kodad	1 (25 %)	3 (75 %)	4 (100%)
2.	Munagala	2 (50%)	2 (50 %)	4 (100%)
3.	Nadigudem	3(75%)	1 (25 %)	4 (100%)
	Total	6 (50 %)	6 (50%)	12 (100%)

Table 2 reveals that 50 per cent of the schools have kitchen rooms for MDM scheme, and 50 per cent schools do not have a kitchen. In Kodad mandal, 75 per cent of the schools do not have kitchen rooms, only 25 per cent

of the schools have kitchen. In Munagala mandal, kitchen facility is available in 50 per cent of the schools; In Nadigudem mandal, kitchen facility is available in 75 per cent of the schools.

Table 3 : Availability of Cooking Agency for MDM Scheme in the Schools

S. No.	Name of the Mandal	Responses of the HMs				Total
		Members of SHG (1)	School Management Committee (SMC) (2)	Private Agency (3)	Parents Committee (4)	
1	Kodad	4 (100%)	-	-	-	4 (100%)
2	Munagala	3 (75 %)	-	-	1 (25 %)	4 (100%)
3	Nadigudem	3 (75%)	-	-	1 (25 %)	4 (100%)
	Total	10 (83%)	-	-	2 (17%)	12 (100%)

Table 3 reveals that, members of self-help group (SHG) are cooking food for MDM in 83 per cent of the schools, parent committee members are cooking in 17 per cent of the schools. In Kodad mandal, members of SHG are cooking in all schools (100 per cent). In

Munagala mandal, 75 per cent of schools and Nadigudem mandal 75 per cent of the schools, cooking is done by members of SHG. It is pointed out that parents committee is also involving in cooking food for MDM scheme.

Table 4 : Receiving Foodgrains in-time to the School

S. No.	Name of the Mandal	Responses of the HMs		Total
		Yes	No	
	Kodad	1 (25%)	3 (75%)	4 (100%)
	Munagala	—	4 (100 %)	4 (100%)
	Nadigudem	1 (25%)	3 (75%)	4 (100%)
	Total	2(16.7 %)	10 (83.3 %)	12 (100 %)

Table 4 reveals that the maximum schools (83.3 per cent) are not receiving foodgrains (rice) in-time; only 16.7 per cent are receiving rice at the school in-time. In Kodad mandal, 75 per cent of the schools are

not receiving rice in-time, and the same is happening in Nadigudem mandal too. But 100 per cent of the schools are receiving rice from the dealers in-time.

Table 5 : Increase of Children's Enrolment Due to MDM Scheme Implementation in the Schools

S. No.	Name of the Mandal	Responses of the HMs		Total
		Yes	No	
1	Kodad	3 (75 %)	1 (25 %)	4 (100%)
2	Munagala	3 (75 %)	1 (25 %)	4 (100%)
3	Nadigudem	2 (50 %)	2 (50 %)	4 (100%)
	Total	8 (65 %)	4 (35%)	12 (100 %)

Table 5 reveals that 65 per cent of respondents opined that MDM scheme enhanced the enrolment of the children,

whereas only 35 per cent of the respondents opined that MDM scheme does not influence enrolment of children.

Table 6 : Regularity of Children Attending School

S. No.	Name of the Mandal	Responses of the HMs		Total
		Yes	No	
1	Kodad	4 (100%)	-	4 (100%)
2	Munagala	3 (75%)	1 (25%)	4 (100%)
3	Nadigudem	3 (75%)	1 (25%)	4 (100%)
	Total	10 (83 %)	2 (27%)	12 (100 %)

Table 6 reveals that 83 per cent of the schools have regular attendance of children but only 27 per cent of the schools do not have regular attendance. And 100 per cent regular attendance in Kodad mandal schools, 75 per cent regular attendance in Munagal and Nadigudem. And that majority of the respondents (83 per cent) opined that

regularity improves in the school due to MDM scheme but only 27 per cent respondents opined there is no change. In case of Kodad mandal, there is 100 per cent of regularity of the students and there is 75 per cent regularity of the students each in Munagala and Nadigudem mandals.

Table 7 : Safe Drinking Water Facility in the Schools

S. No.	Name of the Mandal	Responses of the HMs		Total
		Yes	No	
1	Kodad	2 (50%)	2(50%)	4 (100%)
2	Munagala	1(25%)	3(75%)	4 (100%)
3	Nadigudem	1(25%)	3(75%)	4 (100%)
	Total	4(33.2%)	8(66.8%)	12 (100 %)

Table 7 reveals that there is no safe drinking water facility available in majority of the schools (66.8 per cent). But 33.2 per cent of schools had safe drinking water facility.

