

Mid-Day Meal In School And Its Impact On Educational System: A Study Of Of Balasore District In Odisha

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ABSTRACT : Education plays a vital role in the development of human potential. The State Governments are spending considerable portion of their limited resources to provide educational facilities all over the country. In spite of these efforts the goal of cent per cent Universalization of elementary education appears to be far and elusive due to inherent socio-economic factors present in the society. Most of the children from low socio-economic society suffer from under nutrition; more often they drop out from schools at an early age, which directly affects their personality development. Several programs have been launched to combat these problems. Given the correlation between educational attainment and economic growth, policies that both effectively and efficiently decrease the financial barriers to primary school education in developing countries are of extreme interest to government and non-government organizations alike. In 1995, the Government of India implemented a school-feeding program to incentives children to attend primary school through the provision of a subsidized mid-day meal.

KEYWORDS – Human Resource Development ,subsidized Mead day meal, , Universalization of elementary education, school-feeding program , Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), centralized kitchen, Anganwari, Gram Panchayat, Mahila-Mandal or NGOs, Food and Nutrition Board, teacher training programmes, locally available fresh fruits and milk

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I INTRODUCTION

Education plays a vital role in the development of human potential. The State Governments are spending considerable portion of their limited resources to provide educational facilities all over the country. In spite of these efforts the goal of cent per cent Universalization of elementary education appears to be far and elusive due to inherent socio-economic factors present in the society. Most of the children from low socio-economic society suffer from under nutrition; more often they drop out from schools at an early age, which directly affects their personality development. Several programs have been launched to combat these problems.

Given the correlation between educational attainment and economic growth, policies that both effectively and efficiently decrease the financial barriers to primary school education in developing countries are of extreme interest to government and non-government organizations alike. In 1995, the Government of India implemented a school-feeding program to incentives children to attend primary school through the provision of a subsidized mid-day meal.

Education is the most important asset we have because our knowledge is the type of wealth that we will never lose no matter what, and the more we share it the more it increases. The vision of Odisha is to provide education to all. Keeping this vision in consideration School & Mass Education Department was created as a separate Department in January 1993, to look into the issues pertaining to Elementary Education, Secondary-Education, Teachers Education, Sanskrit Education, Computer Education, Special Education and Mass Education in the State. The provision of funds for the development of these sectors is being made keeping in view the availability of State resources for education sector and assistance from the Central Government under various schemes.

National Program of Nutritional Support to Primary Education was launched by Government of India in the year 1995. The primary objective of this scheme was to provide nutritional meal to children in government schools and government aided schools. This scheme was renamed as Mid- Day Meal in the year 2001. The cost of Mid- Day Meal scheme is shared between Central Government and State Government and at present, 75% of the scheme is funded by Central government.

The Mid Day Meal Scheme is a noble programme satisfying the hunger of millions of children per day throughout the country. The Mid Day Meal Scheme is one of the major initiatives started for achieving the goals of Universalization of elementary education in India. The Scheme has the potential to boost or adversely affect the ongoing teaching-learning processes depending on its way of implementation. The evaluation of Mid Day Meal Scheme is very important in terms of its implementation and the objectives for which it is launched. In this study an attempt has been made by the researcher to know the strengths and weaknesses of the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Mid Day Meal Scheme) in Odisha along with its present status of implementation. The success of any programme depends upon its proper implementation and hence evaluation of such programmes is needed in order to know the ground realities. Such types of studies have hardly been taken up by researchers in the State and will be very helpful in evolving a holistic picture of the Mid Day Meal Scheme at the State level, it was thought worthwhile to undertake the problem for research:

II OBJECTIVES OF MID-DAY MEAL SCHEME

The objectives of the Mid-Day Meal Scheme are to address two of the pressing problems for majority of children in India, viz. hunger and education by: (i) Improving the nutritional status of children in classes I – VIII in Government, Local Body and Government aided schools.

(ii) Encouraging poor children, belonging to disadvantaged sections, to attend school more regularly and help them concentrate on classroom activities.

(iii) Providing nutritional support to children of elementary stage in drought-affected areas during summer vacation. Education plays a vital role in the development of human potential. State Governments are spending considerable portion of their limited resources to provide educational facilities in their respective states. In spite of these efforts, the goal of 100 per cent Universalization of elementary education appears to be far and elusive due to inherent socio-economic factors present in the society. Free and compulsory education up to the age of 14 years is the constitutional commitment and it is estimated that Primary school children (6-14 years) from about 20% of the total population in India. Most of the children from low socio-economic section of society suffer from under nutrition, more often they drop out from schools at an early age, which directly affects their overall development. Also a hungry child would not attend schools regularly. Chronic hunger can cause or lead to malnutrition and even lead the children to pay less importance to studies as well as divert their attention from the studies and with a view to enhance the enrolment, retention, attendance and simultaneously improving nutritional level among children.

