



An Economic Analysis of Mid Day Meals Programme in Telangana: A Case Study of Siddipet District

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Abstract:

In 2003, the former Andhra Pradesh State Government introduced the prepared Mid-Day Meal (MDM) Program to all primary school pupils in government, local body, and government-aided schools. The State is also adopting the MDM programme in high schools, which will encompass pupils in 9th and 10th grades, beginning in 2008. The Department of School Education, Government of Telangana, is implementing the Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) in the state. Using the normative survey approach, the researcher looked at schools in all of Telangana State districts. This research study elicited responses from students, instructors, and principals. For sampling, the researcher chose the 'stratified random technique.' The current analysis encompasses all schools in the Telangana State. According to the report, the majority of schools receive low quality rice from the government; there is no safe drinking water for MDM; bills are not distributed properly; and administrators lack expertise. Because to the MDM initiative, enrolment and attendance increased, and classroom hunger was averted.

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I. Introduction:

Education can contribute to social, cultural and economic development of a country. Education produces the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes which are necessary for the development of society and economy. Education is the main instrument for disseminating the accomplishments of human civilization and essential for civic order and good citizenship. Further, maintains of higher living standards, better health and nutrition, increased productivity and sustained economic growth and the reduction of poverty and social and economic inequality and good governance all depend on widespread education. Therefore, these multiple rules of education make education a key area of public policy in all developing countries. Hence, the Government of India launched Mid Day Meal Scheme with the main objective of giving a boost to universalization of school education by increasing enrolment, attendance and simultaneously, improving the nutritional status (quality of food) of students in primary and upper primary classes. Mid-Day Meal Program is the popular name for the school meal program in India.

II. Importance of the Study:

The present study is concentrated on Midday Meals Scheme in Siddipet district of Telangana state. Mid-Day Meal Program is the world's largest school children feeding program satisfying the hunger of lacks of students per day throughout the country. The Government of India launched Midday Meal Program in 15th August, 1995 with the objective of giving a boost to universalization of education by increasing enrollment, attendance and retention and simultaneously improving the nutritional status of students in schools. Midday Meal Scheme is one of the pioneer work started for the betterment of deprived section in the education and fight against the under nutrition problem, especially, in Below Poverty Line (BPL) families. This is a good scheme to attract the students towards Government schools. But, due to lack of proper monitoring of higher officials and practical implementation of the program, it is really unable to flourish correctly. Even though, a few studies were conducted on the Midday Meal Scheme in Telangana, no in-depth study has been taken on the economic analysis of Midday Meal Scheme in Siddipet district of Telangana state. So, there is need to take a comprehensive and grass root level study on Midday Meal Program in Siddipet district. Therefore, it is necessary to study the information on various issues related to the infrastructure of Midday meal program, the performance of MDM Scheme, impact of Midday Meal Program on enrolment, attendance, drop-out, nutritional status (quality of the food), implementation status and other important

indicators of the Midday Meal Program in Telangana state. Hence, the scholar decided to undertake a study on Midday Meal scheme which focused on various aspects such as infrastructure, enrolment, attendance, drop-out, nutritional status, implementation of MDM Scheme, opinions and involvement of functionaries and beneficiaries of the Zilla Parishad High Schools (ZPHS) in Siddipet district of Telangana state.

III. Objectives of the Study:

The main objectives of the present study are:

1. To study the Midday Meal Scheme in Zilla Parishad High Schools of Siddipet district.
2. To study the opinions and involvement of the beneficiaries and functionaries regarding the implementation of Midday Meal Scheme in Zilla Parishad High Schools.
3. To examine the impact of Midday Meal Scheme on enrolment, attendance, dropout and academic environment of the students in Zilla Parishad High Schools.
4. To identify various problems in the implementation of Midday Meal Scheme in Zilla Parishad High Schools of Siddipet district.

IV. Hypotheses of the Study:

The following hypotheses were framed for the study:

1. Lack of infrastructure hampered the implementation of Midday Meals Program.
2. There is a positive effect of Midday Meal Scheme on enrollment and attendance of the students in Zilla Parishad High Schools in the study area.
3. There is a significant impact of Midday Meal Scheme on the academic environment of the students in Zilla Parishad High Schools.
4. The supervision and monitoring mechanism of Midday Meal Scheme is inadequate.

