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A CRITICAL STUDY TO DETERMINE THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF MIDDAY MEAL SCHEME IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS OF CHENNAI DISTRICT, TAMILNADU.

AUTHOR: M. HARIHARA PRIYA¹

ABSTRACT

Midday meal scheme was introduced on 1.7.1982 by former Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran to provide nutritious meal programme. This scheme was enacted on the basis of Article 21, 39(a) and 47 of Indian constitution. The Supreme Court asked all the state to adopt this very good scheme. The study attempt to find the effective implementation of MDMS in Chennai district with a sample size of 33 which was collected through convenient sampling method. The researcher has found that the scheme has been implemented at a good rate and works effectively. But there is a need improve the quality of food and the shelter homes allocated for preparing those nutritious meals.

Key words: Midday meal scheme, students, government schools, Implementation and Nutritious food.

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INTRODUCTION

The Midday Meal Scheme (MDMS) is a school meal programme launched by the Indian government in 1995, which aims to improve the nutritional status of school-going children in the country. Tamil Nadu was one of the first states to introduce a school meal programme, called the Nutritious Meal Scheme, in 1984. This scheme was later renamed as the Midday Meal Scheme, and was subsequently implemented on a national level in 1995. The study on the effective implementation of Midday Meal Scheme in Tamil Nadu is significant for several reasons. The Midday Meal Scheme is a crucial program that aims to improve the nutritional status of children in classes I-X in Government, Local Body and Government aided schools, and EGS and AIE centres, Encouraging children, belonging to disadvantaged sections, to attend school more regularly and help them concentrate on classroom activities and Providing nutritional support to children of primary stage in drought affected areas during summer vacation². While focusing on improving nutritional level and attendance, this scheme also aims to address two Sustainable Development Goals: Zero Hunger and Quality Education. Tamil Nadu is one of the largest beneficiaries of the program, and an analysis of the scheme's effectiveness will provide insights into the impact it has on child nutrition. Implementing a program of this scale is not without challenges. By analyzing the implementation of the scheme in Tamil Nadu, the study identifies any challenges and bottlenecks that need to be addressed to improve the effectiveness of the program. The Midday Meal Scheme is a flagship program of the Indian government, and its implementation has significant policy implications. An analysis of the scheme's implementation in Tamil Nadu provides insights into the policy implications of the program. Evaluating government programs is essential to ensure that they achieve their intended objectives and that public funds are utilized effectively. The study on the effective implementation of the Midday Meal Scheme in Tamil Nadu provides insights into the evaluation of government programs. The Midday Meal Scheme is an evolving program, and analyzing its implementation in Tamil Nadu can provide insights into the future direction of the program. The study can identify areas that need improvement and suggest ways to make the program more effective. The study on the effective

² Dreze, Jean and Goyal, Aparajita (2003): Future of Mid-Day Meals. Published in: Economic and Political Weekly , Vol. 38, No. 44 (2003): pp. 4673-4683.

9 Jithendra, V.K. (2013). Midday meal scheme: A study on its implementation and effectiveness in government primary schools of Kanpur district. International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Literature, 1(7), 25-31

implementation of Midday Meal Scheme in Tamil Nadu is significant as it can provide insights into child nutrition, identify challenges and bottlenecks, have policy implications, evaluate government programs, and suggest future directions for the program³.

Midday meal scheme was introduced by former chief minister MGR the nutritious meal programme was started on 1.7.1982. The motive of the government was “education on nutrition”. They wanted to serve free hot cooked nutritious meal. Children enrolled in national child labour project special school in 16 districts will get 312 days variety meals by this scheme. The government has initiated this scheme to bring 100% child education all over Tamil Nadu. They also wanted to provide accurate calories of nutrition for all the students. Indian constitution provides for Article-21 which deals with the right to food impliedly and Article-39(a) provides for right to adequate means of livelihood for both men and women equally and Article-47 imposes duty on state to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living and to improve public health. There are various factors affecting this study like, political factors, social factors and economic factors; there may be corruption and lack of implementation of this scheme. Current trends related to the topic are the scheme was extended to urban areas as well on 15.9.1982 and also to children belonging to age group (10-15years) on 15.9.1984. And recently the midday meals was increased for 5days a week and for 210day in a year totally for 16 districts. In USA there is an Act called hunger free kids act, 2010 enacted by former president Barack Obama for funding and set policy for USDS’s core child nutrition programs. They also have national school lunch program, the school breakfast program, the special supplemental nutrition program for women, infant and children, the summer food service program and the child and adult care food program⁴.