Broadly speaking, this paper attempts to analyze the nature and impact of mid-day meal programme on academic achievement of students in some selected upper primary level schools of Balasore district in Odisha. The study covers 2391 students rural areas encompassing „Below Poverty Line“ (BPL) and „Above Poverty Line“ (APL). The results of Chi-square-test revealed that mid-day meal program has had a significant positive impact in academic achievement of students. A multiple regression model has been used to determine the extent of relationship between mid-day meal programme (via the factors- attendance, enrolment, retention and drop out) and academic achievement of students. Again, students' t test has been used to examine the assumed hypothesis whether any variation of effect of mid-day meal among economic status of students (i.e., among BPL and APL) or area (i.e., among village and town) and enrolment, attendance, retention or dropout among rural and urban students exists or not.

III GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE

The terms of reference indicated coverage of 26 upper primary and primary schools and High School in three panchayats (Barunasing, Kuligan and Maharajpur) of Remuna Block of Balasore district in Odisha. This covers 2391 students in all. The period of comparison is made for three years , i.e 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15 covering 2686 sample students. 10 percent of students , i.e 268 and 268 parents are interview personally by the investigator. Out of total 111 teachers of sample schools 50% of teachers that is 55 teachers are interviewed.

IV HYPOTHESIS AND STRUCTURE OF STUDY

As per the terms of reference, the study has been undertaken with the following hypothesis:

The null hypotheses are the following –

H01: Is there any significant association between mid-day meal program and students' academic performance in school?

H02: There is no significant difference exists between MDP and enrolment of students in urban and rural schools.

H03: There is no significant difference exists between MDP and attendance of students in urban and rural schools.

H04: There is no significant difference exists between MDP and retention of students in urban and rural schools.

V DATA SOURCE AND METHODOLOGY

A multi-stage stratified random sampling technique will be adopted to select Panchayat wise total number of villages and Primary schools at the first stage. Whereas at the second stage, stratified sampling technique and also purposive sampling method were applied for selection of number schools by location. Stratified random sampling was applied in this study in order to select the primary schools. Data were also collected from the secondary sources like Census Reports, Government Documents, Gazetteers, District Handbooks and other published literatures

VI PROGRAMME PARAMETER TOOLS

1. Attitude scale for primary school teachers measuring attitude towards Mid Day Meal Scheme.
2. Questionnaire to study the teachers' perceptions towards Mid Day Meal Scheme.
3. Questionnaire to study the students' reactions towards Mid Day Meal Scheme.
4. Questionnaire to study the parents' perceptions towards Mid Day Meal Scheme.
5. Observation schedule regarding implementation of Mid Day Meal Scheme in government primary schools of Odisha

VII REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Numerous research studies support this correlation between poverty and low educational attainment, and find that entrenched, household characteristics are highly predictive of children academic success. In their analysis of the determinants of school participation in rural North India, Dreze and Kingdon (2001) find that the probability of school participation increases with higher levels of parental education, and that this relationship is particularly strong between parents and children of the same gender.

Additionally, the effects of caste status, household wealth, and level of parental motivation are highly significant. Research conducted in Brazil supports a positive relationship between parent and child education levels, and suggests that higher levels of maternal education reduce intra household gender biases that may prevent females from attending school (Emerson and Souza 2007). Finally, in their study of child labor and schooling decisions in Ghana, Canagarajah and Coulombe (1997) find that education decreases and child labor increases as household wealth declines, supporting the theory that schooling can be a financial burden for poorer families. If these results hold across regions, then the 69 million children not enrolled in school worldwide (United Nations 2010) and the 1.4 billion people living below the poverty line (World Bank 2008) will be less likely to afford education for their children, further perpetuating the cycle of poverty through future generations. Policy intervention is therefore needed to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of universal primary education and ensure that all children have equal access to education.

An important policy response to this issue has been to target the cost of education itself, providing subsidies and in-kind or conditional cash transfers when a household would otherwise be unable to afford education. For example, the PROGRESA program, initiated by Mexico in 1997, provided cash transfers to rural households conditional on satisfactory school attendance by their children, and it has been estimated to increase school attendance of treatment children by 0.66 years on a baseline of 6.80 years (Schultz 2002). Furthermore, PROGRESA increased enrollment even for children who were ineligible for the program, but benefited from the influence of peers, particularly those from the poorest households (Bobonis and Finan 2002). In Bangladesh, a targeted school stipend administered through Bangladesh's Food-for-Education program had strong effects on school participation, leading to an average of a 17.3 percentage point increase in attendance rate for boys and a 16 percentage point increase for girls (Ravallion and Wodon 2000).