V. Methodology of the Study:

It is important to adopt a systematic procedure to collect the required data, which helps to achieve the objectives and hypotheses of the study. The present study was designed to examine the impact of Midday Meals Scheme on enrollment, attendance, dropout, academic environment of the students, opinions of the beneficiaries, and various problems faced by functionaries in the implementation of Midday Meals Program in Zilla Parishad High Schools. The research methodology is an important part of research work. It is most essential for the frame work to obtain all the necessary input for the research work to study the objective of the research along with the testing of hypothesis. As per the objectives of the present study, the details of research methodology which includes the sampling procedure for data collection, source of data and statistical techniques used for data analysis have been discussed in this chapter.

5.1. Sampling Design:

Multistage sampling technique is used to select the sample beneficiaries i.e. teachers (including headmasters and MDM in-charges), students and their parents, and cooks & helpers. In the present study, the sampling was done in 4 stages. In the first stage, out of 33 districts in Telangana, Siddipet district was selected purposively for the study in Telangana. In the second stage, out of 22 mandals in Siddipet district, two mandals i.e. Maddur mandal and Kondapak mandal have been selected randomly. In the third stage, the lists of Zilla Parishad High Schools were obtained from Mandal Resource Centers (MRC) and from each mandal, 5 schools were selected randomly i.e. 10 schools from two mandals. In the fourth stage, the sample respondents i.e. teachers (including headmasters and MDM in-charges), students, parents, MDM in-charges and cooks & helpers of the study were selected randomly to collect the primary data on different aspects of Midday Meal Scheme. The sampling for the present study was done in the following manner.

The School Teachers are the important functionaries of the Midday Meals Scheme and they are responsible for the implementation of the scheme. To examine the various issues related to infrastructure, implementation of the program, other arrangements of the scheme, quality & quantity of food, impact of Midday Meals Scheme on the enrollment, attendance, dropout and academic environment of the students in Zilla Parishad High Schools, the feedback of the teachers (Including Headmasters and MDM in-charges) is significant. In order to know the above information about the scheme, total 10 Zilla Parishad High Schools Headmasters and 10 Zilla Parishad High Schools MDM in-charges were selected.

Students are more important and ultimate beneficiaries of the Midday Meal Program. They are the reason for the implementation of the Midday Meal Scheme. Their opinions & views and problems faced by them are importance for the achievement of the scheme. In order to study the perceptions and attitude of the students for Mid-day Meal Scheme, a sample of 30 students from each school, making a total of 300 students from 10 schools (Ten students each from 8rd, 9th and 10th class from each selected school) were selected randomly. The student's parents are among the beneficiaries of the scheme and their feedback will be more

significance in knowing the benefits of Midday Meal Scheme and their suggestions will lead to contribute to the efficient functioning of the Midday Meal Program. In order to know the opinions and perceptions of the parents regarding Midday Meal Scheme, a sample of 30 parents of the students eating mid-day meal from each school, making a total of 300 parents from 10 schools (Ten parents of the students from 8rd, 9th and 10th class from each school) were selected.

Cooks and helpers are also part of the functionaries of scheme. They cook the food/meal, serve it, wash the utensils, take care of the kitchen devices & clean the kitchen after cooking the meal. Hence, their feedback is also helpful for the smooth running of the Midday Meals Scheme. In order to know the opinions of the cooks and helpers about scheme, total 1 cook and 1 helper, making a total of 20 cooks and helpers (1 cook + 1 helper from each school) cooking food from 10 Zilla Parishad High Schools were selected. Therefore, to know the information on various aspects of Mid-Day Meals Scheme, 20 teachers (Headmasters & MDM in-Charges), 300 students, 300 parents and 20 cooks were selected from 10 Zilla Parishad High Schools of 2 mandals in Siddipet district. Thus, a total of 640 samples were selected from 2 mandals in Siddipet district of Telangana State. For this, the data has been collected from teachers, students, parents, MDM In-charges and cooks of Zilla Parishad High Schools in Siddipet district for the academic year 2018-19. The study is used primary as well as secondary sources of data to fulfil the objectives of the study. The study was used simple statistical techniques to analyze the collected data such as, percentages, averages and other tools to justify the hypothesis.

VI. Analysis of Data:

The information obtained through field survey on Midday Meals Scheme in Siddipet district of Telangana state has been analyzed in the following pages. The infrastructure of the school for proper implementation of Midday Meal Program, implementation of Midday Meal Scheme, opinions of the sample functionaries (Teachers and Cookers) and beneficiaries (Students and Parents) regarding impact of Midday Meal Program on enrollment, attendance, dropout, nutritional status and other aspects are presented here.