Table 8 : Providing MDM Bills to the Cooking Agency and Helpers

S. No.	Name of the Mandal	Responses of the HMs		Total
		Yes	No	
1	Kodad	-	4 (100%)	4 (100%)
2	Munagala	-	4 (100%)	4 (100%)
3	Nadigudem	-	4 (100%)	4 (100%)
	Total	-	12 (100 %)	12 (100 %)

Table 8 reveals that bills are not properly paid to cooking agency in time. Same is the case with three sample mandals.

Table 9 : Fulfilling the Children's Right to Food Objective Due to MDM

S. No.	Name of the Mandal	Responses of the HMs		Total
		Yes	No	
1	Kodad	3 (75 %)	1 (25%)	4 (100%)
2	Munagala	2 (50%)	2 (50%)	4 (100%)
3	Nadigudem	1 (25%)	3 (75%)	4 (100%)
	Total	6 (50 %)	6 (50%)	12 (100 %)

Table 9 explains that 50 per cent of the respondents opined MDM scheme fulfills the objective of right to food for children. Another 50 per cent of the respondents opined negatively.

Table 10 : School Enrolment, Malnutrition of Food, School Attendance, Mid-Day Meal Scheme

S. No.	Statement	Teachers' responses		Parents' responses	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1.	School enrolment increased due to Mid-Day Meal (MDM)	50 (80.5 %)	10 (19.5%)	45 (72%)	15(28 %)
2.	Malnutrition of children decreased due to MDM scheme	30 (50%)	30 (50 %)	40(64 %)	20(36 %)
3.	School attendance increased due to MDM scheme	53(84.8 %)	07 (5.2 %)	50(80.5%)	10(19.5%)

Table 10 indicates that majority of the teachers and parents (80.5 and 72 per cent) opined that the school enrolment increased due to MDM scheme. But only a small percentage of teachers (19.5) and parents (28) felt there is no increase in enrolment due to MDM. The same Table reveals that the teachers opined that malnutrition in children decreased due to MDM (50 per cent). But the majority of the parents (64 per cent) opined that malnutrition in children decreased due to MDM scheme in the schools. It reveals that majority of the teachers and parents (84.8 and 80.5 per cent) viewed school attendance to have increased due to MDM scheme.

Table 11 : Implementation of MDM Scheme, Food Norms (Quantity), Paying Bills

S. No.	Statement	Teachers' responses		Parents' responses	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1.	MDM scheme implementation in our school/ village is good	55 (88%)	05 (12%)	22(35.2%)	38(64.8%)
2.	Food norms (quantity) are designed properly	50(80%)	10(20%)	35(56%)	25(46%)
3.	Paying bills to agency, cook & helper is negotiable	40(64%)	20(36%)	40 (64%)	20(36%)

Table 11 reveals that 88 per cent of teachers' perception on implementation of MDM school is good, but parents' (35.2 per cent) perceptions are not positive about implementation of MDM scheme in schools. Teachers (80 per cent) viewed food norms

designed in proper way but 56 per cent are not satisfied with food norms. Paying bills to agency, cook and helper is negotiable as expressed by teachers and parents (64 and 64 per cent).

Table 12 : Work Load for Teachers, Utilisation of Noon Time by Students and Cooking by SHG Members

S. No.	Statement	Teachers' responses		Parents' responses	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1.	It is additional load for teachers to maintain the MDM Scheme	44 (70.4%)	16(29.6 %)	08(12.8%)	52(86.2%)
2.	Students utilise afternoon time properly due to MDM	54(86.4%)	06(12.6 %)	55(88%)	5(12%)
3.	Cooking by SHG members in the school is suitable	33(52.8%)	27(6.2%)	22(35.2%)	38(64.8%)

Table 12 reveals that majority teachers (70.4 per cent) opined to be additional load for teachers to manage the MDM Scheme, but parents viewed positively. Hence the perceptions of both are different. Majority of teachers (86.4 per cent), parents (88 per cent) opined that students utilise afternoon time properly due to MDM scheme. Cooking by SHG

members in the school is suitable as expressed by 52.8 per cent teachers and 35.2 per cent of parents. It is concluded that there is a difference between opinions of parents and teachers with regard to work load for teachers managing MDM Scheme and Cooking by SHG members in the school.