OBJECTIVES

- To analyse the quantity and quality of food.
- To find the number of students dependent on midday meal scheme.
- To find the prevalence of corruption in midday meal provided to students.

³ Motkuri, V. (2009). Reaching out of noon meal scheme in India. Indian Journal of Social Work, 70(3),437-448

⁴ Motkuri, V. (2009). Reaching out of noon meal scheme in India. Indian Journal of Social Work, 70(3),437-448

LITERATURE REVIEW

Midday meal scheme was launched by the government of India (Abhijeet Singh, 2014) with an aim to boost universalisation of primary education and increase the enrolment of children. Poor and downtrodden section of society. The midday meal scheme promotes friendship, feeling of brotherhood (Farzana Afridi, 2010) among children belonging to different caste, colour and creed. Until 2001, providing dry ration in most states but this scheme has made cooked meals for all primary school children. Midday meal scheme is a very successful scheme though it has so many problems in implementation. The major drawback is (Ingo Outes, 2013) spending teaching time, insufficient basic infrastructure, parents, panchayat, local authority-Negligibly. Midday meal scheme hampered difference between Dalits and other caste (Rajshri Jayaraman, 2015)

86th amendment of Indian constitution provides for free and compulsory education. (Farzana Afridi, 2011). Millennium development goals on 8th sep, 2000. Sarva Shiksha Abhigyan (SSA), National literacy mission and operation black board was started in 2015 (Monica Jain, 2015).

MDMS-National programme of nutritional support. 15th Aug, 1995- primary education was universalised (Avinash Kishore, 2015). MDMS promotes equality in all the aspects- gender, caste, class, race, etc (Reetika Khera, 2006). MDMS aims to overcome to problems of classroom hunger (Benjamin, 2013). In a very short period MDMS has become a part of daily school routine. 10.44 Crore of 12.12 lakh school are benefited says a government report (Patricia Allen, 1999). Government report has revealed that there are 8.77 lakh kitchen cum stores. 24 lakh cooked cum helpers mainly from SC/ST and OBC are appointed in this job (Janet M Currie, 2008). Until 2001, most states failed to put required arrangements in place instead provided monthly dry rations on attendance in school (Karen Weber, 2017). Tamil Nadu launched cooked MDMS in 1950 expanded it in 1982 and Gujarat adopted it in 1980s and next was Kerala, MP and Orissa in 1995 (Lucie Schmidt, 2016). First MDMS was limited to providing rations in most state and it changed after Nov. 28, 2001 (Juliana FW Cohen, 2016). Supreme Court held right to food and directed states to implement MDMS (Michael Kramer, 2005). Prepared meals minimum contents of 300 calories of energy and 8 to 12 grams of protein on every school day (200 days minimum) (Michele Belot, 2011). MDMS is helpful for many poor children (GA Rees, 2008). Report states that, teachers first taste the food and after verification children eat them (Ramona Robinson, 2010). Many children reported the quality of food and they feel that the quality has to be improved (Carmen Perez, 2001).

METHODOLOGY

This is an empirical research and the sampling method used by the researcher is convenient sampling method and 33 samples has been collected from students and teachers of government schools in Chennai district. The independent variables are age, gender, parent's income. The dependent variables are student's dependency on midday meals, the ratings for the food and its quality and quantity, opinion of students about corruption in the midday meal scheme. The research tool used is pie chart and graphical representation.

