



Research Paper

Problems Faced by the Teachers in Implementation of Mid-day Meal scheme at Primary school level in Rani area of Kamrup (Rural) District, Assam.

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ABSTRACT:

Mid-day Meal scheme was started as a centrally sponsored scheme on the 15th of August, 1995 with the aim of universalization of primary education by increasing enrolment, retention and attendance and simultaneously impact on Nutrition of Students in Primary Classes. It involves provision of lunch/ snacks/ meal free of cost to school children on school working days. Teachers play an important role in the successful implementation of Mid-day Meal scheme at school level. The paper focuses on the problems faced by the teachers in the implementation of Mid-day Meal scheme. Here survey method was used for the study of the subject related to this topic, 30 teachers were selected randomly from the primary schools of Rani area Kamrup District, Assam. Self-prepared questionnaire was used to collect the primary data. Teachers mentioned some problems such as wastage of teaching time, work load of teachers, lack of grain storage room, lack of fuel, lack of fund etc. being faced by them in implementation of Mid-day Meal scheme. They also put some suggestions for effective implementation of the scheme so that objectives of Mid-day Meal can be achieved.

Key Words: Mid-day Meal Scheme, Primary Education, Nutrition, Teachers, Students, Problems

I. INTRODUCTION:

Education plays an important role in fulfilling the basic need of a common man. It is a process through which a child is made capable to attend necessary competencies and skills to face the challenges in life to survive and to make a struggle for excellence. Free and compulsory education up to the age of 14 years is the constitutional commitment and it is estimated that Elementary school children (6-14 years) form about 20% of the total population.

It is argued that elementary education is the foundation of constructing sustainable livelihoods and for expanding livelihood opportunities. This is achieved by building the skills of people and increasing their human capital by using which societies can tackle their problems of poverty and backwardness.

Most of the children from low socio-economic society agonize from nutrition, more often they drop out from schools at an early age which unswervingly affects their personality development. Health status has a significant impact on the development of children and on their education prospects. Malnourished children or children with poor health often have more limited capacity to pay attention in school and perform poorer as a result, have higher than average absenteeism rates, often fall behind at school, and ultimately may be at greater risk of dropping out of school. Mid-Day meal scheme was started as a centrally sponsored scheme on the 15th of August, 1995 with the aim of universalization of primary education by increasing enrolment, retention and attendance and simultaneously impact on Nutrition of Students in Primary Classes. It involves provision of lunch/ snacks/ meal free of cost to school children on school working days.

Article 45 under Directive Principles of State Policy of Indian Constitution visualized that free compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years would be provided by 1960. But after 62 years of Independence this Constitutional Directive has not been fulfilled. Recently, the 86th constitution amendment added clause 21 A to the right to life and guaranteed every child between the ages of 6 –14 years, education up to the elementary stages as a fundamental right. Shrimati Pratibha Devisingh Patil, our ex-President has also emphasized the importance of Mid-Day Meal programme. In 15th Lok Sabha, addressed by the President of India, Shrimati Pratibha Devisingh Patil, to Joint Session of Parliament on the 4th of June, 2009, said “Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has been able to provide access to children to elementary schools and retention has increased on account of the universal mid day meal programme. The focus will be on making quality education a right through the enactment of the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Bill now under consideration of

Parliament.” This valued speech is soon followed, on June 25, a press brief by our Minister for Human Resource Development Mr. Kapil Sibal. He said that the government would try to enact the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Bill, and so would see that the Bill was passed in the Budget session. According to the Gazette of India (August 27, 2009). The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education now becomes an Act, (No. 35 of 2009, Ministry of Law and Justice, Govt. of India).

II. Review of Literature:

Kaur, Rajwinder(2010) conducted a study on “Impact of Mid-Day meal scheme on attendance retention and learning outcome of students and problems faced by teachers and school administrators.” The main objective of the study is to determine impact of Mid-Day Meal Scheme on the enrolment of the students, impact of Mid Day Meal Scheme on attendance of the students, impact of Mid-Day Meal Scheme on retention of the students, impact of Mid-Day Meal Scheme on academic achievement of the students, the problems faced by the teachers in implementing Mid-Day Meal scheme, and the problems faced by the school administrators in implementing Mid-Day Meal scheme. Four types of samples were selected for this study i.e. school’s sample, student’s sample, teacher’s sample and administrator’s sample. The study concluded that Mid-Day meals do not only have positive impact on enrolment of all classes but attendance also was increased. But the study revealed that the investigator found various problems/difficulties are faced by the teachers and the administrators in the implementation of Mid day meal scheme.