Table 13 : Supervision on MDM Scheme, Social Inequality & Social Participation Aims

S. No.	Statement	Teachers' responses		Parents' responses	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1.	Supervision on MDM scheme to be strengthened	55 (88%)	05 (12%)	56(89.6 %)	04 (9.4 %)
2.	Social inequality & social participation aims are fulfilled by MDM in the school	54(86.4%)	06 (12.6)	54(86.4%)	06 (12.6)

Table 13 reveals that majority of teachers (88 per cent) and parents (89.6 per cent) opined supervision on MDM scheme to

be strengthened and majority of respondents (86.4 and 86.4 per cent) felt social inequality & social participation aims fulfilled by MDM in the school.

Table 14 : Taking Mid-Day Meal Daily, Encouragement of Parents, Getting Absence Due to MDM

S. No.	Statement	Students' Responses	
		Yes	No
1.	I take Mid-Day Meal (MDM) in our school daily	52 (83.2%)	8 (15.8 %)
2.	My parents encourage me to take MDM in the school	50 (80%)	10 (20%)
3.	I am unable to be absent due to MDM scheme in school	38 (60.8%)	22 (39.2%)

Table 14 reveals that majority of the respondents (83.2 per cent) are taking MDM in their schools, only 15.8 per cent are not taking, and 80 per cent of students' parents

encourage students to consume MDM in the school; 60.8 per cent of the students are unwilling to be absent due to mid-day meal. Only 22 per cent students are absent.

Table 15 : Development of Healthy and Good Habits Due to MDM

S. No.	Statement	Responses	
		Yes	No
1.	Healthy and good habits are developed due to mid-day meal scheme	44 (70.4%)	16 (29.6 %)
2.	I am getting proper nutrition with MDM	41 (65.6)	19 (34.4 %)
3.	I am satisfied with MDM in our school	44 (70.4%)	16 (29.6 %)

Table 15 reveals that majority of the students (70.4 per cent) feel healthy and good habits are developed due to mid-day meal

scheme, 65.6 per cent of the students feel they get proper nutrition with MDM, 70.4 per cent feel satisfied with MDM.

Table 16 : Quality and Taste of MDM, Taking Two Eggs Weekly, Supervision and Eating Together with Friends

S. No.	Statement	Responses	
		Yes	No
1.	MDM in our school is of good quality and tasty	37 (59.2 %)	23 (39.8%)
2.	I take two eggs weekly by MDM scheme in our school	39 (62.4 %)	21(37.6%)
3.	Supervision to be strengthened on MDM scheme	41(65.6 %)	19(34.4%)
4.	Eating with my friends mid-day meal makes me happy	50 (80%)	10(20%)

Table 16 reveals that 59.2 per cent of students feel mid-day meal is of good quality and tasty, but 39.8 per cent students feel otherwise. Majority of the students take two eggs per week. Eighty per cent eat with their friends and mid-day meal makes them happy.

Major Findings of the Study

1. Fifty per cent of the schools receive poor quality of rice from the government, 41.7 per cent of the schools receive average quality of rice and only 8.3 per cent of the schools receive good quality of rice for MDM scheme in the school.
2. In Kodad mandal, 50 per cent of the schools received average quality of rice, 50 per cent of the schools received poor quality of rice; In Munagal mandal, 75 per cent of the schools got poor quality of rice and 25 per cent of schools average, whereas, 25 per cent schools of Nadigudem mandal received good quality of rice to the schools but 50 per cent of schools in the same mandal received average quality of rice, 25 per cent of schools received poor quality of rice.
3. Fifty per cent of the schools have kitchen. In Kodad mandal, 75 per cent of the schools do not have kitchen but only 25 per cent of the schools have kitchen; In Munagala mandal, kitchen facility is available in 50 per cent of the schools; In Nadigudem mandal, kitchen facility is available in 75 per cent of the schools.
4. Members of self-help group (SHG) cook food for MDM in 83 per cent of the schools, parent committee members cook in 17 per cent of the schools. In Kodad mandal, members of SHG are cooking in all schools (100 per cent). In Munagala mandal 75 per cent of schools and Nadigudem mandal 75 per cent of the schools, MDM is cooked by members of SHG.
5. Cook and helper availability in all schools (100 per cent) and all schools of three mandals have cooks and helpers.
6. The maximum schools (83.3 per cent) are not receiving foodgrains (rice) in-time; only 16.7 per cent are receiving rice at the school in-time. In Kodad and Nadigudem mandals, 75 per cent of the schools have not received rice-in time. However, 100 per cent of the schools are receiving rice from the dealers in-time.
7. Fifty per cent of the school's enrolment increased below 10 per cent; and 50 per cent of the school's enrolment increased between 11 and 20 per cent due to MDM scheme. It can be concluded that there is an increase in enrolment in schools due to MDM scheme.
8. Majority of the respondents (83 per cent) opined that regularity to the school improved due to MDM scheme. In case of Kodad mandal, there is 100 per cent of regularity of the students and there is 75 per cent regularity of the students each in Munagala and Nadigudem mandals.
9. Boys and girls sit separately in 41.5 per cent of the schools; About 33.2 per cent of children sit in accordance with class studying, only 24.3 per cent schools children sit together for mid-day meal.
10. There is no health problem reported by children due to MDM scheme in the schools. However, only 33.2 per cent of the schools are getting health problems due to MDM meal.
11. Training programmes are not conducted for HMs on MDM scheme. Paying of bills to cooking agency in time is not found in any of the three mandals. Fifty per cent of the respondents opined MDM scheme to be fulfilling the objective of right to food for children.
12. Majority of the teachers and parents (80.5 and 72 per cent) opined that the school enrolment increased due to Mid-Day Meal scheme. A small percentage of teachers (19.5) and parents (28) feel there is no