DATA ANALYSIS

Fig1

Age
33 responses

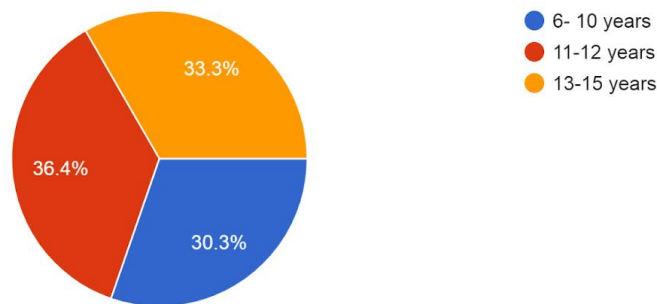


Fig 2

Gender
33 responses

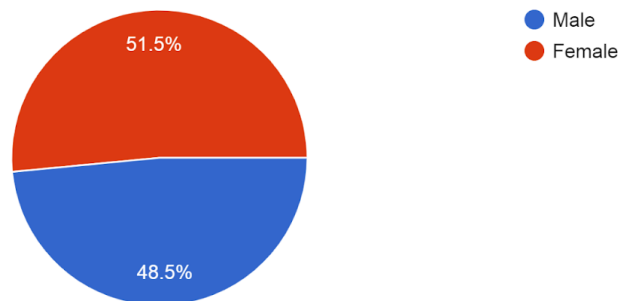


Fig 3

Annual income of your family

33 responses

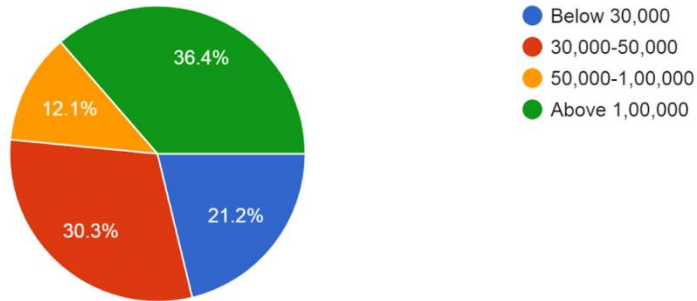


Fig 4

Were you studying in a private school before

33 responses

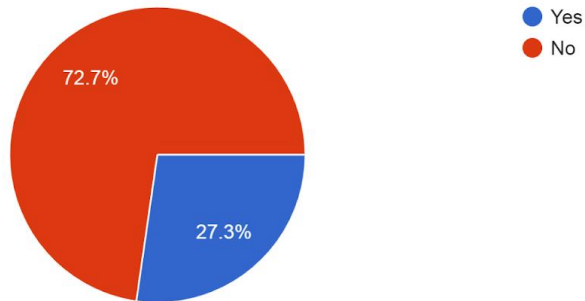


Fig 5

If yes, what is/are the reason for shifting to government school or Basic reason for u to choose government school

33 responses

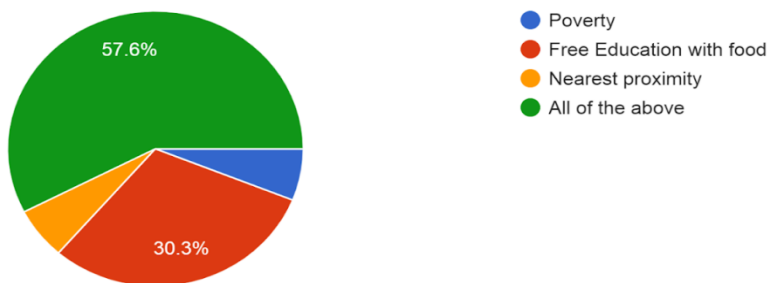


Fig 6

Do you bring lunch from your house

33 responses

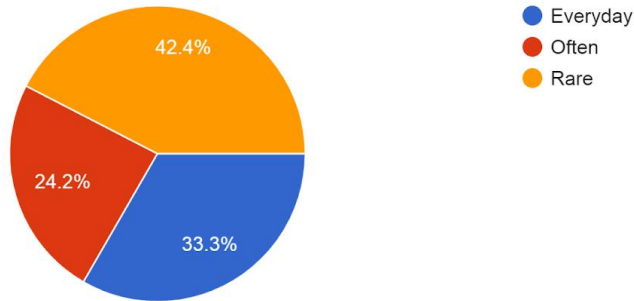


Fig 7

How much you are dependent on food that is provided in your school

33 responses

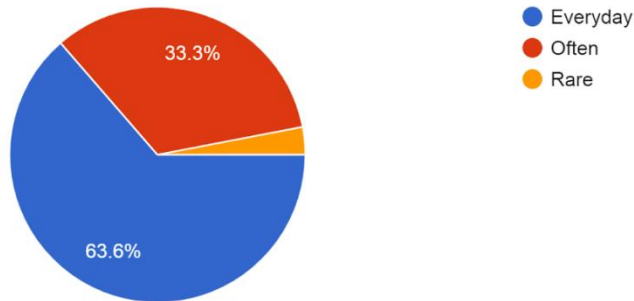


Fig 8

Are you that person who brings home cooked meal but also get meal provided in school for the sake of count

