



## International Journal of Home Science

ISSN: 2395-7476  
IJHS 2017; 3(1): 450-454  
© 2017 IJHS  
www.homesciencejournal.com  
Received: 25-11-2016  
Accepted: 26-12-2016

**Bharati C Mirajkar**  
Ph D Scholar and Associate  
Professor of Food Science and  
Nutrition, College of Agriculture-  
Hassan, Karnataka, India

**Usha Ravindra**  
Associate Professor of Food  
Science and Nutrition, UAS,  
GKVK-Bangalore, Karnataka,  
India

### Opinion of the beneficiaries towards mid-day meal scheme in rural government schools of Hassan district

**Bharati C Mirajkar and Usha Ravindra**

#### Abstract

Education plays a vital role in the development of human potential. Since independence, the central and state governments have been expanding the provision of primary formal and non-formal education to realise the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE). The Government of India launched the National Programme of Nutritional support to Primary Education in August 1995 as a centrally sponsored scheme. Integrating the centrally sponsored scheme the State Government launched the Mid-day Meal (Akshara Dasoha) Scheme on June 2002. It provides lunch free off cost to school children on all working days. The key objectives of the programme are to protect the student from the class room hunger, increasing school enrolment and attendance, addressing malnutrition and social empowerment through provision of employment to women. The present study was designed to collect opinion of the beneficiaries on functioning of the scheme in Hassan district of Karnataka, with an objective to assess the opinion of beneficiaries and parents on Mid-day Meal Scheme. The results revealed that the children as well as parents were satisfied with the functioning of the programme, quality of food, menu. The children irrespective of their background were found to enjoy the sharing of food. The poor parents had a very positive view on the Scheme, thus suggested for its continuation with addition of newer recipes. They were happy with the functioning of the scheme and have suggested some modifications for success of the programme in Hassan district of Karnataka.

**Keywords:** Mid Day Meal Scheme, Elementary Education Level, Satisfaction

#### 1. Introduction

Education plays an important part in the all round development of the personality. The government has taken several steps to make primary education compulsory for all. In other words, elementary education is eight years of compulsory schooling that starts from the age of six. Since independence, the central and state governments have been expanding the provision of primary formal and non-formal education to realise the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE). Lowering the poverty ratio, promoting female literacy, and emphasizing on rural education will help Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan fulfill their desired goal. With the objective to enhance enrolment, attendance and retention of children in schools by mitigating their class room hunger and improving nutritional status Mid Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) was started in India by Madras Corporation in 1925 as a school lunch programme. After 50 years, the programme got national attention and in 1974, the National Policy on Children declared that country's children were its supreme human resource. This policy stressed the state to ensure full physical and mental development of children. As a result states viz. Gujarat, Kerala and Tamil Nadu and the UT of Pondicherry had universalized a cooked Mid Day Meal Programme with their own resources for children studying at the primary stage. Gradually by 1990-91 the number of states increased to twelve in implementing the mid day meal programme on a large scale basis with their own resources. The states, namely Karnataka, Odisha and West Bengal implemented the programme with state resources along with international assistance.

In later stage, the National Program of Nutritional Support to Primary Education commonly known as the Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) was launched in India in August 1995. The MDMS covered all students in primary schools run or funded by the Government throughout the country. A historical order by the supreme court of India in 28 November 2001 changed the picture of MDMS and all the state governments introduced cooked mid-day meals programme in all government and government assisted primary schools.

**Correspondence**  
**Bharati C Mirajkar**  
Ph D Scholar and Associate  
Professor of Food Science and  
Nutrition, College of Agriculture-  
Hassan, Karnataka, India

It was one of the first achievements of the right to food campaign. Mid-day meal scheme has become an effective means to check high dropout rates of children from economically weaker sections of the society. Besides, it addresses the nutritional needs of the children. Mid-day meal scheme is considered as a means to promoting improved enrollment, school attendance and retention; has brought a positive impact on educational advancement.

The Government of Karnataka has initiated many programmes and policies towards achieving UEE the concept being free supply of text books and uniforms, awarding scholarships and supply of mid-day meal through Akshara Dasoha programme on June 2004. The scheme was extended to VI and VII standards in Government/Government Aided Schools in the State w.e.f 01-10-2004 and it was extended to students of 8 to 10 standard of Govt and Aided High Schools w.e.f 01-06-2007. Mid Day Meal Scheme (Akshara Dasoha programme) the mega dream project of Karnataka was evaluated by Naik in 2005 reported that 34 per cent of children in Karnataka go to school without breakfast. However, the present study was designed to collect opinion from beneficiary children and parents towards the functioning of programme in Hassan district of Karnataka. Evaluation enables the functionaries to make necessary improvements and changes. Hence an attempt was made with an objective to assess the opinion of beneficiaries, parents and teachers on Mid Day Meal Scheme. Bisht (2007) [2] in her study on "National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education in Tribal areas of Himachal Pradesh: An Evaluative Study found that a large number of teachers revealed that Mid Day Meal Scheme is helping in achieving the goal of universalization of elementary education. They suggested that instead of providing cooked meal other incentives should be given and efforts should be made to improve the infrastructure of the government primary schools.

