



An Exploration of the Effectiveness of Mid-day Meal Programme and Its Impact on Children in India

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Abstract:

In India, more than a third of youngsters suffer from stunted development. Stunting in children may be reduced by ensuring that mothers are healthy and well-nourished, according to food and nutrition experts. The Mid-Day Meal programme, which provides nutrition support to primary education, is widely regarded as a technique of boosting enrolment, attendance, and retention. In order to meet the nutritional needs of each school kid, MDM aims to serve them with a hot, freshly prepared lunch. Some people believe that for children from low-income families, the school lunch serves as a replacement rather than an addition to the home meal. While the long-term consequences of school meals on students' nutritional condition are essential, so are the short-term implications on their ability to focus, remember, and learn. Well-conducted investigations have led to a number of published findings pointing to these positive short-term impacts on learning capacity of the school lunch. When a youngster is hungry, he or she is unable to focus and learn well. Providing students with a mid-day lunch is an excellent way to prevent classroom hunger and improve student performance. Early morning meal is not part of many families' daily routines; therefore, many kids arrive at school on an empty stomach each morning. Consider the short-term effects of MDM on learning in these conditions. As a result, MDM has the potential to help increase school enrolment while simultaneously improving student performance in the classroom. It also helps to improve social cohesion since it brings together youngsters from different tribes and castes to share a meal.

Keywords: *Mid-Day Meal (MDM), UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring Report, India, Malnutrition*

1. Introduction

Children in this country have several difficulties in obtaining a quality education. Socioeconomic and geographic issues are only two of the many reasons why individuals do not go to school. Many benefits exist for both the individual child and society as a whole if we continue to invest in education. Because of these advantages, both students and parents are encouraged to go to school. A mid-day lunch is one of these options. It is impossible to exaggerate the value of school meals, particularly for children from low-income homes.

2. Mid-day meal programme in India

Although India has made great advances in ensuring education for everyone, UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring Report (2015) states that "quality of education remains a serious concern." Keeping students in school through graduation is still a problem, and dropout rates remain high, despite advances in enrolment. In many respects, schools aren't set up to deal with the current student body as it is. More than 690,000 primary school teachers are needed, yet just 53 percent of schools have working girls' restrooms and 74 percent have access to drinking water. An important finding from the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) was that pupils throughout the country were not performing at the same level when it came to fundamental abilities such as reading and writing. As

much as a fifth of Indian youngsters, between the ages of six and 14, do not attend school. Attendance is poor even among youngsters who have been enrolled. Twenty-six percent of elementary school students drop out before the fifth grade. The poor, people who live in rural regions, females, and residents of various states are particularly vulnerable. In order to enhance the nutritional and educational condition of underprivileged children, one of the country's national flagships feeding programmes, MDMS, was established. Since January 2005, the Mid-Day Meal (MDM) programme has been launched in the state of Bihar. For elementary school teachers, MDM continues to be a major source of distraction. It's the teachers' fault if something goes wrong with the programme. Teachers are receiving a poor rap because of pervasive corruption in the implementation of MDMS and occasional cases of food poisoning. Many of India's youngsters must complete basic and secondary school in order to establish a globally competitive workforce.

3. Mid-day Meal Scheme in India

In 1995, the Ministry of Education introduced the Midday meal programme, which is a government-sponsored programme.

It is the biggest school food programme in the world, with the purpose of making basic education accessible to all children.

Cooked lunches are provided to all students in grades I through VIII who enrol and attend the school.

4. Objective

1. Effectiveness of mid-day meal programme and its impact on children in India.

5. Impact of Mid-Day Meal Scheme

At CPR's Centre for Policy Research and the Accountability Initiative, Avani Kapur, a Reacher, said that although learning results rely on many factors, MDM has a beneficial impact on nutrition levels among children who eat regular and nutritious mid-day meals. Education progress, child nutrition, and social fairness are all important factors in the execution of the Mid-Day Meal Program. There are a variety of facets to each of these goals. Some people have more aspirations than others have. To demonstrate, a primary benefit of school lunches is to increase school enrolment. In addition, it may be assumed that daily lunches would lead to an Increase in student attendance (and not just annual enrolment). Since "classroom hunger" may make it difficult for students to focus and may even hinder their capacity to study, school meals may help students achieve better academic results. Similarly, the nutritional goal of school lunches is multifaceted, including anything from preventing students from becoming hungry in the classroom to promoting healthy development in schoolchildren. One of the great advantages of a Mid-Day Meal Program is that kids come every day and eat whatever is served to them. There are several ways in which school lunches contribute to social fairness, including by educating students to sit together and share a meal. Meals in the middle of the day may help to level the playing field for students of different socioeconomic backgrounds. In fact, the majority of pupils in India's public schools come from low-income households. As a result, the less fortunate in society benefit from free lunches provided by the government. Children from low-income families could benefit from mid-day meals, which may encourage them to attend school. Because education is a key cause of economic disadvantage and social exclusion, this scheme likely led to a reduction in future class disparities. Despite their benign appearance, mid-day meals pose a substantial threat to the entrenched inequities of class, race, and gender.