Rani Rekha and Sharma Darshana(2017) conducted a study on “Problems Faced by Teachers in Implementation of Mid Day Meal Scheme at Primary School Level in Jammu Province.” The attempt of this study is to focus on the problems faced by teachers in the implementation of mid day meal scheme and to make certain suggestions to overcome the problems faced by the teachers in implementation of Mid Day Meal Scheme in Government Primary Schools of province. To gather the information 200 teachers were selected randomly from the primary schools of Jammu Province. To collect the primary data self prepared questionnaire was used. The result of this study indicate that teachers pointed out a number of problems like increased workload, disturbance in the teaching-learning process, insufficient funds, delay in receipt of funds, insufficient infrastructure and support staff, which are being faced by them.

Biswas, Dipankar (2016), in his study entitled, “A Study of the Educational Impact of Mid-Day Meal Scheme in Primary Schools of West Tripura District.” The attempt of this study is i) To study the infrastructure, which is an essential component for implementing the scheme, ii) To assess the quality of mid-day meal in schools, iii) To study daily attendance of students in primary schools after the introduction of mid-day meal, iv) To study the school efficiency before and after implementation of mid-day meal scheme, v) To study the effect of mid-day meal on social development of students in primary schools, (vi) To find out the role of community and panchayat to implement the scheme, vii) To identify the problems in the implementation of the scheme and to suggest measures to overcome them. To collect the data the investigator has randomly selected 20 schools for the study. The results of this study indicate that infrastructure facility for implementing the mid-day meal was found satisfactory and quality of food is also good. After implementation of mid-day meal scheme daily attendance of students was increased. After taking the mid-day meal students stays whole day in the school. Because of mid-day meal social development was also seen among the students. Study shows that there was a positive impact of mid-day meal in education in West Tripura district of Tripura.

Sing Neha (2016) in her study entitled, “Constraints Faced by the Teachers in Implementation of Mid-day Meal Programme at School Level.” The study focuses on the constraints faced by teachers in the implementation of mid day meal programme. To collect data the investigator has randomly selected 200 teachers from the schools of selected villages of Dharwad (Karnataka) and Jhansi (Uttar Pradesh), where mid day meal is served. Structured interview schedule was used to collect the primary data. The study showed that most of (60.00%) the teachers are performing helper/cooks roles other than teaching such as cooking, cleaning and other arrangements due to lacking, irregularity and absenteeism of helpers/cook followed by more than (54.00%) of the teachers having complaints of improper toilet facility for school children as well as for them also and half (51.50%) of the teachers did not receive any training regarding better implementation of Mid-day Meal programme at school level.

Jalal Priyanka and Sareen Neena (2019) conducted a study on “Constraints faced during implementation of mid-day meal scheme in Bikaner district of Rajasthan.” 50 parents and 30 teachers from upper primary schools were selected randomly for the sample. To gather the information, interview schedule and spot observation technique were used. The investigator has used suitable statistical parameters such as frequencies, percentages, rank and standard deviation for analyzing data. The major constraints found by most of the teachers (66%) were, they perform extra role in absence of cook/helper which reduces their teaching time as well as mostly teachers (63%) reported that there is improper/ no storage place for cooked food / food grains in school.

Kumar Dr. Ajay (2021) conducted a study on “Evaluative study on Mid-day Meal Scheme in primary schools of Bhoranj Block of Hamirpur District”. The attempt of this study is to study the enrolment and dropout of boys and girls student under the Mid-day Meal scheme in primary schools at Bhoranj block of the Hamirpur district, to study the physical infrastructure for Mid-day Meal scheme in primary schools at Bhoranj block of Hamirpur district. To investigate the problems in implementation of Mid-day Meal scheme in primary schools at Bhoranj block of Hamirpur district. The researcher has selected the forty primary schools out of the ninety primary schools through the random sampling. As a research tool a questionnaire was used for the in charge. Study concluded that there enrolment of general boys and girls student was increased, whereas SC boys and girls enrolment was decreased. However, there was a little increase in case of ST boys and girls student and decreasing trend in case of OBC boys and girls students. Moreover, the infrastructure under the scheme was sufficient.

III. Statement of the Problem:

Specific problem of the present study is “Problems Faced by the Teachers in Implementation of Mid-day Meal scheme at primary school level in Rani area of Kamrup (Rural) District, Assam”.

IV. Objective of the Study:

- i) To study the problems faced by the teachers in implementation of Mid-day Meal Scheme in Primary schools.
- ii) To make certain suggestions to overcome the problems faced by the teachers in implementation of Mid-day Meal Scheme in primary schools.