To analyze various aspects of the Midday Meal Scheme on infrastructure, implementation of Midday Meal Program, enrolment, attendance, dropout, nutritional status (quality food) and to provide suggestions to make the program more affective, a questionnaire has been used to collect the primary data on functionaries (teachers and cooks) and beneficiaries (students & parents) of the Midday Meal Scheme in Zilla Parishad High Schools of Siddipet Districts in Telangana State. The present study has been discussed under the following sections:

1. Infrastructure of the schools for proper implementation of Midday meal program.
2. The views and perceptions of the sample teachers about midday meal scheme.
3. Perceptions of the students about midday meal program.
4. Parents perception about midday meal scheme and
5. Perceptions of cooks and helpers about midday meal scheme.

6.1. Infrastructure of the Schools for Proper Implementation of Midday Meal Program:

There are different numbers of classrooms in the 10 schools visited by the research scholar. Number of classrooms in each school is given. It shows that 70.00 percent of the Zilla Parishad High Schools (ZPHS) have 10 classrooms whereas 20.00 percent of the schools have 9 classrooms. Only 10.00 percent of the schools have 8 classrooms in the study area. It can be concluded that most of the schools have sufficient classrooms in study area.

The highest pupil-teacher ratio is 36:1 and the lowest PRT is 21:1 in all sample schools. The overall pupil-teacher ratio in the all 10 sample schools is 29:1. It is occluded that the low PRT indicates the burden on a single teacher of teaching many students. A low PTR not only results in overburdening a small group of teachers but also adversely affects the quality of education.

The drinking water facility in the sample schools is given. The researcher visited 10 sample schools where the main (90.00 percent) source of water was Government Borewells. Only in one school where the main (10.00 percent) source of water was Government tap water. Interestingly, no school in the study area is using filtered water for their students. It is concluded that lack of clean water has more serious effects on children's academic performance and attendance rates.

It can be observed that all the sample schools have toilets in their schools. But, 50.00 percent of sample schools have their separate toilets for boys and girls and remaining 50.00 percent of the schools have not separate toilets for boys and girls. Therefore, female student and teachers are facing problem in this regards. The data shows that only 20.00 percent of the sample schools have kitchen shed for cooking Midday Meal and 80.00 percent of the schools cooks Midday Meal in open place of their school premises. Therefore, the students are getting more problems while cooking and it is also impact on their studies.

The data reveals that 90.00 percent of the sample schools have sufficient cooking utensils for Midday Meal and only 10.00 percent of the schools have not sufficient cooking utensils. It can be seen that all (100 percent) the sample schools used firewood as fuel for cooking Midday Meal and firewood is common fuel in the rural areas in Telangana. No sample school is using cooking gas for cooking midday meal because it is expensive. That is why most of the sample schools in study area prefer firewood as cooking fuel which is easily found in the locality.

According to data, no sample school have separate dining place for distribution of Midday Meal in the study area. It can be found that only 30.00 percent of the sample schools have store rooms to storage of foodgrains and remaining 70.00 percent of the schools do not have store rooms in the study area. It is observed that 90.00 percent of the sample schools have 1 cook & 1 helper and only 10.00 percent of the schools have 2 cooks & no helper in the study area.

6. 2. The Views and Perceptions of the Sample Teachers about Midday Meal Scheme:

The views and perceptions of the teachers about the Midday Meal Scheme in Zilla Parishad High Schools of Siddipet District were analyzed and the results have been discussed. Teachers are the functionaries of the Midday Meal Scheme. They are responsible for the implementation of majority of the aspects of the MDM scheme. Thus, their feedback is significant. Teacher's views and opinion towards Midday Meal Scheme were analyzed and the results have been discussed in the following pages.

The data indicates 90.00 percent of the respondents replied that the funds provided by Government is sufficient to provide food quality food for the children while only 10.00 percent of them opined funds are not sufficient. The infrastructure facilities are more important to implement Midday Meal scheme. It is observed that 70.00 percent of the teachers say that infrastructure like kitchen, utensils, storage etc. is available sufficient while 30.00 percent of them opined that the infrastructure to keep kitchen items available is not adequate.

It reveals that 20.00 percent of the teachers said that MDM is cooked in kitchen sheds whereas, 80.00 percent of them say that they cooked in open place in the school premises due to unavailability of kitchen shed in the sample schools.