- increase in enrolment due to MDM implementation.
13. Incidence of malnutrition among children decreased due to MDM scheme. But the majority of the parents (64 per cent) opined there is decrease of malnutrition among children due to MDM scheme in the schools. It reveals that majority of the teachers and parents (84.8 and 80.5 per cent) viewed school attendance to have increased due to MDM scheme.
 14. Eighty eight per cent of teachers' perception on implementation of MDM in the school is positive. Teachers (80 per cent) said food norms are designed in proper way but 56 per cent are not satisfied with food norms. Paying bills to agency, cook and helper is negotiable as viewed by teachers and parents (64 and 64 per cent).
 15. Majority of teachers (70.4 per cent) opined as additional work load for teachers to maintain the MDM Scheme, but not the same opinion by the parents. Hence the perceptions of both are different. Majority of teachers (86.4 per cent), parents (88 per cent) opined of better attention and retention with the help of meal consumed in the mid-day. Cooking by SHG members in the school is expressed to be good.
 16. Majority of teachers (88 per cent) and parents (89.6 per cent) opined supervision on MDM scheme to be strengthened and maximum respondents (86.4 and 86.4 per cent) felt social inequality and social participation aims are fulfilled by MDM in the school.
 17. Majority of the respondents (83.2 per cent) take MDM in their schools, only 15.8 per cent do not take, and 80 per cent of students' parents are encouraging students to take MDM in the school; 60.8 per cent of the students are unable to skip school due to mid-day meal.
 18. Majority of students (64 per cent) felt drinking water facility and cleanliness to be good in their schools, 64 per cent said quantity provided under MDM scheme is sufficient, and 60 per cent students' opinion is mid-day meal menu is properly designed.
 19. Majority of the students (70.4 per cent) say healthy and good habits are developed due to mid-day meal scheme. 65.6 per cent of the students stated that they are getting proper nutrition due to MDM, 70.4 per cent expressed satisfaction with MDM.
 20. Mid-day meal is of quality and tasty, but 39.8 per cent students say it is of poor quality. Majority of students consume two eggs weekly by MDM scheme in their schools; 80 per cent eat with their friends and mid-day meal makes them happy.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Safe drinking water must be used for food preparation. Suitable water purification system must be made available to all schools and kitchens. Government should provide these facilities for better implementation and to improve school attendance. Vegetables and pulses should be added daily in the mid-day meal as per prescribed menu under MDM guidelines.

The School Management Committee may be involved to decide the menu according to the availability of local ingredients and the liking of the school children. Management Information System (MIS) launched by MHRD. is to be used and inspections and monitoring regularly carried out by the Govt. awareness to all the stakeholders and officials is essential. Periodic orientation for teachers, SMC members and officers is to be conducted.

Community mobilisation efforts need to undergo a qualitative shift by taking Right to Education (RTE-act) norms into consideration whereby communities are also empowered to monitor the implementation of mid-day meal scheme. Improved hygienic practices through education in terms of hand-washing, safe drinking water etc., will enhance the health benefits of this scheme. MDM logo and menu chart should also be exhibited prominently in the school.

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