VIII BRIEF INTRODUCTION OF BALASORE DISTRICT OF ODISHA

Baleshwar is one of the coastal districts of Odisha and lies on the northernmost part of the state. The district is surrounded by Medinapur district of West Bengal in north, Bay of Bengal in east, Bhadrak district in south and Mayurbhanj and Kendujhar districts lie on its western side. Bhadrak Sub-division was a part of Baleshwar district which on 3rd April 1993 became a separate district vide Govt. of Odisha Notification No. SRO-214/93 dated 27.03.1993. Baleshwar gets its name from the Persian word. 'Bala-e-Shore' meaning 'Town in the Sea'. The historical legends ascribe that the district has been named as per the Lord Baneshwar (Lord Shiva) of the town, which subsequently changed to Balasore during the Mughal rules.

1.9: Sampling design

The study is based on the field level data collected from a sample schools of three Grampanchayats, selected from total Grampanchayats of Remuna Block in Balasore district of Orissa. A multistage sampling technique has been used to select schools for the purpose of questionnaire

Selection of Block :

Remuna Block of Balasore district, Orissa, is purposively selected as the area of the present study, as it has the largest concentration of population as well as the Block is an advanced Block of the district.

Selection of Gram Panchayats :

Selection of Gram Panchayats becomes the second stage of sampling. There are twenty-eight Gram Panchayats operating in the Block. Accordingly 10 percent Gram Panchayats are selected for the study purpose. As such three Gram Panchayats namely Barunasing, Kuligan and Maharajpur are selected at random to study the impact of Mid Day Meal in Schools.

IX COLLECTION OF DATA

Difficulties in the collection of Data

The study is essentially based upon the primary evidence collected from the various schools of the three gram panchayats, relying thus on the feedback obtained from them as a means of accessing and assessing the ground reality, for it is my firm belief that it is only when the theoretical citadel is confronted with the ground realities that the chinks start to appear in the traditional armour. Thus perhaps the best way of testing the efficacy of a populist policy formulation is to pit it against the ground which it has actually traversed and let the conclusions speak for themselves. One major bottleneck I ran into during the very initial stages of the study was the inability to elicit uninhibited responses from the target group for the very nature of the survey brewed a general feeling of suspicion, apprehension and discomfort. The very idea of parting with such sensitive information and that too to practically alien individuals was not looked upon with favour and the indifference bordering upon apathy, if not hostility, was alarmingly obvious.

Table-1Details of Sample Panchayats of Remuna Block

Sl No	Name of GP	No of Villages in GP	No of Households in GP	No of Population in GP	Number of sample schools
1	Barunasing	08	1300	7000	11
2	Kuligan	09	1400	8500	7
3	Maharajpur	09	1400	8500	8

(Source : Primary data collected from Remuna Block)

Table-02 Details of Students/Teacher strength in the sample school of Sample Panchayats

Name of Panchayat: Barunasing under Remuna Block of Balasore district

Sl No	Name of School	Village	Number of Teacher	Class wise Number of students in 2014-15							
				1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	Total
1	Barunasing Pry School	Barunasing	4	30	16	19	-	-			
2	Dasarathi ME School	Barunasing	8				45	30	70	68	213
3	Mala UGUP	Mala	6	26	35	14	19	39	31	-	164
4	Uttarchak PRY	Uttarchak	3	16	20	11	15	10	-	-	72
5	Gobindachandra Nodal	Mandagan	6	18	14	12	25	23	51	41	184
6	Tina Pry	Tiona	3	12	20	18	19	17	-	-	86
7	Nua Primary Tahalia	Tahalia	2	9	8	5	3	4	-	-	29
8	Saharda Pry	Saharda	4	9	18	9	13	9	-	-	58
9	Tahalia Primary	Tahalia	3	12	13	14	15	18	-	-	72
10	Patra Pry	Patra	3	12	23	21	12	11	-	-	79
11	Upendra Nayan UP	Patra	3	-	-	-	-	-	18	20	38
	Total		45								995

Table-03 Name of Panchayat: Kuligan under Remuna Block of Balasore district

Sl No	Name of School	Village	Number of Teacher	Class wise Number of students in 2014-15							
				1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	Total
1	Reheng A Primary School	Rehenga	4	23	21	27	26	28			125
2	Rehenga B Primary	Rehenga	3	18	23	19	26	28			114
3	Nabakumar UP	Kuligan	2	-	-	-	-	-	50	57	107
4	Annapura UGME	Kuligan	2						56	44	100
5	Dasarathi UGME	Bedipur	6	17	12	19	25	26	11	18	145
6	Siramani Nodal	Ganjia	6	10	11	14	15	14	20	16	109
7	Bansidhara Bidyapitha (Only Class eight)	Kuligan	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	103
			29								803

Table:-04 Details of Students/Teacher strength in the sample school of Sample Panchayats