It can be seen that all teachers (100 percent) said that the schools used firewood as fuel for cooking Midday Meal and firewood is common fuel in the rural areas in Telangana. No sample school is using cooking gas for cooking midday meal because it is expensive. That is why most of the sample schools in study area prefer firewood as cooking fuel which is easily found in the locality.

It is observed that 20.00 percent of teachers said that the Midday Meals is served in the class room due to insufficient space to accommodate all the students while 55.00 of them replied that they served in the school Varandha. It is also noticed that 25.00 percent of them responded that students would like to take food standing or open space of the school compound.

The quality of food provided to the school students is one of the most important tasks in Midday Meal Scheme. It is observed that 50.00 percent of the teachers opined that the quality of food is good while 35.00 percent of them have reported that it is average. It is also observed that 10.00 percent of the beneficiaries said that it is poor quality whereas only 5.00 percent of the teachers responded that the quality of the food is very good.

The quantity of food is sufficient for the students as per teacher's opinion. The quantity of food per child is sufficient enough as per the nutritional standard. Students are provided with sufficient quality of food, sometimes they share the excess food with their friends. It is observed that 95.00 percent of the teachers are said that the food is sufficient while only 5.00 percent of them say that it is not sufficient.

It reveals that under Midday meal program in Siddipet District, Zilla Parishad High School (ZPHS) students will get around 150 grams of food grains, 30 grams of pulses, 70 grams vegetables including leafs, 7.5 grams of oil and fat, salt and condiments as per need is provided per student per day. It states that 75.00 percent of the teachers say that the food provided under Midday Meals is hygienic and only 25.00 percent of them say it is not hygienic.

The researcher obtained the menu prescribed by the state government of Telangana and the menu was decided by the state level officials. The researcher also asked the school teachers to know about their weekly menu. According to the school teachers, the schools provide rice, egg and vegetables curry on Monday, rice and dhal with leafy vegetable on Tuesday, rice egg, and vegetables curry on Wednesday, rice, sambar with vegetables on Friday, special rice like vegetables biryani on Saturday.

The data shows that 85.00 percent of the teachers opinioned that the main sources of water were Government Borewells. Only 15.00 percent of them said the source of water was Government tap. Interestingly, no school in the study area is using filtered water for their students. For drinking, cooking and washing utensils, these Government Borewells and Tap water is used directly in all the sample schools. It is concluded that lack of clean water has more serious effects on children academic performance & attendance rates.

According to teacher's opinion, the school students are aware of the menu provided under MDM because they are high school students studying in ZPHSs. It is found that 90.00 percent of the respondents are satisfied with the menu while only 10.00 percent of them are not satisfied with the menu provided under this program.

It is confirmed that the Midday Meal Program is able to increase the enrolment in primary level, because 85.00 percent of the teachers accepted that the Midday Meal Program is able to increase enrollment in primary level. According to them, the Midday Meal Program provides hot cooked meal along with the nutritional support which is essential for the children. Whereas 15.00 percent of the teachers felt that the impact is negative on enrolment.

It can be found that 75.00 percent of the teachers agreed that, the Midday Meal Program is able to increase the enrolment of the students. The program is additional benefit for the economically backward children and is able to decrease the burden of their mothers' of day time cooking. About 25.00 percent of the teachers are not agreed to increase in the students attendance whereas the data confirm that Midday Meal Program is able to increase the daily attendance. It reveals that 70.00 percent of the teachers agreed that the impact is positive and the program is able to decrease the dropout rates in ZPHSs. According to them, the Midday Meal Program is good for those children who belong to the Below Poverty Line. Whereas 30.00 percent of the sample teachers did not agree with this, according to them, families which are living in Below Poverty Line require money to retort the poverty. The Midday Meal Program only gives one time food for their children which is not sufficient. They also express that, the migration of the people from one place to another with their family in search for jobs is also responsible for increase or decrease in the dropout rates and during this migration process of in or out migration, the importance of Midday Meal is worthless.

The aim of the Midday Meal is to attract the students to the school and provide them nutritious and good hygienic food. It can be found that 95.00 percent of the teachers said that the MDM scheme is not distraction attention of the students from studies while only 5.00 percent of them said it is distracting attention of the student from studies.

It is noticed that 15.00 percent of the respondents say that due to heavy work load for teachers, this program has increased the burden on teachers. Majority of them i.e. 85.00 percent say that this program is not burden for them. They do not feel that the work load has increased considering this as a part of their work.