33 responses

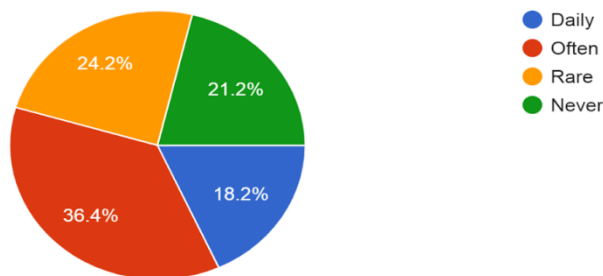


Fig 9

Rate the infrastructure of preparation and distribution of noon meals

33 responses

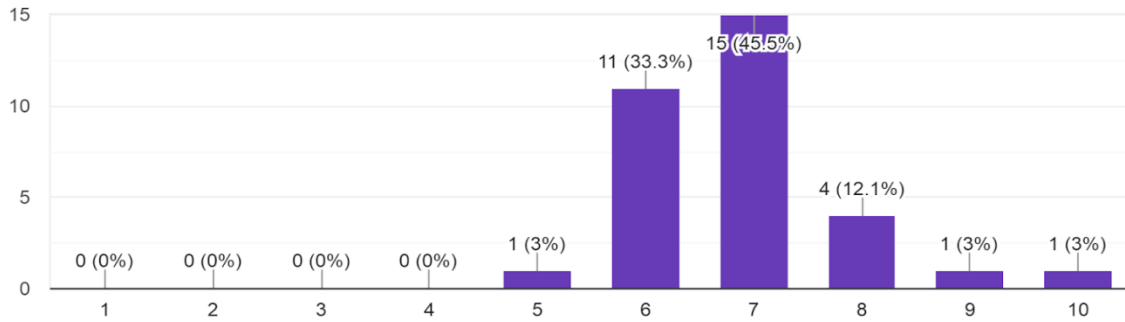


Fig 10

Rate the quality and quantity of noon meals

33 responses

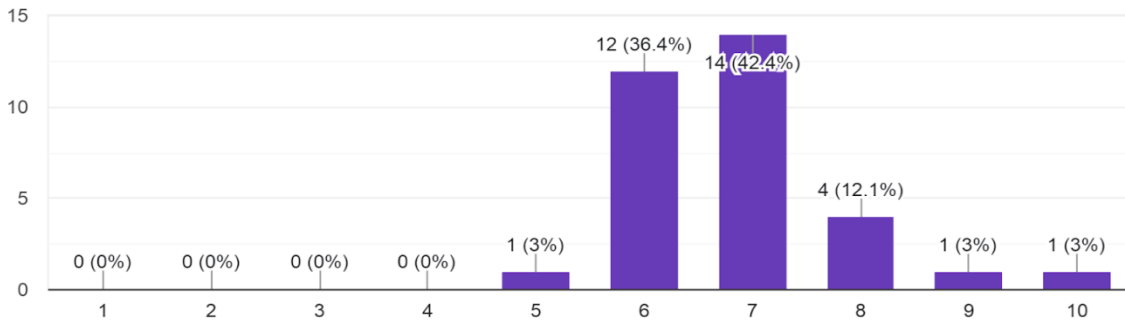


Fig 11

Have you ever fallen sick or faced any kind of health issues due to the food provided in your school

