

MID-DAY MEAL PROGRAMME IN KARNATAKA: A CASE STUDY

RAGHAVENDRA JIGALUR,

Research Scholar, Department of Studies in Economics, Karnatak University, Dharwad 580003. Mobile-

Abstract

Education is the most important invention of mankind. It is also more important than the invention of tools like, machines, spacecrafts, weapons and medicines etc. which are the products of education. Man without education would still be living just like an animal. It is only the education which transformed man from a mere two-legged animal in to human being. It helps him to behave like a human being and prevents him from behaving like an animal. Hence the value of education is recognized in every society. Education has been emphasised by UNDP by introducing Human Development concept and Adding strength to it. Mid-Day Meal Programme is the centrally sponsored scheme aims at universalisation of education and along with to improve the nutritional level among the students so that their health is improved at a very crucial biological growth keeping in mind the future of young India.

Keywords: *Mid-Day Meal Programme (MDM Programme), Universalisation of Education, Attendance, Academic Score.*

INTRODUCTION

Education is the most important invention of mankind. It is also more important than the invention of tools like, machines, spacecrafts, weapons and medicines etc. which are the products of education. Man without education would still be living just like an animal. It is only the education which transformed man from a mere two-legged animal in to human being. It helps him to behave like a human being and prevents him from behaving like an animal. Hence the value of education is recognized in every society. Education has been emphasised by UNDP by introducing Human Development concept and Adding strength to it.

With a view to enhance enrolment, attendance and retention and also to improve the child health by increasing nutrition levels among children, the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education known as Mid-Day Meal (MDM) Programme was launched in India. It is a well known Centrally Sponsored school meal programme in India which has been started in 1995 to implement universal primary education scheme. MDM aims at provision of lunch with free of cost to school-children on all working days. This programme gives relief to the parents who are economically not sound and who encourage the child labour to meet necessity of the family. The Mid-Day Meal Programme is having the goal to bring all children to school. But even today also large numbers of students are out of school.

Driven by national and international efforts and the MDG campaign, many students at the world level are enrolled in school at the primary level, especially since 2000. Girls have benefited the most. The ratio between the enrolment rate of girls and that of boys grew from 91 in 1999 to 97 in 2010 for all developing regions. (MDGs 2012) The literacy rate among youth aged 15 to 24 has increased globally from 83 per cent to 91 per cent between 1990 and 2015. The gap between women and men has been narrowed. (MDGs 2015)

Mid-Day Meal Programme in Karnataka

Government of Karnataka launched Mid-day Meal programme in June 2002 covering seven backward Districts namely Raichur, Koppal, Kalaburagi, Bidar, Bellary, Bagalkote and Vijayapura as per the recommendation made by Hon'ble D.M. Nanjundappa. In 2003, MDM programme has been extended to the remaining 20 districts under the ambitious "Akshara Dasoha" programme. As per the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, the scheme of providing hot cooked meal is implemented for all the children of class I to V of both Government and Government aided primary schools. The scheme of providing free food grains at 3 k.g / child / month to children of class I to V of Government aided schools on the basis of 80 per cent of attendance in a month under NP-NSPE has been continued during 2002-03 and 2003-04. Further the Programme was extended to VI and VII standards in Government/Government Aided Schools in the State w.e.f 01-10-2004 and the programme of providing hot cooked meal transferred to Zilla Panchayat w.e.f 01.04.2005. The programme is extended to students of eighth standard studying in upgraded primary schools and students of eighth to tenth standard of Government and Aided High Schools w.e.f 01-06-2007. (See Srinivas, 2008)

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The Present study is conducted in Ron Taluka of Gadag District, Karnataka. This paper is an attempt to study the impact of Mid-Day Meal Programme on Progress of education especially in terms of attendance and academic performance of students falling under the sample size of the present study.

Data Base: The present study is based on the primary and secondary data. Secondary data is collected by the various sources of published and unpublished information in the state of North Karnataka, India. The primary data is collected through structured interview schedule administered to students, teachers, Headmasters, parents and SDMC members for evaluating the MDM programme.

Sampling Design: The primary data was collected during the year of 2015-16 across the selected schools in Ron taluka of Gadag District. The Education Department of the Ron Taluka has categorized schools based upon their educational performance. Four villages namely Belavanaki, Koujageri, Hunagundi and

Mudenagudi have been selected for the study. Under the best performing category of schools, two Government primary and upper primary schools from Belavanaki and one from Koujageri were selected. Under average performance category, one from Hunagundi and one from Mudenagudi have been selected based upon the inputs of the Education Department.

Tools and Techniques: The statistical techniques have been employed in the study, namely Percentages, Averages, Gender Parity Index, Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) and Correlation Co-efficient is used.

- 1) **Percentages:** It is used to arrive at share of enrolment by gender. It is calculated by dividing the male/female enrolment to the total enrolment multiplied by 100. It is also used to arrive at percentage of childrens attended to the number of children enrolled.
- 2) **Averages:** It is calculated by dividing the total sum of observations to that of the number of observations in a given series. It is used in the study wherever it's required.
- 3) **Correlation Co-efficient:** Karl Pearson's product moment correlation co-efficient technique has been used for testing the hypothesis. It measures the association and significant relationship between two variables. The value of correlation co-efficient lies between -1 to +1. In the study, SPSS is used for arriving at the value of Correlation co-efficient of attendance and academic score.