V. Research Question:

- Is it possible to identify the problems faced by the teachers in implementation of Mid-day Meal scheme and up to what extent should give the suggestions for solution of the problems?

VI. Methodology of the study

Research Methodology is a way to solve the research problems systematically. The study was designed on descriptive research methodology.

6. (i) Sampling: In the Rani area of Kamrup® district, Assam, there are 64 schools. The researcher has randomly selected 30 teachers from the 30 schools for the study. Stratified random sampling technique was used to draw sample for the study.

6. (ii) Tools: Keeping in view the nature of the study a questionnaire consisting of 25 items was administered. Questions based on the problems faced during implementation of Mid-day Meal scheme. The questions were YES or NO type.

VII. Collection of Data:

Primary data were collected through survey research in the selected area. For the purpose of the study, related primary data were collected from 30 teachers. The investigator has given clean instructions to the primary school teachers and doubts would be clarified.

Secondary data were also collected from different books, journals, published research papers and articles.

VIII. Analysis and Findings:

Data were analyzed using statistical technique such as percentage. The analysis of data in the light of objectives and findings of the study are as follows:

Table1. Problems of teachers on Mid-day Meal Scheme

SL. NO.	STATEMENTS	YES	%	NO	%
1.	Implementation of Mid-day Meal Scheme is a problem for the teachers	25	83.33%	05	16.67%
2.	Due to this scheme, there is wastage of teaching time of the teachers.	22	73.33%	8	26.67%
3.	Funds provided by the government to run the scheme are received on time.	20	66.67%	10	33.33%
4.	Funds provided by the government are sufficient to provide quality food to the students.	5	16.67%	25	83.33%
5.	Because of Mid-day Meal Scheme, the workload of teacher has increased.	27	90%	3	10%
6.	The salary provided to the cook-cum-helper is insufficient to motivate him to provide service under Mid-day Meal Scheme.	24	80%	6	20%
7.	There is difficulty in obtain dry ration from retailer for preparing Mid-day Meal.	20	66.67%	10	33.33%

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8.	School compound is made dirty by throwing the cooked meal served to the students here and there.	23	76.67%	7	23.33%
9.	Separate kitchen is available in the school to cook Mid-day Meal.	30	100%	0	0
10.	The quality of dry ration provided by the government to the school under Mid-day Meal Scheme is satisfactory.	15	50%	15	50%
11.	Availability of Fuel	22	73.33%	8	26.67%
12.	The quality of education at primary level has suffered because of attention towards Mid-day Meal related activities.	26	86.67%	4	13.33%
13.	Proper facility of cooking and drinking water	22	73.33%	8	26.67%
14.	Availability of adequate utensils for serving	25	83.33%	5	16.67%
15.	Separate store room for the food grain	0	0	30	100%
16.	No training received by the teachers for better implementation of Mid-day Meal programme	24	80%	6	20%
17.	Nutritional needs of the students are met by the kind of food provided to the students under Mid-day Meal Scheme	4	13.33%	26	86.67%
18.	Cooked food is tested by the forensic laboratories on regular basis.	0	0	30	100%
19.	School provides hand wash facility to the students before and after taking Mid-day Meal.	27	90%	3	10%
20.	Cooking of meal is not being done in a hygienic manner (wearing head gears and gloves).	20	66.67%	10	33.33%
21.	School department ensures maintenance of hygiene as per the guidelines of Mid-day Meal Scheme.	10	33.33%	20	66.67%
22.	Attention of students is diverted from studies due to Mid-day Meal Scheme.	22	73.33%	8	26.67%
23.	The Mid-day Meal Scheme is an additional assignment to the teachers making them overburdened.	24	80%	6	20%
24.	There is delay in release of funds under Mid-day Meal Scheme from state to school levels.	30	100%	0	0
25.	Monitoring system is available of the institution for serving Mid-day Meal.	20	66.67%	10	33.33%