6. Research Design

The term "exploratory data analysis," or EDA, refers to a technique that is used by data scientists to analyse and study data sets as well as summarise the primary features of such data sets. These

techniques often include the usage of data visualisation approaches. It makes it simpler for data scientists to see patterns, recognise anomalies, test a hypothesis, or verify assumptions by assisting them in determining the most effective way to alter data sources in order to get the answers.

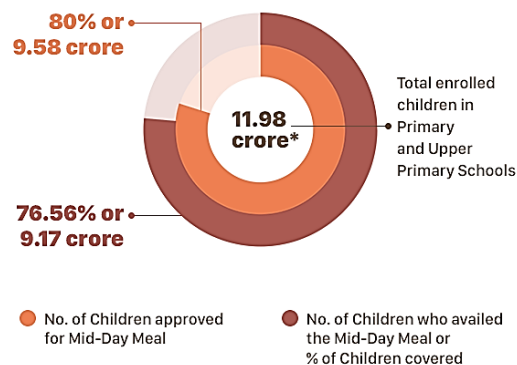
7. Population Size

Total sample population considering for this paper is low income of Indian population.

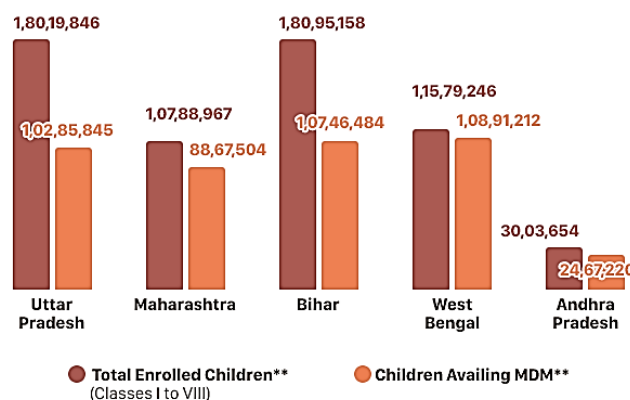
8. Tools

SPSS is a software for data management that is used in both the academic and professional markets.

9. Coverage of Mid-Day Meal in India



According to the Ministry of Human Resource Development, the Mid-Day Meal (MDM) plan of India, which is supplying hot and freshly prepared meals to malnourished children and is believed to be the world's biggest school lunch programme, is the world's largest school meal programme (MHRD). According to the statistics provided by the government, the MDM initiative reached around 9.17 crore students in 11.35 lakh schools throughout the nation in the academic year 2018-19. When a state seeks permission, it never requests clearance for 100 per cent of the registered students since the daily attendance in school is never 100 per cent. In Rajasthan, the average attendance in public schools in all the 33 districts in the state is 78 per cent. To minimise wasting of resource, the state government requests clearance on the basis of the average attendance in their respective states.



10. Conclusion

According to food and nutrition experts, stunting in children may be decreased by ensuring that moms are healthy and well-nourished. The Mid-Day Meal program, which offers nutrition assistance to primary school students, is commonly considered as a method of increasing enrolment, attendance, and retention. MDM aspires to provide a hot, freshly cooked lunch to each school child in order to satisfy their nutritional requirements. Some argue that the school lunch functions as a substitute rather than an addition to the home meal for children from low-income homes. While the long-term effects of school

meals on children' nutritional status are critical, the short-term effects on their capacity to concentrate, recall, and learn are as important. A number of published studies pointing to these favourable short-term consequences on school lunch learning capacity have come from well-conducted research. When a child is hungry, he or she is unable to concentrate and learn well. Providing a mid-day meal to pupils is an effective approach to avoid classroom hunger while also improving student performance. Because many households do not prepare an early morning meal, many children arrive at school hungry. In these circumstances, consider the short-term consequences of MDM on learning. As a consequence, MDM has the potential to improve student performance in the classroom while also increasing school enrolment. It also promotes social cohesiveness by bringing together young people from various tribes and castes to share a meal. In developing nations, the greatest problems are eradicating hunger and providing universal education to all residents. Almost every country in the world has established and implemented a school feeding program for school-aged children in order to combat hunger and encourage marginalized children to attend school. India has the world's greatest kid population. The majority of them are economically disadvantaged and come from low-income households. They cannot afford a proper education or the daily calorie requirements.

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