Cuts (2007) [3] studied the implementation of Mid Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) in Rajasthan and found initially, students were distributed boiled wheat supplemented with groundnut and jaggery (Gur) under the Mid Day Meal Scheme. More than 90.0 per cent parents and students were satisfied with the Mid Day Meal Scheme. Kumar (2008) [5] in his research paper reported that most of the teachers teaching in government

primary schools of Himachal Pradesh were not in favour of implementation of cooked Mid Day Meal Scheme. Gupta (2009) [6] studied teacher's and student's perceptions towards Mid Day Meal Scheme in district Mandi of Himachal Pradesh and concluded that the Mid Day Meal Scheme is helpful in encouraging poor children belonging to disadvantaged sections of the society to attend school more regularly. Deodhar *et al* (2010) [4] opinion, there is a potential for general increase in hygiene and cleanliness at the schools and kitchens. Ashwini *et al* (2013) [1] in her study reported that beneficiary mothers as well as teachers were satisfied with the functioning of the programme, quality of food, menu and thus suggested for its continuation with addition of newer recipes.

## 2. Materials and method

Five rural government schools having Mid Day Meal provisions from Hassan district were taken into consideration for sampling purpose. Out of these schools 208 students, 104 girls and 104 boys studying in 1<sup>st</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> standard (in the age group 6 to 15 years) were selected randomly for the present study. In all 208 parents have been selected from the five villages whose children are beneficiaries of Mid Day Meal Scheme. Semi structured schedules were used to record the opinion of the children and parents regarding school lunch programme. It included questions relating to menu supplied, likes and dislikes of the menu, regularity of the meal, quantity of the food, health problems ever faced due to consumption of school lunch, opinion towards continuation of programme, benefits of programme, inclusion of additional foods to existing menu, information regarding breakfast was elicited. The responses were recorded, tabulated and presented using percentage.

## 3. Results and discussion

### Opinion of the children about mid day meal scheme

The researcher interviewed the students in the absence of their teachers to enable them to express their views freely without any inhibition. The researcher preferred to communicate with the students in their local dialect so that responding students may feel at home and could express freely. The item wise analysis of the children's responses towards different aspects of Mid Day Meal Scheme is given in Table-1

**Table 1:** specific information and opinion collected from beneficiary children about mid day meal (n=208)

Information	YES		NO	
	No	%	No	%
Children consume school lunch everyday	195	93.75	13	6.25
Have breakfast regularly	205	98.56	03	1.44
Served food is sufficient	208	100	-	-
<b>Child preference</b>				
School food	10	4.81		
Home food	198	95.19		
School lunch is tasty	208	100		
Likes school lunch	208	100		
Needs Change in the menu	190	91.35	18	8.65
Child is regular due to provision of school lunch	15	7.21	193	92.78
Improvement in Health	208	100	0	-
Improvement in Academic	201	96.63	09	4.33
Improvement in Alertness	199	95.67	09	4.33
MDM Scheme cutting into the studying time	03	1.44	205	98.56
<b>Opinion on the quality of the food</b>				
Good	197	94.71		
Average	11	5.29		
poor	0	-		
Satisfaction by provision of school lunch	208	100		
Continuation of the programme	208	100		

Children's likings towards food, frequency of consumption of school lunch, health problems ever faced due to consumption of school lunch, opinion towards quality and quantity of the food and continuation of programme, benefits of programme, changes in the existing menu, information regarding breakfast was elicited. The table reveals that almost all the children (100 per cent) were satisfied by the school lunch programme and expressed that served food is tasty, sufficient and has improved their health. This response may be attributable to the good quality of mid day meal that is served to them under the Mid Day Meal Scheme. All the children reported that they get school lunch regularly. Hence, it is clear from the responses of children that there is regular supply of cooked meal under Mid Day Meal Scheme in government schools of Hassan district and students get mid day meal daily during lunch time on each working day without any interruption. Children expressed that at the time of distribution of mid day meal they sit together without any discrimination and they sit with their fast friends in the class as well as at the time of taking mid day meal. So mid day meal is fostering sound social behaviour among children by dispelling differences between castes and communities.