GENERAL INFORMATION OF STUDENTS IN RON TALUKA

In North Karnataka Gadag District of Ron Taluk has been selected for the present study. Statistics indicates that Ron Taluka has been denied by many speciality of government of Karnataka. Hence the researcher found it right to be reinvestigate the matter which is appropriate to be scientifically study in this Gadag District of Ron Taluka, five schools were selected located in different part of the Taluka. The names of the schools selected are given in below table 1.

Table 1: General Information of Sample Students in Ron

Name of the school / villages	Frequency	Percent
School : GHPKGS & MCS Belavanaki	26	25.00
School : 29080402301 - GHPS Koujageri	19	18.26
School : 29080405201 - GHPS Mudenagudi	24	23.07
School : 29080401101 - GHPS Hunagundi	35	33.65
Total	104	100

Source: Field Survey.

The above table is the details of the students from Ron Taluka, based on their general information. It is noticed that 33.65 per cent of the students belong to Hunagundi which is large school in terms of number of students whereas Koujgeri is the small school with 18.26 per cent.

Table 2: Share of Primary and Upper-Primary Classes in selected schools of Ron Taluka

Class	Frequency	Percent
IV	11	10.6
V	40	38.5
VI	30	28.8
VII	23	22.1
Total	104	100.0

Source: Field Survey.

The above table indicates that 38.5 per cent of the students belong to Vth class and 10.6 per cent belong to IVth class. Rest of the students that is 28.8 per cent and 22.1 per cent respectively belong to VIth and VIIth classes.

Table 3: Students Perception about MDM Programme

Sl. No.	Statements	Opinion (per cent)	
		Yes	No
1	Availability of food before coming to school.	100	00
2	Every day provision of MDM in school	90.4	9.6
3	Use of MDM by student's every day.	99	1
4	Sufficiency of food supplied through MDM.	100	00
5	Student's assistance in cooking.	46.2	53.8
6	Provision of Milk with MDM	100	00
7	Washing of individuals plates	96.2	3.8
8	Work involvement outside after school hours	19.2	80.8
9	Attendance in last month	55.8	44.2
10	Government officers visit to monitor the MDMP	95.2	1.9

Note: * Rest of 2.9 per cent are not aware about the visit of government officers.

Source: Field Survey.

In response to the question about availability of food before coming to the school in Ron Taluka 100 percent of students responded that every day they had food before coming to school. It is clear that here is no student who comes to school by their empty stomach but, all the students belong to rural area and 72 percent of their parents are BPL holders. Interestingly, the preference of consuming food among the students is different than what Mid-Day Meal is providing. All the respondents said that the food supplied to them is sufficient and milk is also provided along with MDM every day. Majority of the students with 90.4 percent satisfied with the regularity of the scheme. 46.3 per cent of the respondents were involved in assisting in various activities of preparation of MDM. 92.6 per cent of the respondents wash their plates by using mud and water. Unfortunately the attendance of the students was very poor with 55.8 per cent in the last month at the time of field survey. It has been reported that 19.2 per cent of the students involve in work after school hours either to assist their family or to earn income for their family. From the data it implies that the reason for low attendance and work participation of students is the child labour issue which has to be addressed so that the goal of universal education can be achieved within the desired time period.

Table 4: Regularity in Providing MDM in Ron

Name of the school	Yes	No	Total
GHPKGS & MCS Belavanaki	15.38	9.62	25
GHPS Hunagundi	33.65	0	33.65
GHPS Koujageri	18.27	0	18.27
GHPS Mudenagudi	23.08	0	23.08
Total	90.38	9.62	100

Note: Figures indicate percentage to total student respondents surveyed.

Source: Field Survey

There was some report which gives the information that students are assigned to do some works at school to get the Mid-Day Meal the same thing is happening in the present study area. The opinion is taken from 104 students from 5 different schools in that 47 students are working in school.

The question is asked to students about the regularity in school providing Mid-Day Meals the 90.38 per cent of the student responded yes and rest of 9.62 per cent are responded no because sometimes the ration will not reach the school in time. The same question is also asked and opinion is collected by the teachers, Head Masters of the different schools and even the parents and SDMC members, they say that there is a problem of ration sometime it will reach the school very late and also the weight will not be that much what it written on the bags of the rice. It is found that in one of the school namely GHPS Hunagundi there is discontinuation of Mid-Day Meal in the school from December 1st to 13th Dec 2013 due to no supply

of ration to that school.

Table 5: Type of MDM Work done by the students in Ron

Name of the school	Bringing Water	Chopping the Vegetables	Cleaning Room	Total
GHPKGS & MCS Belavanaki	23.40	0.00	0.00	23.40
GHPS Hunagundi	2.13	0.00	51.06	53.19
GHPS Koujageri	2.13	0.00	0.00	2.13
GHPS Mudenagudi	0.00	2.13	19.15	21.28
Total	27.66	2.13	70.21	100.00

Note: Figures indicate percentage to total student respondents surveyed.

