

## **Impact of Mid-Day Meal Scheme on Enrollment of Students at Upper-Primary Level in Education**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The present study was carried out to find out the “Impact of Mid-Day Meal Scheme on Enrollment of Students at Upper-Primary Level in Education”. The sample for the present study was drawn from 20 Government Upper-Primary schools. It is proposed to draw at least 10 students (5 males and 5 females) from each school. Hence, the sample for the study was 200 students (100 males and 100 females). The data was collected with the self-constructed questionnaire (survey questionnaire) and the school record was prepared and the usable response rates were collected and the collected data was analyzed with the help of percentage. The results reveal that there is a significant impact of mid-day meal scheme on the enrolment and the retention of students at upper primary level in education.*

**Key words:** Mid-Day Meal, enrolment, retention and upper primary level.

### **Introduction**

India is one of the developing nations. Despite all its economic prosperity in certain areas, India lags behind on many social parameters. One of them is child nutrition and nourishment. 42% of the Indian children under the age of 5 are underweight. Most children belonging to the economically- backward background are foregoing schooling to supplement their family’s income. The surest way to break out of the cycle of poverty is through education. Education can significantly improve the quality of life of a family for generations to come. Education is regarded as the corner stone of economic growth and social development. When the basic needs of a child such as food are not met, education becomes the last priority. Mid-Day Meal Scheme was initiated on the basis of the philosophy that “when children have to sit in class with empty stomachs, they cannot focus on learning”.<sup>1</sup>It is a major programme launched all over the country, not only to attract the children into the embrace of schooling but also to provide nutritional support for generating necessary interest both physical and psychological among the children to ensure their presence in the school.

The MDMS is implemented largely at the state and local level and for this reason; the scheme has experienced unique rates of success and sets of problems in individual states. Further, the MDMS is seen as a tool for realizing both the ‘right to food’ and ‘right to education’.Introduction of MDMS is a well-intentioned programme. Government of India has attempted to address the fundamental problems of health, education, and overall development of children in the country by implementing this programme. School meal programme also provides parents with a strong incentive to send children to school, thereby encouraging enrollment and reducing absenteeism and drop-out rates.

Mid-Day Meal Scheme was started in Jammu and Kashmir on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2004. Under this scheme cooked food is supplied to students at primary schools from standard I to V. From October 2007, the scheme has been extended to students studying in upper-primary schools from VI to VIII. As per the guidelines of the scheme, 100 grams of rice and 20 grams of dal per student per day are supplied to primary

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schools while as 150 grams of rice and 30 grams of dal per student per student is supplied to upper-primary schools. Cooking assistance of Rs 1.58 for primary and Rs 2.40 upper-primary per child per school day and reimbursement of transportation cost Rs125 per quintal is provided by Government. The Government of India provides rice and Government of Jammu and Kashmir provides fund towards purchase of dal, vegetables, oil, condiments, etc.

**Need and importance:**

The idea behind implementation of Mid-Day Meal Programme can be understood by three crucial perspectives: educational advancement, child nutrition, and social equity.

Each of these objectives in turn has different aspects. Some are more ambitious than others. To illustrate, one basic contribution of mid-day meals to educational advancement is to boost school enrollment. Going beyond that, mid-day meals may be expected to enhance pupil attendance on a daily basis (and not just annual enrollment). School meals may also enhance learning achievements, in so far as 'class-room hunger' undermines the ability of pupils to concentrate and perhaps even affects their learning skills.

Similarly, the nutritional objective of mid-day meals has several layers, ranging from the elimination of class-room hunger to the healthy growth of school children. In many respects, a Mid-Day Meal Programme is a nutritionist's dream; the children come every day, on their own, and they eat whatever is given to them. The contribution of mid-day meals to social equity also has a variety of aspects as it helps to undermine caste prejudices, by teaching children to sit together and share a common meal. To some extent, mid-day meals also reduce class inequalities.