Name of Panchayat: Maharajpur under Remuna Block of Balasore district

Sl No	Name of School	Village	Number of Teacher	Class wise Number of students in 2014-15							
				1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6th	7th	Total
1	Maharajour Nodal	Maharajpu	9	18	18	20	20	28	46	57	207
2	Rampur Pry	Rampur	3	10	18	14	18	14	-	-	74
3	Batitanki Pry	Batitanki	2	7	6	6	10	8	-	-	37
4	Boita UG UP	Boita	7	27	17	31	24	33	33	17	182
5	Bauli Dibya Pry	Rampur	2						20	12	32
6	Dahigadia Pry	Dahigadia	3	12	12	7	9	12	-	-	52
7	Boita Girls HighSchool	Boita	3	-	-	-	-	-	22	27	49
8	Maharajpur School	Maharajpu	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	42	42
	Total		37								675

(Source- Personal Survey)

1.11 Research Findings

Table 05: School wise status on regularity in serving meal during 2014-15

Sl. No.	School name	Hot cooked meal served daily	If no, what is served?	Period of school days (total no.) when meal was not served	Reasons for not serving hot cooked meal
1	Barunasing Pry School	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
2	Dasarathi ME School	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
3	Mala UGUP	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
4	Uttarchak PRY	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
5	Gobindachandra Nodal	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
6	Tina Pry	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
7	Nua Primary Tahalia	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
8	Saharda Pry	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
9	Tahalia Primary	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
10	Patra Pry	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
11	Upendra Nayan UP	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
12	Reheng A Primary School	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
13	Rehenga B Primary	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
14	Nabakumar UP	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
15	Annapurna UGME	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
16	Dasarathi UGME	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
17	Siramani Nodal	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
18	Bansidhara Bidyapitha	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
19	Maharajour Nodal	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
20	Rampur Pry	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
21	Batitanki Pry	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
22	Boita UG UP	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
23	Bauli Dibya Pry	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
	Dahigadia Pry	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
24	Boita Girls High School	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
25	Maharajpur High School	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA
26	Barunasing Pry School	Yes	NA	Not Available	NA

(Source personal Interview)

Table 06: School wise status on gender, caste and community wise discrimination in cooking and serving MDM and seating arrangement made for children to take MDM during 2014-15

Sl. No.	School name	Gender discrimination			Caste discrimination			Community discrimination		
		Cooking	Serving	Seating	Cooking	Serving	Seating	Cooking	Serving	Seating
Sl. No.	School name	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
		No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
1	Barunasing Pry School	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
2	Dasarathi ME School	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
3	Mala UGUP	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
4	Uttarchak PRY	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
5	Gobindachandra Nodal	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
6	Tina Pry	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
7	Nua Primary Tahalia	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
8	Saharda Pry	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
9	Tahalia Primary	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
10	Patra Pry	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
11	Upendra Nayan UP	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
12	Reheng A Primary School	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
13	Rehenga B Primary	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
14	Nabakumar UP	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
15	Annapura UGME	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
16	Dasarathi UGME	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
17	Siramani Nodal	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
18	Bansidhara Bidyapitha	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
19	Maharajour Nodal	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
20	Rampur Pry	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
21	Batitanki Pry	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
22	Boita UG UP	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
23	Bauli Dibya Pry	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
24	Dahigadia Pry	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
25	Boita Girls High School	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
26	Maharajpur High School	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

Source- Field Survey

Table 07: School wise status on opinion of children on quality and quantity of MDM during 2014-15

Sl. No.	School name	Opinion on quality of rice	Opinion on quality of dal	Opinion on quantity of rice	Opinion on quantity of dal	Reasons for unhappiness on quality of rice/dal	Reasons for unhappiness on quantity of rice/dal
1	Barunasing Pry School	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil
2	Dasarathi ME School	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil
3	Mala UGUP	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil
4	Uttarchak PRY	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil
5	Gobindachandra Nodal	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil
6	Tina Pry	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil
7	Nua Primary Tahalia	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil
8	Saharda Pry	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil
9	Tahalia Primary	Happy	Happy	Happy	Happy	Nil	Nil

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		Always	Always	Always	Always		
10	Patra Pry	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil
11	Upendra Nayan UP	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil
12	Reheng A Primary School	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil
13	Rehenga B Primary	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil
14	Nabakumar UP	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil
15	Annapurna UGME	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil
16	Dasarathi UGME	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil
17	Siramani Nodal	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil
18	Bansidhara Bidyapitha	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil
19	Maharajour Nodal	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil
20	Rampur Pry	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil
21	Batitanki Pry	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil
22	Boita UG UP	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil
23	Bauli Dibya Pry	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil
24	Dahigadia Pry	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil
25	Boita Girls High School	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil
26	Maharajpur High School	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Happy Always	Nil	Nil