- During the survey, 83.33% teachers responded that Mid-day Meal Scheme is a problem for them because along with supervision of Mid-day Meal Scheme they have to maintain all possible arrangements as well as the records of the scheme regularly.
- Majority of teachers (73.33%) observed that Mid-day Meal Scheme wastes the teaching and learning time because there is inadequate number of teachers in the government primary schools. Other duties such as bringing dry rations from ration store, eatables (oil, salt and other ingredients) wastes their time of teaching.
- 66.67% teachers responded that they receive all the required funds from the government to run this scheme on time.
- Majority of teachers (83.33%) responded that the funds provided by the government are not sufficient to provide quality food to the students.
- Maximum number of teachers (90%) responded that the workload of teachers has increased because along with the supervision they have to maintain Mid- day Meal register and other accounts related to the scheme.
- (80%) teachers responded that the salary provided to the cook-cum-helper is very low and sometime that salary is also not provided on time.
- (66.67%) teachers revealed that they find difficulties in carrying ration to their respective places. In this area, some of the schools are situated at hilly place and for this, they revealed that they manage from their own pocket as government does not provide sufficient amount for purchasing dry ration from retailer, like vehicle fare, etc.
- (76.67%) teachers responded that class I and class II students are small kids and they make the school compound dirty by throwing the cooked meal here and there.
- (100%) teachers responded that there was separate kitchen in the school to cook Mid-day Meal.
- (50%) teachers were not satisfied from the quality of dry ration provided by the government. Food items do not have nutritional content.
- (26.67%) teachers responded that in this area they use dry bamboo as a fuel but sometimes they face problems to collect it.
- (86.67%) teachers responded that the quality of education at primary level has suffered because teachers kept busy themselves towards Mid-day Meal related activities than on academics.
- (73.33%) teachers responded that they have proper facility for cooking and drinking water but in the hilly area school there was not proper facility for cooking and drinking water.
- (83.33%) teachers responded that they have sufficient numbers of serving utensils.
- (100%) teachers responded that there is no separate room for storing the ingredients of Mid-day Meal and they use office's corner, classroom's corner for storing the ingredients.

- (80%) teachers responded that they do not get any training for proper implementation of the Mid-day Meal scheme.
- (86.67%) teachers responded that the nutritional needs of the students are not met by the meal provided under Mid-day Meal scheme because it does not include sufficient number of egg, milk and seasonal fruits etc.
- (100%) teachers responded that there is no provision for cooked food testing on regular basis under Mid-Day Meal scheme in the forensic laboratories.
- (90%) teachers responded that school provides hand wash facility like soap to the students before and after taking meal.
- (66.67%) teachers responded that in most of the schools cooking of meals by the cook-cum-helper is not being done in a hygienic manner (wearing head gears and gloves).
- (66.67%) teachers responded that school department does not ensure maintenance of hygiene as per the guidelines of Mid-day Meal scheme.
- (73.33%) teachers revealed that because of Mid-day Meal students' attention is diverted from studies because there is not much distance between the classroom and kitchen where meal is prepared.
- (80%) teachers responded that Mid-day Meal is an additional assignment for them because they have to spend enough time and energy for the implementation of the scheme which makes them overburdened.
- (100%) teachers responded that because of delay in funds from the government, teachers faces some problems to supply the food to the students.
- (66.67%) teachers revealed that there is no such monitoring system of the school for serving Mid-day Meal.

IX. Suggestions:

The researcher suggests some ways to overcome the problems faced by the teachers in the implementation of Mid-day Meal scheme:

- A separate person should be engaged as Mid-day Meal in charge for maintaining records and making purchases instead of school teachers.
- Supply of Mid-day Meal should be substantially managed by local NGO which may helps in relieving the teachers from additional assignment.
- It is urgently required to ensure timely transfer of funds and food grains in schools to make Mid-day Meal scheme more effective and successful.
- Monitoring system should be maintained on regular basis of the school for serving the Mid-day Meal.
- Quality of food grains delivered to the school must be checked regularly.
- Cooked food should be tested by a team of health and sanitary experts or forensic laboratories.
- Regular health check up programme should be systematized in the school.
- Cook-cum-helper should be given awareness about hygienic condition.
- Another provision of fuel should be made possible for cooking Mid-day Meal instead of dry bamboo.
- Hand wash provision for students should be made available in each school so that they can learn hygiene.
- Salary of cook-cum-helpers should be increased in time to time so that they work with motivation and commitment and should be trained for hygiene and desirable cooking practices.
- Seasonal fruits, milk, egg and vitamin rich foods should be made available in the menu to meet the nutritional needs of the students.

X. Conclusion:

The study focused on gaining the perceptions into the problems faced by the teachers in the implementation of Mid-day Meal scheme and to provide some suggestions to make the scheme more successful. Teachers identified a number of problems like increased workload, wastage of teaching time of the teachers, insufficient fund, lack of fuel, lack of monitoring system of the school for serving food which are being faced by them. They also indicated interest about the quality of food and hygienic conditions under which food is served to the children. The teachers also gave some suggestions to overcome the problems which would be helpful to proper implementation of the scheme.

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