Indeed, in contemporary India, children enrolled in Government schools come mainly from disadvantaged families. Thus, mid-day meals can be seen as a form of economic support to the poorer sections of the society. More importantly, perhaps mid-day meals facilitate school participation among underprivileged children. This is likely to reduce future class inequalities, since lack of education is a major source of economic dis-advantage and social marginalization. In short, despite their innocent garb, mid-day meals are a significant challenge to the prevailing inequalities of caste, class, and gender.

**Objectives of study:**

The following objectives were framed for the present study:

1. To evaluate the effects of mid-day meals at upper-primary level in Education.
2. To study the impact of mid-day meals on the enrollment and retention of students at upper-primary level in Education.
3. To draw the comparison of the effects of mid-day meals on the enrollment and retention of students from gender perspective.

**Methodology and procedure:**

**Sample:**

Simple Random Sampling method was followed for the present study to draw the sample from the target population. The sample for the present study was drawn from 20 Government Upper-Primary schools of different villages of Education. It is proposed to draw at least 10 students (5 males and 5 females) from each school. Hence, the sample for the study was 200 students (100 males and 100 females).

**DESCRIPTION OF DATA GATHERING Tools:**

In order to collect the data for the first objective of the study, a self-constructed questionnaire was used. The questionnaire was prepared to evaluate the effects of MDMS at upper – primary level in Education. For collecting data for other two objectives school records were used. Descriptive survey method will be adopted for the present study.

**PROCEDURE OF DATA ANALYSIS:**

The data collected from a survey questionnaire and the school records was prepared and the usable response rates were collected and the collected data was analyzed with the help of Percentage.

**Analysis and interpretation:**

. The aim of present study is to study the impact of mid-day-meals on enrollment and retention of the students in education. Keeping this in view the statistical analysis of the data has been carried out along with the following lines.

1. Results pertaining to evaluate the effects of mid-day meals at upper-primary level in Education.
2. Results pertaining to study the impact of mid-day meals on the enrollment of students at upper-primary level in Education.
3. Results pertaining to study the impact of mid-day meals on the retention of students at upper-primary level in Education.
4. Comparison of the effects of mid-day meals on the enrollment and retention of students from gender perspective.

**Table 1.1 showing the effect of mid-day meals at upper primary level in education.**

Numbers of respondents	Response in Percentage
200	95%

A perusal of above table shows the percentage of respondents towards the effect of mid-day meals at upper primary level. The selected sample of respondents given 95% response towards the positive effect of midday meals at upper primary level, while knowing the enrollment, retention, motivation, satisfaction, regularity of attendance and developing interest in continuity their upper primary education.

**Table 1.2 showing the enrolment in different primary schools in Pulwama**

S. No.	Name of the School	Enrollment in 2008-09		Enrollment in 2009-10		Enrollment in 2010-11		Enrollment in 2011-12		Enrollment in 2012-13	
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
01	GMS* Narbal	21	13	25	17	28	22	30	29	32	32
02	GMS Larve	14	11	19	13	23	19	27	22	31	25
03	GMS Qazigund	15	10	19	14	24	15	28	19	32	21
04	GMS Parigam	19	10	22	13	26	16	32	18	37	22
05	GMS Pinglena	20	11	23	17	27	20	31	22	37	23
06	GMS Ratnipora	14	14	17	20	21	22	26	26	27	31
07	GMS Kakapora	13	16	16	20	20	22	23	28	26	32
08	GMS Nehama	17	13	22	15	25	20	28	24	29	31
09	GMS Narow	16	11	19	16	20	21	25	25	27	29
10	GMS Dougam	12	10	14	16	17	20	21	24	25	29
11	GMS Marval	17	09	19	14	22	17	25	24	27	28
12	GMS Urichersoo	13	10	15	16	20	18	23	21	26	26
13	GMS Sather Gund	11	10	13	16	17	18	20	22	23	27
14	GMS Hajibal	15	11	17	16	20	20	23	26	26	29
15	GMS Wandalpura	12	08	15	14	18	18	20	24	23	30