Source- Field Surve

Table 08 : School wise opinion of community leaders on MDM programme 2014-15

No.	School name	Quantity of MDM per child at primary level	Quantity of MDM per child at upper primary level	Overall impression of MDM programme	From where do you know about MDM?
1	Barunasing Pry School	Very good	Very good	Good	Friend
2	Dasarathi ME School	Excellent	Very good	Quite Satisfactory	teacher
3	Mala UGUP	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Teacher
4	Uttarchak PRY	Excellent	Excellent	Quite Satisfactory	School, Television, DSWO
5	Gobindachandra Nodal	Very good	Very good	Satisfactory	Villagers
6	Tina Pry	Very good	-Very good	Good	Teacher
7	Nua Primary Tahalia	Very good	Very good	Satisfactory	Teacher
8	Saharda Pry	Good	Good	Good	Teacher
9	Tahalia Primary	Very good	Very good	Satisfactory	Teacher
10	Patra Pry	Excellent	Very good	Satisfactory	Teacher
11	Upendra Nayan UP	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Teacher
12	Reheng A Primary School	Very good	Very good	Satisfactory	Teacher
13	Rehenga B Primary	Very good	Very good	Satisfactory	Teacher
14	Nabakumar UP	Very good	Very good	Very good	Teacher
15	Annapurna UGME	Very good	Very good	Quite Satisfactory	Teacher
16	Dasarathi UGME	Very good	Very good	Good	Teacher
17	Siramani Nodal	Excellent	Very good	Satisfactory	Teacher
18	Bansidhara Bidyapitha	Very good	Very good	Good	Teacher
19	Maharajour Nodal	Excellent	Excellent	Very good	Teacher
20	Rampur Pry	Very good	Very good	Very good	Teacher
21	Batitanki Pry	Excellent	Excellent	Very good	Teacher
22	Boita UG UP	Very good	Very good	Very good	Teacher
23	Bauli Dibya Pry	Very good	Very good	Very good	Teacher
24	Dahigadia Pry	Very good	Very good	Satisfactory	Teacher
25	Boita Girls High School	Very good	Very good	Satisfactory	Teacher
26	Maharajpur High School	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Very good	Teacher

Source- Field survey

1.12 Observation from the above Tables:

- 1 Hot Cooked meal is served in all sample schools. During 1-9-14 to 31-8-16, only in 05 schools MDM service has been interrupted for a few days.
- 2 Out of every 2686 children only 2625 children are taking MDM because rest are going home to take home-made food.
- 3 Food-grains are received regularly by most of the schools but some have got 2 to 8 kg less supply of both rice and dal per 50 kg. bag.
- 4 Most of the schools have received 01 month's extra food-grains but only half of the schools have received the food-grains at school point. Food-grain quality has been good in most cases.
- 5 Cooking cost has never been received in advance. It takes even 1 to 2 years time in some schools to get it.
- 6 Social equity is seen everywhere relating to cooking, serving and seat arrangement for MDM.
- 7 Weekly menu is not at all displayed. The NGO provides variety of food items every day but SHG / VEC prepares same food (Bhata and Dalma) everyday. Eggs are distributed boiled, two times in a week.
- 8 Children are happy with both quality and quantity of food items.
- 9 Healthcare and supplementary nutrient facilities are very rare.
- 10 Cooks and Helpers do not get remuneration regularly every month. In majority of schools, they belong to weaker sections.
- 11 Pucca kitchen-cum-store has been constructed in some schools but are used either for cooking or for storing purpose only. Some schools cook in open place / school verandah and store in classroom.
- 12 All schools have potable drinking water facility. Most of the schools have adequate cooking utensils but none has storing utensils.
- 13 In all schools, children wash hands and utensils before and after eating. They also partake meals in an orderly manner.
- 14 Parents / VECs/ PRI supervise MDM occasionally but a roster for MDM supervision is not maintained.
- 15 Community in many schools has expressed satisfaction over the quantity of MDM served and has felt that MDM contributes to raise child attendance and general health.

1.13 :Impact of MDM Programme

Impact on student's enrolment, retention, attendance & learning enhancement- PTA/SMCs perceptions -PTA/ SMC members opined that there has been a positive change on all the three parameters and an improvement has taken place on enrolment, retention and attendance of students. More importantly students' learning ability particularly in the rural locations has been enhanced due to improvement in the nutritional status which helps them to concentrate and perform better in the classroom. This is due to the fact that these students either come from economically weak background and both the parents go out for work early in the morning, thus leaving the children hungry at home. These children then go to school without eating anything or their elder siblings prepare only rotis and give them. Eventually these children are either empty stomach or hungry, which hinders their process of concentration & learning.