Source: Field Survey

Above table gives the details of students doing work for MDM. Totally 104 students have been selected from 5 schools. Out of the total respondents 46.2 per cent of the students were helping in preparation of MDM in different activities such as bringing water, chopping the vegetables, and cleaning rooms at their respective schools. Remaining 53.8 per cent of the students are not doing any work at the school for MDM. Cleaning the rooms is the major work to the students with 70.21 per cent, followed by bringing water (27.66%) and chopping the vegetables (2.13%). From the data it is clear that significant percentage of the students is assisting MDM Programme at the grass root level. This kind of work participation by the students harms the learning presses of students; hence the alternative arrangement of required labour should be made.

Table 6 details of no of days absent to school

Name of the school	Less than 10 days	More than 10 days	Total
GHPKGS & MCS Belavanaki	20.69	1.72	22.41
GHPS Hunagundi	32.76	3.45	36.21
GHPS Koujageri	20.69	0.00	20.69
GHPS Mudenagudi	20.69	0.00	20.69
Total	94.83	5.17	100.00

Note: Figures are indicating percentage to total student respondents surveyed.

Source: Field Survey

Table 6 gives the details of no of days absent to school in order to calculate the attendance level of students in the study area. Hunagundi school shows highest percentage of absence that is 32.76 per cent falling under the scale of 1 to less than 10 days and also 3.45 percentage of absence falling under the scale of more than 10 days together accounting for 36.21 per cent. This is the clear indication that the

attendance level Hunagundi School is dissatisfactory. The remaining schools are recorded with moderate level of absence falling between the scale of 20.69 to 22.41 as a combined scale of less than 10 days and more than 10 days. In total the above information implies that Mid-Day Meal Programme though has made a remarkable progress in terms of attendance but still the percentage of attendance has to be further improved.

Table 7: Reasons for not attending school among students in Ron Taluka

Name of the school	Agri Labour	Fair	Family Function	Family Work	Fever	Migrated for Work	Marriage Function	Stomach Problem	Total
GHPKGS & MCS Belavanaki	8.62	0	1.72	6.9	5.17	0	0	0	22.4
GHPS Hunagundi	12.07	3.5	0	8.62	10.3	1.72	0	0	36.2
GHPS Koujageri	3.45	0	0	12.07	1.72	0	1.72	1.72	20.7
GHPS Mudenagudi	8.62	5.2	0	6.9	0	0	0	0	20.7
Total	32.76	8.6	1.72	34.48	17.2	1.72	1.72	1.72	100

Note: Figures are indicating percentage to total student respondents surveyed.

Source: Field Survey

Students have been absent for a many reasons that is shown in this table. The reasons are like agricultural labour, attending fair, family function, family works, fever, marriage function, stomach problem.

Due to agricultural labour, 32.76 per cent of the students are absent to the school and to attend the fair 8.6 per cent of the students are absent. It is followed by family function (34.48 per cent) and 17.2 per cent due to fever and then marriage function (1.72 per cent). Same per cent is seen across migrated for labour works and those who are left because of stomach pain. The highest number of absentees is identified for the reason of family function that is 34.48 per cent and agricultural labour 32.76 per cent which is around half of the respondents. This is clear that only because of lack of awareness among the parents about the wellbeing of their own children students remain absent to school.

MDM AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Table 8 shows the academic score achieved by the students in the selected schools in Ron Taluka. It is found that nearly 33.65 per cent of them have scored first class and 32.69 per cent of them have just passed.

Table 8: Academic Score of students in Ron

Name of the school	Don't Know	First Class	Pass	Second Class	Total
GHPKGS & MCS Belavanaki	0.00	7.69	12.50	4.81	25.00
GHPS Hunagundi	10.58	8.65	6.73	7.69	33.65
GHPS Koujageri	0.00	7.69	9.62	0.96	18.27
GHPS Mudenagudi	6.73	9.62	3.85	2.88	23.08
Total	17.31	33.65	32.69	16.35	100.00

Note: Figures are indicating percentage to total respondents surveyed.

Source: Field Survey.

Table 9: Results of Correlation Co-efficient between Attendance and Academic Score

Variables		Attendance	Academic score
Attendance	Pearson Correlation	1	0.241*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.014
Academic score	Pearson Correlation	0.241*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.014	

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

This table 9 shows that there is a low degree of positive co-relationship between the academic performance and attendance of the students in the study area. The value of correlation stood at 0.241.

CONCLUSION

There is significant association between the attendance of the beneficiaries and their academic performance among selected schools of Ron Taluka. After implementation of the MDM programme in the government schools, the results of the students are increased tremendously. The MDM officials visit the schools every month to monitor the programme. Still Mid-Day Meal Programme has to go a long way to prove that MDM Programme is the best Programme to universalisation of primary education. For this the stake holders like, Parents, Teachers, Government officers should meet their responsibilities.

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