The perception about involvement of teachers and its adverse impact on teaching is shown. It is observed that only 5.00 percent of the teachers say 'Yes' while 95.00 percent of them say 'No'. This is because of Midday Meal has increased the quality of education, nutritious food and improvement in attendance. It can be observed that all the sample schools have toilets in their schools. But, 45.00 percent of sample schools have separate toilets for boys & girls and remaining 55.00 percent of schools have not separate toilets for boys & girls. Therefore, female student and teachers are facing problem in this regards.

The data reveals that 90.00 percent of the sample teachers opinioned that utensils for Midday Meal are sufficient and only 10.00 percent of them said the utensils are not sufficient. It can be found that only 35.00 percent of the teachers said that they have store room facility for storage of foodgrains and remaining 65.00 percent of them opinioned that they do not have store room facilities for MDM in the school.

It is observed that 80.00 percent of respondents said that the implementation of MDM is not a problem for teachers because they are assisted by government machinery and SDMC members with the assistance of student volunteers. Whereas 20.00 percent of them say that it is a problem and burdensome because of additional work such as census work and election meetings apart from teaching work.

6.3. Perceptions of the Students about Midday Meal Program:

Students are the ultimate beneficiaries of the Mid-day Meal Program. They are the reason for the implementation of the program. Their opinions and problems are of outmost importance for the achievement of the program.

The data reveals that out of 300 respondents 49.67 percent are male and 50.33 percent are female students selected for the study. Coming to age, the ZPHS, Narshaipalle have maximum (80.00 percent) number of children under the age group of 12-14 years and minimum (20.00 percent) number of students who comes under the age group of 15-17 years. It indicates that the parents of Narshaipalle village are more conscious regarding education of their child. While in general, out of 300 sample students, 71.67 percent of students fall under the age group of 12-14 years and 28.33 percent falls under the age group of 15-17 years.

The total 300 sample students are familiar with Midday Meal Program in schools. It reveals that the participation of the students is 100 percent in the selected schools. The percentage of children who went to house at the time of meals & denied to take food is zero in all the selected schools. It implies that the state is able to maintain quality, hygienic cooking process, implementation procedure, timely supply of foodgrain and provide basic needs to the school resulting as the success of program in ZPHS.

The facility of the Midday Meal Scheme in study area is able to develop the friendly environment to every individual student in the school through social education. The practice of social discrimination against sex, caste, religion, gender, rich and poor is totally absent among all the schools. During field survey it is revealed that, the Headmaster of the school along with the teaching members have actively participated to avoid social discrimination during meal hour.

The data indicate that 43.33 percent of the children have opinioned that the quality of the meal is very good whereas 34.67 percent of the students express that the quality of the meal is healthy. Hence, out of 300 students, 78 percent students have responded that the quality of the meal is good and only 22 percent of students replied that the quality is poor. It reveals that 96.67 percent of the students pinioned that there is hand-wash facility in the sample school premises while only 3.33 percent of them said that there is no hand-wash facility in their schools.

According to the data, the opinion of the 80.67 percent students is positive regarding students attraction ability of the program towards schools. It shows that the program is able to boost the non-school going students to join the school. They further express that, the program is good and one time supportive meal with full of food nutrition for the students of the economically backward families in study area. They believed that Midday Meal Program justify the needs of the students on the basis of nutrition value and inadequate diet. Whereas 19.33 percent of student believed that the program is not able to attract those students who are not enrolled in school.

According to data, 94.67 percent of students said that their attention towards the study has not declined due to the cooking process of midday meal and it will not affect the academic environment of the study as well. Whereas only 5.33 percent of students expressed that their attention is being diverted from the study and they are not able to concentrate on their study due to the cooking process of Meal. The main reason behind this is the conversion of corridors into kitchen, which is due to the ongoing construction of kitchen shed along with the storeroom at the school premises.

According to data, 90.67 percent of students have believed that Midday Meal Program is able to improve the enrolment whereas, only 9.33 percent students of the total samples have shown their deviated the opinion. About 92.00 percent of the students believe that, the program has a huge impact in the attendance of a student in the school and they also believe that the scheme has an effect in increasing the presence of a student in the school. Whereas, 8.00 percent of the students believe that the scheme has not impact in the attendance of a student in the school. Therefore, we can conclude that if the Government discontinues this policy of free meal among the school going students would lead to the decrease of student's presence in the School. The majority of children have agreed that the Midday Meal Program is able to decrease the dropout rates in schools, which is; in general 88.67 percent of students have agreed that it is helpful to reduce the dropout rates and 11.33 percent of students have disagreed.