16	GMS Hassnwani	16	09	20	11	24	15	27	19	30	20
17	GMS Zadora	19	07	22	13	22	21	26	26	31	28
18	GMS Lelhar	13	07	15	11	15	17	18	22	21	27
19	GMS Gundpora	12	10	14	12	16	16	18	22	21	26
20	GMS Newa	15	10	17	15	19	20	22	25	26	26
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>557</b>	<b>542</b>

*\*Government middle school*

A perusal of above table shows the impact of mid-day-meals on enrolment of students (male and female) in 20 different primary schools of Pulwama from 2008-2013. The table reveals that in every passing year the enrolment of boys enhances as in 2008-09 there were 304 boys in 20 primary schools which enhances up to 363 in 2009-10, in 2010-11 up to 424, in 2011-12 up to 493 and in 2012-13 the number increases up to 557. The table also depicts that in every passing year the enrolment of girls enhances tremendously as in 2008-09 there were 210 girls in 20 primary schools which enhances up to 299 in 2009-10, in 2010-11 up to 377, in 2011-12 up to 468 and in 2012-13 the number increases up to 542.

**Table 1.3 showing the retentions in different primary schools of Pulwama**

S. No.	Name of the school	Enrolment in 2008-09		Enrolment in 2009-10		Enrolment in 2010-11		Enrolment in 2011-12		Enrolment in 2012-13	
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
01	GMS* Narbal	21	13	25	17	28	22	30	29	32	32
02	GMS Larve	14	11	19	13	23	19	27	22	31	25
03	GMS Qazigund	15	10	19	14	24	15	28	19	32	21
04	GMS Parigam	19	10	22	13	26	16	32	18	37	22
05	GMS Pinglena	20	11	23	17	27	20	31	22	37	23
06	GMS Ratnipora	14	14	17	20	21	22	26	26	27	31
07	GMS Kakapora	13	16	16	20	20	22	23	28	26	32
08	GMS Nehama	17	13	22	15	25	20	28	24	29	31
09	GMS Narow	16	11	19	16	20	21	25	25	27	29
10	GMS Dougam	12	10	14	16	17	20	21	24	25	29
11	GMS Marval	17	09	19	14	22	17	25	24	27	28
12	GMS Urichersoo	13	10	15	16	20	18	23	21	26	26
13	GMS Sather Gund	11	10	13	16	17	18	20	22	23	27
14	GMS Hajibal	15	11	17	16	20	20	23	26	26	29
15	GMS Wandalpura	12	08	15	14	18	18	20	24	23	30
16	GMS Hassnwani	16	09	20	11	24	15	27	19	30	20
17	GMS Zadora	19	07	22	13	22	21	26	26	31	28
18	GMS Lelhar	13	07	15	11	15	17	18	22	21	27
19	GMS Gundpora	12	10	14	12	16	16	18	22	21	26
20	GMS Newa	15	10	17	15	19	20	22	25	26	26
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>557</b>	<b>542</b>

The perusal of above table shows the impact of mid-day-meals on retention of students (boys and girls) in 20 different primary schools of Pulwama from 2008-2013. The highlights that the students are not only retaining in the schools but there is a gradual increase in both the sexes in every school. As there were in 2008-09 304 boys in 20 primary schools which enhances up to 363 in 2009-10, in 2010-11 up to 424, in 2011-12 up to 493 and in 2012-13 the number increases up to 557. The table also depicts that in every passing year girls are also retaining and there is also a gradual increase in their retention as in 2008-09 there were 210 girls in 20 primary schools which enhances up to 299 in 2009-10, in 2010-11 up to 377, in 2011-12 up to 468 and in 2012-13 the number increases up to 542.

