

Vol 4 Issue 8 Feb 2015

ISSN No :2231-5063

International Multidisciplinary
Research Journal

Golden Research
Thoughts

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RNI MAHMUL/2011/38595

ISSN No.2231-5063

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GRT **REQUIREMENT OF MID-DAY MEAL
PROGRAMME FOR SECONDARY LEVEL (9-10)
SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THE RURAL AREAS IN WEST BENGAL.**

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Abstract:-This paper attempts to analyze the requirement of mid-day meal programme of students in the secondary schools in West Bengal. The study covers 80 students, 40 teachers of different secondary schools and 40 guardians in rural areas. The results of Chi-square(2) test revealed that mid-day meal program is also required for the students of secondary level (9-10) in the Rural area secondary schools in West Bengal.

Keywords:mid-day meal.

INTRODUCTION

The Midday Meal Scheme is the well known name for school meal programme in India which started in the 1960s. It includes provision of lunch free of cost to school-children on all working days. According to current statistics, 42.5% of the children under 5 are underweight (Livemint.com, 2012). This is due to simple reasons such as not using iodized salt. "India is home to the world's largest food insecure population, with more than 200 million people who are hungry," India State Hunger Index (ISHI) said, adding that the country's poor performance is driven by its high levels of child under-nutrition and poor calorie count. It is further noted that "The child malnutrition of India is higher than most countries in Sub-Saharan Africa" (World Bank, 2003. A report released as part of the 2009 Global hunger Index ranks India at 65 out of 84 countries. The 2008 report says that India has more people suffering hunger – a figure above 200 million – than any other country in the world, it says. The report also says "improving child nutrition is of utmost urgency in most Indian states" (UNDP, 1999). So, mid-day meal program (MDP) is a right solution in this respect. Most of the studies revealed that there exist a positive relationship between mid-day meal program and enrolment and attendance of students in schools including education and health outcomes of students.

In West Bengal mid-day meal program is running successfully in every secondary schools up to class-8.

But there is no mid-day meal programme for Secondary level (9-10) students. Students from different family back ground (specially from BPL, SC, ST) faces problems when they do not get any mid-day meal at school. So they are forced to do work for earning money which affect their daily school attendance and of course their academic performances.

OBJECTIVES

To find out the requirement of MDP for the secondary level (9-10) students in the Rural area secondary schools in West Bengal.

HYPOTHESES

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the opinion of Guardians, Teachers and Students about the association of mid-day meal Program and student's academic achievement in rural secondary school.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the opinion of Guardians, Teachers and Students about the association between mid-day meal Program and daily attendance of students in rural secondary schools.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference between the opinion of Guardians, Teachers and Students about the requirement of mid-day meal Program for the secondary level (9-10) students in the Rural area secondary schools in West Bengal.

Data Source and Methodology

The primary data has been collected from 80 students and 40 guardians, 40 teachers in secondary schools of rural areas of different districts in West Bengal. A self made structured questionnaire was used by considering different anxiety dimension like economic background, educational background, and teaching strategy. Chi-square (χ^2) test has been used to examine the relationship between mid-day meal and academic achievement of students.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Mid-day Meal Programme and Academic Achievement of Students:

A Non-Parametric Analysis:

The present study has attempted to make an assessment of perceptions of the guardians of students, teachers and school authorities about the role of mid-day meal program in academic performance of upper primary level school's students in terms of non-parametric "Chi-square" (χ^2) analysis.

Opinions of different Respondents:

Table-1

Respondents	Yes	Uncertain	No	Total
Guardians & Teachers	62	4	14	80
Students	64	5	11	80
Total	126	9	25	160

Testing of the Hypothesis

Table-2

Variables compared	Calculated (χ^2) value	Remark
Mid-day Meal program. and student's academic achievement	0.50	Not Significant at 5 % and 1 % level of significance.

It should be noted (Vide table- 2) that the observed value of Chi-square (χ^2) i.e., 0.50 is less than the critical values both at 5 % and 1 % level of significance, therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. So, we can conclude that there exists significant association between mid-day meal program and academic performance of students. This view is similar to the study of Dreze & Goyal (2003), Paul P.K.& Mondal N. K which indicate that there is strong association between mid-day meal program and academic achievement of students.

Mid-day Meal Programme and Daily School's attendance of Student:

A Non-Parametric Analysis:

The present study has attempted to make an assessment of perceptions of the guardians of students, teachers and school authorities about the role of mid-day meal program in Daily School's attendance of Student of upper primary level school's in terms of non-parametric „Chi-square? analysis.

Opinions of different Respondents:

Table-3

Respondents	Yes	Uncertain	No	Total
Guardians & Teachers	61	11	8	80
Students	64	9	7	80
Total	125	20	15	160

Testing of the Hypothesis:

Table-4

Variables compared	Calculated(χ^2) value	Remark
Mid-day Meal Programme and Daily School's attendance of Student	0.33	Not Significant at 5 % and 1 % level of significance.

It should be noted (Vide table- 2) that the observed value of Chi-square (χ^2) i.e., 0.33 is less than the critical values both at 5 % and 1 % level of significance, therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. So, we can conclude that there exists significant association between mid-day meal program and Daily attendance of Student. This view is similar to the study of Paul P.K. & Mondal N. K which indicate that there is strong association between mid-day meal program and academic achievement of students.

Requirement of Mid-day Meal Programme for class 9-10 level students :

A Non-Parametric Analysis :

The present study has attempted to make an assessment of perceptions of the guardians of students, teachers and school authorities about the Requirement of Mid-day Meal Programme for class 9-10 level students in terms of non-parametric Chi-square (χ^2) analysis. The opinions of the respondents collected from the field survey can be expressed in the following table .

Table-5
Opinions of different Respondents:

Respondents	Yes	Uncertain	No	Total
Guardians & Teachers	68	4	8	80
Students	70	4	6	80
Total	138	8	14	160

Testing of the Hypothesis

Table-6

Variables compared	Calculated (χ^2) value	Remark
Requirement of Mid-day Meal Programme for class 9-10 level students	0.31	Not Significant at 5 % and 1 % level of significance.

It should be noted (Vide table-) that the observed value of Chi-square (χ^2) i.e., 0.31 is less than the critical values both at 5 % and 1 % level of significance, therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. So, we can conclude that Mid-day Meal Programme is very much required for secondary level (9-10) school students in the Rural areas in West Bengal.

CONCLUSION

We can conclude that mid-day meal programme (MDP) has a positive impact on students residing in the rural areas of West Bengal. The result of chi-square test revealed a significant association between mid-day meal program and academic achievement of students. Furthermore, mid-day meal program has some other benefits like removal of classroom hunger, social and gender equality and formation of good habits of students (like washing their own hands and utensils before meal) other than academic achievement in school. Chi-square (χ^2) test also revealed that Mid-day Meal Programme is very much required for secondary level (9-10) school students in the Rural areas in West Bengal to enhance the academic achievement of students.

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