Majority of the children (91.35%) needs change in the existing menu and 95.19 per cent of children mentioned that they like home food very much. There might be many causes responsible for their disliking. Either the meal that is served to them in home is of better quality than the mid day meal in school or sometimes they have their own lunch and they avoided to take mid day meal daily in the school. Students have different taste preferences but mid day meal is of average quality prepared by keeping view in the mind the nutritional value of the meal on one hand and economic aspect on other.

A higher number of children (98.56%) expressed that Mid Day Meal Scheme do not affect their learning time. Children stated that the quality of food was good as it tastes good with proper ingredients and is served hot. It was expressed by the children

that at least one teacher is always with them at the time of meal distribution. Hence, from the above responses it is further inferred that teachers of the maximum schools supervised the serving process of the Mid Day Meal Scheme. Children responded that they are fed properly with love and affection in the school. None of the students interviewed by the researcher complained against any rude behaviour on the part of teachers or any other cooking staff.

Further they suggested salad and some sweet should also be served along with the meal. Children did not have any issue with the quantity of food served; similarly the quantity of food served varies from student to student with younger ones are served with lesser quantity as compared to others. To this, the teachers responded stating that young students waste a lot of food either by not eating or by spilling it. Thus, the first serving given is of small amount and the students are free to get the second or more servings if they feel hungry.

Many children said that they wash their plates properly after taking mid day meal. Mid Day Meal Scheme to be used as a vehicle for inculcation of hygienic habits and also for proving them work experience, for this children must be encouraged to develop habits like washing their hands with soap before eating, using clean utensils for eating, cleaning their plates and rinsing their hands and mouth after eating.

#### Opinion of the parents about mid day meal scheme

Information was collected from the parents regarding their opinion about MDMS and benefits expressed were analyzed. Information and opinion collected from beneficiary parents is tabulated in Table-2. It is evident from the table that higher per cent of parents (91.35%) reported that the child consumes school lunch every day and about 98.56 per cent parents expressed that their children consumes breakfast before going to school. Only few parents (6.25%) reported that they do not allow their children to eat school food as they feel that it may lead to problem.

**Table 2:** Specific information and opinion collected from parents regarding mid day meal scheme (n=208)

Information	Yes		No	
	No	%	No	%
Children consume school lunch everyday	190	91.35	13	6.25
Have breakfast regularly	205	98.56	03	1.44
Child carries lunch box to school	-	-	208	100
<b>Child preference</b>				
School food	9	4.33	-	-
Home food	199	95.67	-	-
Improvement in Health	108	51.92	100	48.07
Improvement in Academic	165	79.33	43	20.67
Improvement in Alertness	186	89.42	22	10.58
Send child to school as lunch is provided	09	4.33	199	95.67
Needs Change in the menu	196	94.23	12	5.77
MDM Scheme cutting into the studying time	24	11.54	184	88.46
<b>Opinion on the quality of the food</b>				
Good	193	92.78	-	-
Average	15	7.21	-	-
poor	0	-	-	-
Satisfaction by provision of school lunch	203	97.6	05	2.40
Continuation of the programme	208	100	0	0

Majority of the parents opined that their children like home made food (95.67%), needs change in the menu (94.23%) and are satisfied (97.6%) by the provision of school lunch. Only few parents (4.33%) expressed that they send their children to the school as lunch is provided. The table also reveals that Majority of beneficiary parents reported that, after introduction of school lunch the health, academic achievement and

alertness of child was improve (51.92%, 79.33% and 89.42% respectively). Parents expressed that the mid day meal is prepared with proper care and cleanliness and hence children have never fall sick after taking mid day meal in the school. Further few parents were in favour of providing food grains (rice) to the children every month. The reason behind this response was that as far as possible the teacher's time should

be utilized in teaching-learning activities and there should be no wastage of teaching time in school. Higher per cent of parents (92.78%) reported that the quality of the food served in the school is good and few parents (7.21%) opined that the quality of the school lunch is average. It is also evident from the table that almost all the parents (100%) feel that the school lunch programme should continue. Parents were also happy with the Mid Day Meal Scheme as their children did not play

the sun in during lunch time and remained in the school premises after having the mid day meal. All the parents acknowledge that they were satisfied with the programme and suggested for continuation of the programme because mothers felt that children were free from hunger, and will learn better. Many parents noticed the development of hygienic value in children and reported that children also wash their hands before eating at home and take their meal properly.