33 responses

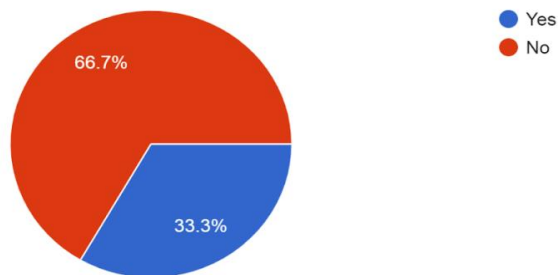


Fig 12

How often the inspection on midday meals take place

33 responses

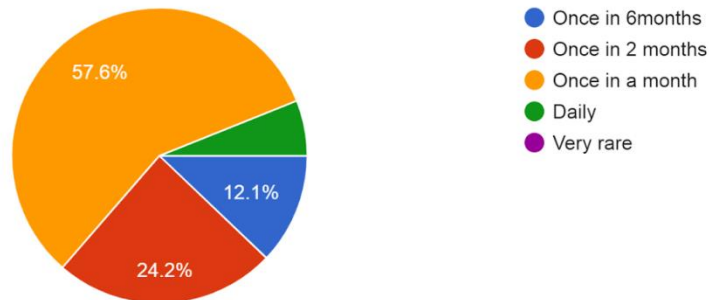


Fig 13

Have you ever noticed any kind of corruption happening with the raw materials allocated for midday meals

33 responses

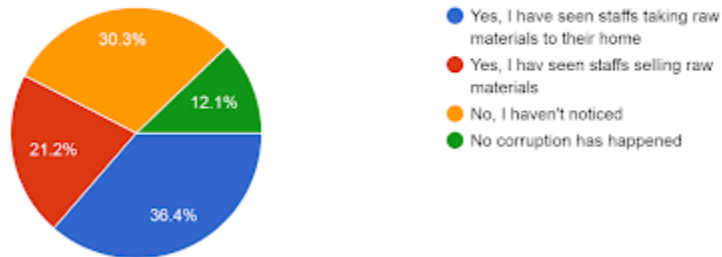
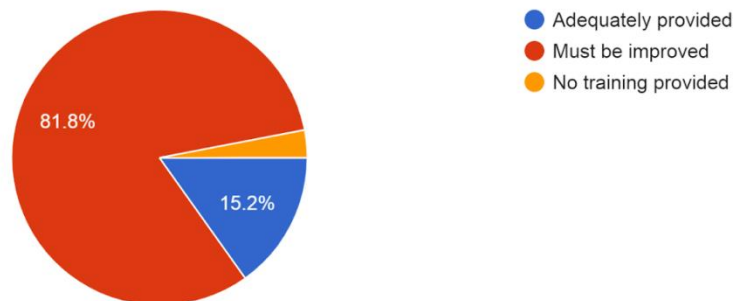


Fig 14

Adequate training to the staffs preparing and distributing midday meals

33 responses



RESULTS

The above given figures are the pie chart representation of the data collected from the students and teachers of government schools in Chennai district. The fig 5 draws the major reason for the students to opt government school for education. The 57.6% of the population feels that poverty, free education and nearest proximity of the school are the reasons for them to study in government school. From fig 6, it can be inferred that 42.4% of students rarely bring lunch from their houses. 63.6% are dependent on midday meals provided in schools everyday (fig7). Among the total sample population about 36.4% of respondents often take both home cooked food and food provided in schools. Further, when asked to rate the infrastructure of preparation and distribution of noon meals (fig9), the ratings fall between 6 to 8. 45.5% of the respondents have rated 7. This infers that the preparation and distribution of noon meals is above average. The fig 10 shows the rating of quality and quantity of the midday meals which is also above average. The majority of the sample population said that they have never fallen sick, however, 33.3% had fallen sick because of the food (fig11). It is shown that there used to be inspection on food every month (fig12). Fig 13 shows that the staffs indulge in corruption by taking home the raw materials stocked up under the scheme. 81.8% of the sample population feels that training to staffs working in preparation and distribution of the midday meals should be improved.

LIMITATION

The study limits to the government schools in Retteri, Madhavaram, Redhills alone.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The midday meal scheme is found to be one extra ordinary steps towards achieving its objectives such as increasing the nutritional status of the children, eradicate class room hunger, increase enrolment, retention and maintaining attendance, etc. The effective implementation of this scheme is tested to find the efficiency of the scheme and its impact on the society. The pandemic has left a huge impact on the economy of the country. Despite there can be no compromise in the working of schemes like this. The above research has inferred that the scheme has been effectively implemented but there is a hourly need to improve the training of staffs involved in preparation and distribution of meals. It is also required to take stringent actions against any person involving in corruption.