

Effectiveness of Mid Day Meal Programme on Academic Performance of students in Odisha

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ABSTRACT

In India the National Programme of Nutritional Support, referred to as Mid Day Meal Programme is the largest social welfare Programme. It involves providing lunch free of cost to school going children on all working days. Now in India, 12 crores of students of 12 lakh schools are getting benefit under this programme. The Mid-day Meal programme was introduced on 1st July, 1995 in primary schools in Odisha. The programme is running in more than 60,000 primary schools and near about 60 lakh students are getting benefit out of this programme. The programme is run by Department of School and Mass Education, Govt. of Odisha. This paper attempts to analyze the nature and effectiveness of mid day meal programme on academic achievement of students in some selected upper primary level schools in Odisha. The study covers two hundred guardians (100 from Government schools and 100 from Private schools, N = 200) both in Government schools, where mid-day meal programme is going on and Private schools where mid day meal programme is not there. As it is an effective study Chi-square-test will reveal that whether mid day meal program has a significant positive impact in academic achievement of students or not.

Keywords: - Effectiveness, Academic Performance, Mid Day Meal.

Introduction

Basic education is one of the most effective factors in improving economies and creating

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literate and healthy societies. Education and learning is always directly proportional to good nutrition and health. Poor nutrition and health among children leads to the inefficiency of the educational system across the state. Children of backward classes enroll in school at a later age and there are always chances that they will drop out of school. For them, provision of free lunch on all school days is necessary. The Mid day meal scheme was launched with the following objectives in mind:

- To reduce hunger in schools by serving hot cooked meal.
- To improve nutritional status of children.
- To encourage children of the backward classes to attend school more regularly and help them concentrate on classroom activities. This leads to increase in enrolment, retention and attendance rates

Objective

The key objective of the study is to assess the role of mid day meal in academic achievement of students.

Hypothesis

The null hypothesis is -

H₀: Mid day meal program and academic performance are independent.

Data Source and Methodology

The primary data have been collected from two hundred guardians (N = 200) both in Government schools, where mid day meal programme is going on and Private schools where mid day meal programme is not there. The method of data collection was face to face interview. Chi-square test as a test of independence has been used to find the relationship.

Results & Discussion

This study attempted to know the relationship between mid day meal program and academic performance (using the perceptions of the guardians) of students of upper primary level school in terms of Chi-square analysis. The opinions of the respondents were collected from face to face interview method are presented in the following Table.

TABLE-1
Opinions of different respondents selected for the study

Respondents	Yes (B1)	Uncertain (B2)	No (B3)	Total
Respondents from the schools where mid-day meal programme is going on(A1)	74	10	16	100
Respondents from the schools where mid-day meal programme is not going on (A2)	70	10	20	100
Total	144	20	36	200

TABLE-2

Groups	Description
A1B1	Number of respondents from the schools where mid-day meal programme is going on and said yes
A1B2	Number of respondents from the schools where mid-day meal programme is going on and said uncertain
A1B3	Number of respondents from the schools where mid-day meal programme is going on and said no
A2B1	Number of respondents from the schools where mid-day meal programme is not going on and said yes
A2B2	Number of respondents from the schools where mid-day meal programme is not going on and said uncertain
A2B3	Number of respondents from the schools where mid-day meal programme is not going on and said no

TABLE-3

The expected frequency of different categories is

Category	expected frequency
A1B1	$100 \times 144 / 200 = 72$
A1B2	$100 \times 20 / 200 = 10$
A1B3	$100 \times 36 / 200 = 18$
A2B1	$100 \times 144 / 200 = 72$
A2B2	$100 \times 20 / 200 = 10$
A2B3	$100 \times 36 / 200 = 18$

Calculation of chi-square (χ^2)

Category	Oij (Observed frequency)	Eij(Expected frequency)	Oij-Eij	(Oij-Eij) ²	(Oij-Eij) ² /Eij
A1B1	74	72	2	4	0.0555
A1B2	10	10	0	0	0
A1B3	16	18	-2	4	0.2222
A2B1	70	72	-2	4	0.0555
A2B2	10	10	0	0	0
A2B3	20	18	2	4	0.0555

TOTAL=0.5554

Degree of freedom = $(r-1)(c-1) = 1 \times 2 = 2$

The table value of chi-square for 2 d.f and 5% level of significance is 5.991. The calculated value of chi-square is much less than the table value. So the null hypothesis is accepted. Hence we conclude that mid day meal program and students academic performance in schools are independent to each other.

Conclusion

Thus, we can conclude that mid day meal programme (MDM) has no impact on academic achievement but it is essential for enhancing enrolment, attendance and lowering drop out of students which are essential for achieving the higher level of academic performance of students of upper primary schools particularly those belongs to BPL, students residing in the rural areas. The result of chi-square test revealed that mid-day meal programme and academic achievement of students are independent. Mid-day meal programme has some other benefits like removal of hunger, social and gender equality and formation of good habits of students like washing their own hands with soap before meal other than academic achievement in school. But to get more outcomes, mid-day meal programme should be tied with the ongoing health awareness programme of Government.

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