**Table 3:** Benefits expressed and changes suggested by beneficiary parents regarding Mid Day Meal Scheme (n=208)

Benefits of MDMS	No. of Parents	%
Physical growth is improved	159	76.44
Packing and planning for lunch box is reduced	128	61.54
Children are getting hot food for lunch	199	95.70
Incidence of cold and cough is reduced	50	20.04
Other changes( getting leisurely in the morning)	20	9.62
Changes suggested		
Improvement in quality of the rice	187	89.90
Inclusion of chapati/roti and bhaji	196	94.23
Inclusion of fruit	165	79.33
Inclusion of egg	97	46.63
Other changes (ready to eat foods)	17	8.20

#### Academic profile

Educational details	University	Specialization	Year
M.H.SC	UAS, Dharwad, Karnataka	Human Development	1994
B.H.Sc	UAS, Dharwad, Karnataka	Food science & nutrition and other Home Science subjects	1992

#### Work experience

Sl. No.	Institution	Duration	Position	Nature of work	Address
1	Krishi Vigyan Kendra Mudigere, Karnataka	23.02.1995 to 18.12.2003	Assistant Professor	Extension	KVK, Mudigere, Chikkamagaluru (Dist) Karnataka
2.	College of Sericulture, Chintamani	19.12.2003 to 10.06.2009	Assistant Professor	Teaching	College of Sericulture, Chintamani, UAS, Bangalore
3.	College Agriculture Hassan	11.06.2009 to Till date	Associate Professor	Teaching	College Agriculture Hassan, UAS, Bangalore,

#### Research paper publication

##### (a) Full Length Publication in International/National Journal

Sl. No.	Perticulars	Nos.
1.	Full length research papers	08
2.	Abstracts published	10
3.	Popular articles	10
4.	Articles published in Extension Bulletin	09
5.	Training Manuals	03

Table-3 shows the benefits of Mid Day Meal Scheme as expressed by parents of beneficiary children. The table reveals that 76.44 per cent parents reported that the school lunch programme has improved physical growth in their children. About 61.54 per cent parents expressed that packing and planning of lunch box was reduced which was one of the regular activities for them in the morning. Majority of the parents also reported that children were getting hot food to eat during lunch times (95.70%) which was not possible by carrying lunch box from home. Only 9.62 per cent of beneficiary parents stated other benefits like getting up leisurely in the morning and incidence of cold and cough among children was reduced (9.62%) because of provision of school lunch.

The changes suggested by parents of beneficiary children with respect to existing menu are summarized in Table 3. More than three fourth of parents interviewed reported for improvement in quality of rice grain provided (89.90%), followed by inclusion of fruit (79.33%). Highest per cent of parents opined that the menu should include chapati/Poori and bhaji (94.23%), and inclusion of egg (46.63%) because parents felt that such food items are necessary for healthy growth of children. Only 8.20 per cent of mothers suggested for inclusion of ready to eat foods as parents feel that these foods are easy to serve and children also enjoy eating.

Children as well as parents were satisfied with the functioning of the programme, quality of food, menu and thus suggested for its continuation with addition of newer recipes. At school level the programme is successfully functioning. They were happy with the functioning of the programme by central kitchen and have suggested some modifications for success of the programme.

#### 4. References

1. Ashwini Bellary N, Sarojani Karkannavar J, Ashalatha KV. Information and opinion of beneficiary mothers and teachers on Akshara Dasoha programme Karnataka J. Agric. Sci. 2013; 26(1):176-180.
2. Bisht, Anjana. National Programme of Nutritional Support

- to Primary Education (Mid Day Meal Scheme) in Tribal Areas of Himachal Pradesh: An Evaluative Study. (Unpublished M.Ed. Dissertation). Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla. 2007.
3. Cuts. Measuring Effectiveness of Mid Day Meal Scheme in Rajasthan, India, CUTS Centre for Consumer Action, Research & Training (CUTS CART) in partnership with the World Bank. 2007.
  4. Deodhar SY, Mahandiratta S, Ramani KV, Mavalankar D, Ghosh S, Braganza V. An evaluation of mid day meal scheme, *Journal of Indian School of Political Economy*, 2010; 22:33-48.
  5. Kumar, Anup. Teachers' Perceptions towards National Program of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Mid Day Meal Scheme). *The Primary Teacher*, 2008; 33(1-2):63.
  6. Gupta Parul. National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Mid Day Meal Scheme) in District Shimla of Himachal Pradesh: An Evaluative Study. (Unpublished M.Phil. Dissertation). Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla. 2006.
  7. Naik. Evaluation of Akshara Dasoha Scheme of Karnataka. Dept. of Food Sci. and Nutr. Univ. Agric. Sci., Dharwad. 2005.
  8. [www.schooleducation.kar.nic.in](http://www.schooleducation.kar.nic.in)