Attendance of Students in School

Every day on the basis of previous day's attendance, cooks are provided food grains by the cooking agency or by village Sarpanch. At school level, the head of the schools maintain the register and at the time of inspection, they present the register before the inspection authority. Every day, food grains are measured as per attendance and food cooked by the designated cooking agency. The children sometimes carry their own utensils and in some blocks, utensils have been provided by school development committees. The children are made to wash their hands, sit together and have their meals. Cleaning up, after eating is also emphasized upon. The process is supervised by the school teacher and a helper. Efforts are on to involve parents in this work.

1.14:Evaluation of MDM Scheme on the basis of the study

The MDM scheme has many potential benefits: attracting children from disadvantaged sections (especially girls, Dalits and Adivasis) to school, improving regularity, nutritional benefits, socialization benefits and benefits to women are some that have been highlighted.

Study shows that some of these benefits have indeed been realized. The positive effect on enrollment of disadvantaged children on attendance on learning on improving nutritional inputs on improving nutritional outcomes .

Other Important Observations in the Selected Primary Schools concerning Mid Day Meal Scheme

- 1) The primary schools in Remuna Block of Balasore District are implementing National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Mid Day Meal Scheme) as per the guidelines received from State government.
- 2) In all schools, there were no safety provisions in case of any accident like fire, leakage of gas cylinders, etc.

- 3) A hot cooked nutritious mid day meal is provided to every child in the recess time regularly on each working day.
- 4) The quantity of food served to the children is sufficient to satisfy their hunger.
- 5) Mid Day Meal Scheme consumed a part of the teaching time of teachers as they have to arrange each and every thing for the smooth implementation of the Scheme and have to maintain the daily records of the Scheme regularly.
- 6) After discussions with cooks and staff members of primary schools it is suggested that there is need to increase the funds for strengthening the Mid Day Meal Scheme.
- 7) The honorarium payable to cooks and other helpers is very less and it is just exploitation of the workers and cooks due to unemployment.
- 8) Maximum cooks appointed in these primary schools for preparation of mid may meals were untrained.
- 9) The delay in release of funds has caused several problems to the schools, as these agencies have less financial resources. Hence, funds may be released without causing delay.
- 10) There is very less time left for students to play games and other physical activities because a major portion of their recess time is consumed in the serving and eating of mid day meals.

Major Findings of the Study in terms of Achievement of Objectives of Mid day Meal Scheme of Remuna Block of Balasore District

Mid Day Meal Scheme and increase in enrolment of students

The average enrolment of students per school is minimum (48.78) in session 2014-15 in comparison to last two years. In other words neither cooked Mid Day Meal Scheme nor uncooked Mid Day Meal Scheme (distribution of food grains) has given a boost to enrolment of students in government primary schools of Odisha attending the primary schools in comparison to male students. However the decline in enrolment may be attributed due to other factors such as mushrooming growth of private English medium schools in the locality and preference of parents towards these schools.

Mid Day Meal Scheme and the attendance of students

In the month of April, 2015 the percentage of students having attendance 80% or more was low as it was 76.69% for class III and 79.86% for class V as compared to May and June, 2015. In the month of May, 2015 the percentage of students having attendance 80% or more was 97.34% for class III and 98% for Class V. Similarly for the month of June, 2014 it was 98.59% for class III and 98.18 for class V. Maximum attendance of students was noticed for the month of May and June, 2015 as more than 97% students at primary school stage were attending the school daily. So along with other schemes and programmes, Mid Day Meal Scheme is also boosting the attendance of students in both pre and post lunch sessions in the government primary schools of Odisha

1.15: Major Findings of the Study based on Teachers' Perceptions towards Mid Day Meal Scheme of Remuna Block of Balasore District

Teachers' perceptions with regard to achievement of objectives of Mid Day Meal Scheme

- 1) A large majority of government primary school teachers (76 %) were of the view that the Mid Day Meal Scheme is helping to achieve the goals of Universalization of Elementary Education, whereas 22% teachers were not certain whether the Scheme is helping to achieve the goals of UEE or not. Only a small percentage of teachers (2%) responded that the Scheme is not helping to achieve the goals of universalization of elementary education.
- 2) Maximum number of teachers (86.99%) considered that there is much increase in the attendance of students after the implementation of cooked Mid Day Meal Scheme, whereas only a small percentage of teachers (10.23%) noticed very little increase. The teachers presently working in government primary schools of Remuna Block have expressed that this Scheme is helping to retain the students in school after post lunch sessions and hence improving the attendance in both the sessions i.e. pre lunch and post lunch sessions.
- 3) A small percentage of teachers (2.56%) felt that Mid Day Meal Scheme is reducing the number of drop-outs in government primary schools of Remuna Block while almost all the primary school teachers (96.16%) responded in a negative manner and provided the reason that there is no problem of drop-outs in their schools. Children, whom we call drop-outs, are very rare.
- 4) Large majority of teachers (76.34%) revealed that there is no improvement in learning levels of students specially those belonging to disadvantaged section of society neither by Mid Day Meal Scheme nor by any other programme. The views of 22.17% teachers were that there is very little improvement in the learning levels of students and only seven teachers (1.49%) considered that there is definite improvement in the learning levels of students after the introduction of cooked Mid Day Meal Scheme.