The students are facing some problems while eating, washing their utensils after they eat and using washrooms in the time implementing Midday Meal Scheme. It reveals that 54.67 percent of the students opinioned that the sufficient water was not available in the schools to drink as well as to wash the utensils and 45.33 percent of them responded that there are not proper washroom facilities for boy and girls in the school.

6.4. Parents Perception about Midday Meal Scheme:

Parents are among the beneficiaries of the Midday Meal Program as their wards are directly availing the benefits from this program. Their feedback will be of great significance in knowing the benefits of the program will lead to contribute to the efficient functioning of the program. Parent's perceptions towards Midday Meal Program were studied by selecting a sample of 300 parents Siddipet District.

It can be seen that 86.33 percent of the parents said that the taste of the food is good while only 13.67 percent of them replied that the food is not taste under this MDM scheme. Parents are very happy about their children due to midday meals scheme. It is observed that 86.33 percent of the parents expressed their happiness about this MDM while only 13.67 percent of them said 'No' to this question.

It reveals that 38.67 percent of the parents said that they visit the school for monitoring once in a month while 28.33 percent of them opined that they visit one in a three months. It is also observed that 14.00 percent of the beneficiaries visit the school once in a fortnight and interestingly, 19.00 percent of them did not visit schools.

It can be found that 94.33 percent of the parents opined that it is hygienic and teachers would take care of this problem under MDM Program. Parents do not find any health problem of their children after taking food under MDM Program. Only 5.67 percent of the parents said that their children have health problem due to Midday meal.

It can be seen that 97.33 percent of parents considered it as a good program whereas 2.67 percent of them treated it not as a good program. The field survey reveals that 83.67 percent of the parents wants that the government should continue the program, whereas 16.33 percent of the parents states that instead of Midday Meal Program in School, 'Ready to Eat' food should be supplied by government in future, in order to maintain the teaching hours and to avoid the indiscipline caused by the Midday Meal Program in school premises.

According to data, 91.00 percent of the parents agreed that the impact of Midday Meal Program on enrollment is positive and only 9.00 percent of them have not agreed to the same. On their view, the Midday Meal Program have reduced the burden of day time cooking for those mothers' who has been working on the basis of daily wages labour. They have further expressed that the program is good for those families who are economically un-sound. It can be seen that 89.67 percent of the parents expressed that the Midday Meals Program is able to increase the student attendance. Only 10.33 percent of parents have expressed that the attendance of the students would not increase or decrease by the Midday Meal Program. According to them, the attendance of the students is highly fluctuating in rural area during agricultural season, because due to the shortage of labour, involvement of children in agricultural activities is highly appreciated by elders because of their illiteracy. According to data, presents that 94.67 percent of the parents expressed the program is able to reduce the dropout rates. only 5.33 percent of the parents expressed that the program is unable to control the dropout rates in the study area. According to them, the seasonal migration of the parents along with their children, permanently shift from one place to another and less number of children in village are the factors which directly affects the dropout rates.

Some of the parents complained about water facility and toilet facilities of the school. According to 42.67 percent of the parent's opinion, toilets were not in proper good conditions in the schools. 57.33 percent of the parents reported that it was happened because of the water stored in tanks got finished & students did not get water to drink. Some of the sample parents suggested that the fruits should be provided once in a week as they are unable to provide fruits to their children.

6.5. Perceptions of Cooks and Helpers about Midday Meal Scheme:

Cooks and helpers are also part of the functionaries of scheme. They cook the food/meal, serve it, wash the utensils, take care of the kitchen devices & clean the kitchen after cooking the meal. Hence, their feedback is also helpful for the smooth running of the Midday Meal Scheme.

It can be found that 45 percent of the cooks and helpers opinioned that they served hot cooked Midday Meals to students everyday excluding Sundays and general holidays whereas 55 percent of them provided the meal for most of the days i.e. 15 days and above. According to the norm, Midday Meal is to be served for 21 days in a month.

It can be seen that all cooks and helpers (100 percent) said that the schools provided firewood as fuel for cooking of Midday Meals. No sample school is using cooking gas for cooking midday meal because it is expensive. That is why most of the sample schools in study area prefer firewood as cooking fuel which is easily found in the locality.