**Table 1.4 Comparison of the effect of mid-day meals on the enrolment and retention of students from gender perspective in district pulwama**

S. No.	Name of the school	Enrollment in 2008-09		Enrollment in 2009-10		Enrollment in 2010-11		Enrollment in 2011-12		Enrollment in 2012-13	
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
01	GMS* Narbal	21	13	25	17	28	22	30	29	32	32
02	GMS Larve	14	11	19	13	23	19	27	22	31	25
03	GMS Qazigund	15	10	19	14	24	15	28	19	32	21
04	GMS Parigam	19	10	22	13	26	16	32	18	37	22
05	GMS Pinglena	20	11	23	17	27	20	31	22	37	23
06	GMS Ratnipora	14	14	17	20	21	22	26	26	27	31
07	GMS Kakapora	13	16	16	20	20	22	23	28	26	32
08	GMS Nehama	17	13	22	15	25	20	28	24	29	31
09	GMS Narow	16	11	19	16	20	21	25	25	27	29
10	GMS Dougam	12	10	14	16	17	20	21	24	25	29
11	GMS Marval	17	09	19	14	22	17	25	24	27	28
12	GMS Urichersoo	13	10	15	16	20	18	23	21	26	26
13	GMS Sather Gund	11	10	13	16	17	18	20	22	23	27
14	GMS Hajibal	15	11	17	16	20	20	23	26	26	29
15	GMS Wandalpura	12	08	15	14	18	18	20	24	23	30
16	GMS Hassnwani	16	09	20	11	24	15	27	19	30	20
17	GMS Zadora	19	07	22	13	22	21	26	26	31	28
18	GMS Lelhar	13	07	15	11	15	17	18	22	21	27
19	GMS Gundpora	12	10	14	12	16	16	18	22	21	26
20	GMS Newa	15	10	17	15	19	20	22	25	26	26
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>557</b>	<b>542</b>

The perusal of above table shows the comparison of male and female students as per their enrollment and retention is concerned from 2008 -2013. The above table depicts that in 2008 the enrollment and retention of male students was 304 which increases up to 557 in 2013, which means addition of 253 students. While as role of female students in 2008 was 210 which increase up to 542 in 2013, which means an addition of 332. So girls show more enrolment and retention as compared the boys. The table also shows that in year 2011-12 there was a tremendous growth in female students i.e. from 377 in 2010 to 468 in 2011-12.

#### **MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

1. There is significant effect of Mid-Day Meal Scheme at upper-primary level in Education.
2. There is significant impact of Mid-Day Meal Scheme on the enrolment of students at upper-primary level in Education.
3. There is significant impact of Mid-Day Meal Scheme on the retention of students at upper-primary level in Education.
4. There is high percentage of female students enrolled at upper-primary level as compared to male students in Education.
5. The percentage of retention of female students at upper-primary level is high as compared to male students in Education.

#### **Educational Implications**

Mid Day Meal Scheme strengthened as it could be a means for not only promoting school enrolment but also better learning in schools. With children from all castes and communities eating together, it is also instrumental in bringing about better social integration. With MDMS, it will be easier for parents to persuade their children to go to school and for teachers to retain children in the classrooms. It could foster sound social behaviour among children and dispel feelings of difference between various castes.

#### **Suggestions**

The following suggestions are being put forth for further research in the field of mid-day-meals.

1. The present study was about "Impact of Mid-Day Meal Scheme on Enrollment of Students at Upper-Primary Level in Education". The same can replicate in other educational blocks of different districts of Jammu and Kashmir.
2. Impact of mid-day-meals on academic achievement of students at upper primary level.
3. The present study was about "Impact of Mid-Day Meal Scheme on Enrollment of Students at Upper-Primary Level in Education". The same can be conducted at lower primary level.
4. Impact of mid-day-meals in bringing about social equity.

#### **Conclusions:**

The study found that the MDMS has produced a positive impact in case of enrollment, attendance, and retention. Most of the students in all the schools confirmed during this evaluation that mid-day meal is a main incentive for attracting them for attending school on a regular basis.

Data also reflects that the mid-day Meal scheme has reduced the burden of the parents for providing one time meal to their children as many of them do not take breakfast in the morning and very few students bring lunch boxes in the school and majority students do not take meals at home after going back from school. It is proven to be a great support to the families especially of low socio economic status. It is also observed that Mid-Day Meals aid in active learning of children which directly improves their academic performance and the scheme has also played a significant role in bringing social equity. The results also indicated that MDMS is a motivating force for the children to attend the school.

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