- 5) Views of 30.28% teachers were that as a result of Mid Day Meal Scheme there is very little improvement in the nutritional status of students of their school, whereas a good number of teachers (36.04%) considered that there is no improvement in the nutritional status of children of their school.
- 6) Large majority of teachers (78.68%) stated that the mid day meal, which is provided to the children of their school, is a balanced and nutritious diet. The responses of only 4.48% teachers were not in favour of the idea contained in this statement and responded that still more quantity of food grains and other ingredients are needed in order to make it nutritious and balanced diet.
- 7) Generally, the teachers considered mid day meal as nutritious and balanced diet responded that it can protect the children from malnutrition and other diseases caused due to malnutrition.
- 8) A large majority of teachers (75.69%) were satisfied from the quality of mid day meal and plead that maintaining the quality of meal in their school is their own responsibility and depends mainly on the teachers of that particular school. Whereas, 15.99% teachers were satisfied up to some extent and considered that the Mid Day Meal Scheme still needs a lots of improvement.
- 9) Maximum number of teachers (89.13%) perceived that during preparation of mid day meal in the school all possible precautions are taken by the cooking staff and they also supervised the process of preparation of mid day meal daily.

1.16: Students' Reactions towards Mid Day Meal Scheme of Remuna Block of Balasore District

- 1) All students (100%) responded that they get mid day meal regularly in the school during lunch break.
- 2) Almost all the students (95.43%) responded that they like the mid day meal that is served to them in lunch break under Mid Day Meal Scheme. Only a small percentage of students (4.57%) responded negatively.
- 3) Maximum number of students (85.43%) reported that there is proper sitting arrangement at the time of distribution of mid day meal in school, but 14.57% students were not satisfied with the sitting arrangement and responded that they have to take their meal on the floor without any mat.
- 4) One fourth of the respondents (25%) reported that their teachers do not supervise the mid day meal distribution while, a large majority of students (75%) were agreed and responded that at least one teacher is always with them at the time of meal distribution.
- 5) All students (100%) responded that they are fed properly with love and affection in the school.
- 6) All primary school students (100%) expressed that at the time of distribution of mid day meal they sit together without any discrimination.
- 7) Almost all the students (99.79%) said that they have never fallen ill after taking mid day meal in the school.
- 8) A good number of students (40.79%) admitted that their attention is often diverted towards the meal during the class and majority of students (59.21%) refused to admit that their attention often gets diverted towards the meal during the class hours.
- 9) Majority of students (62.02%) accepted that as a result of Mid Day Meal Scheme there is less time left for playing games and other physical activities in the recess time. But a good number of students (37.98%) responded that there is no such problem of less time in the recess.
- 10) Only 30.65% students reported that they feel sleepy after taking mid day meal in the school, while 69.35% students responded negatively.
- 11) A good majority of students (74.05%) agreed that their parents inquire about the mid day meal. About one fourth of the students (25.95%) said that their parents are not interested in knowing what they have taken in the school under Mid Day Meal Scheme.
- 12) A good majority of students (72.17%) responded that there is proper arrangement of water and soap for washing hands in their schools.
- 13) Almost all the students (97.39%) felt that there is no problem of scattering of leftover meal in the school and hence the environment of the school is hygienic.
- 14) Maximum number of students (91.52%) said that they are attending the school regularly because of the mid day meal provided in the school.
- 15) A good number of students (37.02%) accepted that they do not wash their plates properly after taking mid day meal but, majority of students (62.98%) said that they wash their plates properly after taking mid day meal.

1.17: Various Problems Obstructing the Achievement of Objectives of Mid Day Meal Scheme of Remuna Block of Balasore District

- 1) There is no separate kitchen in the schools for preparation of mid day meal and the preparation of meals in the same surrounding near the classes disturb the students and teachers. The attention of students is distracted due to this inappropriate distance of kitchen from classrooms.
- 2) Proper storage provisions are not available in most of the schools. There are ad-hoc arrangements for storing items and in many schools they are kept in the school office, staff room or in the classrooms.
- 3) There are no safety provisions in case of any accident like fire, leakage of gas cylinder etc.