Table states that 90.00 percent of the cooks and helpers said that the quantity of food is cooked according to the attendance of the student whereas only 10.00 percent of them responded that the quantity of food cooked daily is the same. It is observed that 20.00 percent of cooks and helpers replied that the meal is served in the class room due to insufficient space to accommodate all the students while 55.00 of them responded that they served in the school Varandha. It is also noticed that 25.00 percent of them said that the students would like to take food standing or open space of the school compound.

It show that 55.00 percent of the cooks and helpers responded that the food left over happens on few days or rarely while 45.00 percent of them said that the left-over of the meal never happens. It can be seen that only 10.00 percent of the cooks and helpers replied that the teachers are involved in the process of cooking while 90.00 percent of them responded that no teachers are involved in cooking process.

The monthly honorarium of the Cook - cum - Helper is found to be Rs.1000/- per Cook - cum - Helper. It is found that 80.00 percent of cooks and helpers replied that the monthly honorarium due to be paid while only 20.00 percent of them have received the entire honorarium till the time of the data collected for the study area. They also optioned that the monthly honorarium payment is not enough them to live.

The government of Telangana has been providing cooking cost Rs.7 per child per day. According to majority of cooks and helpers (95.00 percent), the cooking cost provided by the government is not sufficient. Only 5.00 percent of the beneficiaries replied that the cooking cost is sufficient in the study area. The data reveals that 90.00 percent of the cooks and helpers reported that the government is not releasing cooking cost in time while only 10.00 percent of the respondents replied that the government is not releasing cooking cost in time in the study area.

The field survey reveals that 30.00 percent of cooks and helpers opinioned that the honorarium is too less while 20.00 percent of them replied that proper kitchen is the problems. 10.00 percent of cooks and helpers highlighted that foodgrain is not delivered on time, 10.00 percent of them found number of utensils inadequate while serving and lack of cooking fuel is another problem faced by 10.00 percent cooks and helpers. Another 10.00 percent of cooks and helpers stated that non availability of water facility as a problem faced while cooking Midday Meal. 5.00 percent of cooks and helpers have found it difficult to manage large number of students while serving food and another 5.00 percent attributed untimely release of fund for honorarium as another problem.

VII. Conclusion:

The Right of Children to Free & Compulsory Education (RTE) Act - 2009, prescribes a Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR) of 40:1 & 35:1 at primary school and upper primary school level in every school. As per the Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE), 2019-20, the PTR at primary school, upper primary school and secondary levels are 26:1, 21:1 and 19:1 respectively. School wise pupil-teacher ratio is shown. It can be observed that in all sample schools, the highest pupil-teacher ratio is 36:1 and the lowest PRT is 21:1. The overall pupil-teacher ratio in the all 10 sample schools is 29:1. It is occluded that the low PRT indicates the burden on a single teacher of teaching many students. A low PTR not only results in overburdening a small group of teachers but also adversely affects the quality of education.

The details of library facility in the sample schools are given. It can be seen that 40.00 percent sample schools have library facility for their children whereas 60.00 percent of them do not have library facilities. Some schools have libraries but no library activity for students was found in study area. The information of hall facility in sample schools is presented. It reveals that only 20.00 percent of the sample schools have halls in their schools to use cultural activities whereas 80.00 percent of the schools do not have halls. The Halls are connected with electricity and have sitting arrangement of 150 to 200 students at the time of cultural programs according to the school Headmaster. The information of the play grounds in the selected schools is shown. It shows that all schools have play grounds. According to the Headmasters of the schools, all the schools have sports equipments.

The drinking water facility in the sample schools is given. The researcher visited 10 sample schools where the main (90.00 percent) source of water was Government Borewells. Only in one school where the main (10.00 percent) source of water was Government tap water. Interestingly, no school in the study area is using filtered water for their students. For drinking, cooking and washing utensils, these Government Borewells and Tap water is used directly in all the 10 sample schools. It is concluded that lack of clean water has more serious effects on children's academic performance and attendance rates. If drinking water contains unsafe levels of contaminants, it can cause health effects in students, such as gastrointestinal illnesses and chronic diseases such as cancer.

The availability of toilets for boys and girls in sample schools are presented. It can be observed that all the sample schools have toilets in their schools. But, 50.00 percent of sample schools have their separate toilets for boys and girls and remaining 50.00 percent of the schools have not separate toilets for boys and girls. Therefore, female student and teachers are facing problem in this regards. The availability of kitchens for cooking of Midday Meal in sample schools is also given. It shows that only 20.00 percent of the sample schools have kitchen shed for cooking Midday Meal and 80.00 percent of the schools cooks Midday Meal in open place of their school premises. Therefore, the students are getting more problems while cooking and it is also impact on their studies.