- 4) The grant for Mid Day Meal Scheme is not made available timely by the concerned department dealing with Mid Day Meal Scheme. Teachers have to pay from their own pocket in case of delay in grant.
- 5) The irregular supply of L.P.G. cylinders is also a major problem for teachers.
- 6) There is urgent need to increase the funds for Mid Day Meal Scheme by taking into consideration the current inflation rate. There is no match between government approved rates and the market rates as the government approved rate for cooking oil is Rs. 52 but in the market its cost is nearly Rs. 70 and the same is the case with vegetables.
- 7) The honorarium for helpers and cooks is very less and it is difficult to find suitable trained person for the job within this amount and it should be increased. Sometimes due to this problem of less honorariums they do not bother what the teachers are saying and do not follow the guidelines.
- 8) There is no participation and help received from the local community for the implementation of Mid Day Meal Scheme.
- 9) There is no *night chowkidar* in the school so a fear in the mind of teachers is always there about theft of food articles and cooking vessels from the school.
- 10) The daily maintenance of Mid Day Meal Scheme registers also wastes teachers time and finally the students are the sufferer.
- 11) Fresh vegetables are not available daily in the tribal schools and hence it is better to provide locally available dishes as *momo*, *thupka* etc. for children.
- 12) There is less time left for students to play games and other physical activities.
- 13) Apart from these another problems are overeating on the part of students, sometimes objection of the local people for sharing of mid day meal jointly by students of different castes, problems related to handicapped children, non enrolled children who came to school with their brothers and sisters and also take mid day meal and teachers cannot ignore them and sometimes students yawning in the class and feel sleepy.

1.18: Suggestions for Making the Mid Day Meal Scheme More Effective

- 1) Teachers should be relieved of all Mid Day Meal Scheme responsibilities, except supervising the preparation and distribution of mid day meal.
- 2) Mid Day Meal Scheme should be handed over to any responsible local agency like Anganwari, Gram Panchayat, SHG or NGO which may implement the Scheme and maintain the whole records. No scheme should be implemented at the cost of teaching time of the teachers.
- 3) Separate kitchen-cum- store should be made available to all government primary schools and it should be at an appropriate distance from the classrooms.
- 4) The Mid Day Meal Scheme should be implemented in such a manner that in any circumstances it does not adversely affect teaching-learning activities in schools.
- 5) The grant for Mid Day Meal Scheme should be increased by taking into consideration the inflation rate and should be provided monthly well in time.
- 6) Adequate number of teaching staff must be there in all government primary schools of Odisha only then this Scheme and other schemes can be implemented effectively.
- 7) The participation of the local community in the implementation of Mid Day Meal Scheme should be encouraged by involving many of them in the various developmental plans started by State government in the schools.
- 8) The honorarium for helpers and cooks must be increased so that they can be motivated towards the preparation of better meal for the children with satisfactory income.
- 9) To maintain Mid Day Meal Scheme registers and cash books one post of clerk should be created in the centre government primary schools and paper work of government primary schools under that centre school will be carried out by him.
- 10) There should be the provision of locally available fresh fruits and milk in place of mid day meal for twice a week.
- 11) The L.P.G. cylinders and quota of the food grains should be made available to the government primary schools on priority basis.
- 12) Electronic governance shall be adopted as the management technique.

1.19: General recommendations and suggestions

By educating every child of the country it becomes possible to rule out the differences of rural India and „urban India“ and to realize also the concept of „inclusive growth“.

- 1) Teachers should be relieved of all Mid Day Meal Scheme responsibilities, except supervising the preparation and distribution of mid day meal.

- 2) Mid Day Meal Scheme should be handed over to any responsible local agency like Anganwari, Gram Panchayat, Mahila-Mandal or NGOs which may implement the Scheme and maintain the whole records. No scheme should be implemented at the cost of teaching time of the teachers.
- 3) Separate kitchen-cum- store should be made available to all government primary schools and it should be at an appropriate distance from the classrooms.
- 4) The Mid Day Meal Scheme should be implemented in such a manner that in any circumstances it does not adversely affect teaching-learning activities in schools.
- 5) The grant for Mid Day Meal Scheme should be increased by taking into consideration the inflation rate and should be provided monthly well in time.
- 6) Adequate number of teaching staff must be there in all government primary schools of Himachal Pradesh only then this Scheme and other schemes can be implemented effectively.
- 7) The participation of the local community in the implementation of Mid Day Meal Scheme should be encouraged by involving many of them in the various developmental plans started by State government in the schools.
- 8) The honorarium for helpers and cooks must be increased so that they can be motivated towards the preparation of better meal for the children with satisfactory income.
- 9) To maintain Mid Day Meal Scheme registers and cash books one post of clerk should be created in the centre government primary schools and paper work of government primary schools under that centre school will be carried out by him.
- 10) There should be the provision of locally available fresh fruits and milk in place of mid day meal for twice a week.
- 11) Electronic governance shall be adopted as the management technique.
- 12) The centralized kitchen is a practice for the management of Mid Day Meal Scheme. All schools cannot be managed under the centralized scheme but it is possible only in such areas where schools can be clustered as a unit for timely delivery of mid day meal.

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