The information about cooking and serving utensils for Midday Meal in selected schools is given. It reveals that 90.00 percent of the sample schools have sufficient cooking utensils for Midday Meal and only 10.00 percent of the schools have not sufficient cooking utensils. The details about cooking fuel for Midday Meal in sample schools are presented. It can be seen that all (100 percent) the sample schools used firewood as fuel for cooking Midday Meal and firewood is common fuel in the rural areas in Telangana. No sample school is using cooking gas for cooking midday meal because it is expensive. That is why most of the sample schools in study area prefer firewood as cooking fuel which is easily found in the locality.

The information of dining hall for distribution of Midday Meal in schools is shown. It reveals that no sample school have separate dining place for distribution of Midday Meal in the study area. The availability of store rooms in sample schools is presented. It can be found that only 30.00 percent of the sample schools have store rooms to storage of foodgrains and remaining 70.00 percent of the schools do not have store rooms in the study area. The availability of Cook/Helpers for Midday Meal is shown. It is observed that 90.00 percent of the sample schools have 1 cook & 1 helper and only 10.00 percent of the schools have 2 cooks & no helper in the study area.

VIII. Suggestions of the Study:

1. For the better result of the program, community participation is essential. This will help on many issues like healthcare of the students, maintenance of good healthy environment in the school premises and supply of food on social occasions.
2. Government should provide LPG connection to each school or provide solar cooking system to save further degradation of forest or vegetation.
3. Every school should have kitchen shed consisting of proper ventilations, proper height, light, water and with store facility. The location of kitchen shed should be away from the classroom or it cannot be seen from classroom, which will help the students to concentrate on education rather than watching kitchen.
4. The involvement of teacher in cooking and distribution process should be strictly prohibited.
5. Government should appoint cook and helper on the regular basis and salaries should be raised.
6. Government should try to provide Mid-Day Meal only through decentralized kitchen system or through school only instead of centralized kitchen system. In centralized kitchen system involvement of private entrepreneurs is maximum because of profit. The hygienic process of cooking, the exact value of nutrition and quantity of food does not matter in centralized kitchen and it is not possible to check to every day cooking process in this system.
7. Every essential commodity like salt, chilli, daal, edible oil, gas etc. should be supplied by the government along with the foodgrains to the schools. This process will decrease the total cost of the program.
8. Every school should have their own kitchen garden which gives organic and healthy vegetable.
9. Government Borewells and Tap water is used directly in the schools for drinking, cooking and washing utensils. It is concluded that Lack of clean water has more serious effects on student's academic performance and attendance rates. If drinking water contains unsafe levels of contaminants, it can cause health effects in students, such as gastrointestinal illnesses, nervous system and chronic diseases such as cancer. Therefore, the government should provide safe drinking water to the students.
10. Most of the schools do not have separate toilets for boys and girls. Hence, female student and teachers are facing problem in this regards. Therefore, the government should renovate old tailets and construct new separate toilets for boys & girls.
11. Good quality of the food grain should be supplied by the government.
12. The strict monitoring and supervision by proper authority is needed to check the cheating cases and corruption.
13. Mid-Day Meal Program provides social education along with the hot cooked meal. So practice of discrimination against caste, sex, religion, rich and poor should be strictly checked.
14. Mid-Day Meal should distribute with the time period to reduce its effects on teaching hour.
15. Mid-Day Meal Program needs proper coordination among supplier of foodgrains, administrative authority, In-charge of the program in school level, local authority, village level authority, guardian and teachers at school level to achieve its goal.
16. Officers of the State Governments belonging to the Departments of Revenue, Rural Development, Education and other related sectors, such as Women and Child Development, Food, Health should inspect the schools and centers where the program is being implemented once in 15 days.
17. The program suffers from a number of bottlenecks in the course of its implementation like financial allocation for the operation of this scheme is inadequate and irregular. So government should maintain regular flow of money and sufficient also to success the program.
18. Every school should have maintenance of proper records which is very important for successful running of any program. The register includes detail about the funds received for conversion cost and cooking cost, daily attendance of the cook, daily attendance of children, item bought and served.
19. Menu should be changed on daily basis so students can enjoy the meal with different taste.
20. Regarding distribution of the administration power in school level, more power should be delegated to Head of the teacher as far as management of Midday Meal Program in concern.

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