

## Impact of mid-day meal scheme on enrolment and dropout rate of students at primary level

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### Abstract

For universalization of elementary education govt. of India launched different programs from was started in 1960. In this study the attempt is made to analyze the impact of mid-day meal programs on enrolment and dropout rate of students at primary level. The study was conducted in district Pulwama and Srinagar data was collected from 200 respondents of primary school students both in urban and rural areas using random sampling technique. The responses were collected and evaluated to access the impact of mid-day meal scheme an enrolment and dropout rate of students at primary level. The data was analyzed by applying chi-square test and processed in the form of tables. The findings of the study revealed that mid-day meal scheme has a significant impact on enrolment and dropout rate of students at primary level.

**Keywords:** mid-day meal, enrolment, dropout, primary level

### 1. Introduction

Education plays a vital role in one's life. Though, the education of a child starts with the home itself, yet, the primary school is the first step towards formal schooling in India. India has one of the largest child-population of the world. Half of them are disadvantaged and belong to the families which are economically impoverished. They cannot afford good health care facilities and expensive educational institutes. The govt. of India started the mid-day meal scheme in 1960's to provide nutritional food and a step towards universalization of education. It includes provision of lunch free of cost to school-children in all working days. According to statistics, 42.55% of the children under 5 are underweight (Livemint.com, 2012). India is home to the world's largest food insecure population, with more than 200 million people who are hungry. The child mal nutrition 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. So mid-day meal scheme is a right solution in this respect. The objectives of the scheme are-protecting children from classroom hunger, increasing school enrollment and attendance and addressing mal-nutrition. Various studies have been conducted in India about mid -day meal scheme and students achievement in schools (Dreze and Goyal, 2003, Khera, 2002, Mondal *et al.*, 2007) <sup>[1, 2, 4]</sup>. Most of the studies revealed that there exist a positive relationship between mid-day meal scheme and attendance of students in schools including education and health outcomes of students. Though attempts have also been made to examine the impact of mid-day meal on students' academic achievement but no systematic effort has yet been made to look in to the impact of mid-day meal of enrollment and dropout rate in a comprehensive manner.

### 2. Methods and Procedures

The purpose of this research study is to find out the impact of

mid-day meal scheme on enrollment and dropout rate of students at primary level. The study was undertaken in two districts-Pulwama and Srinagar. The data has been collected from 200 students and hundred guardians, teachers and authorities and primary level schools both in urban and rural areas. By using random sampling technique. A self-made question are was used by considering dimensions like economic background, educational background and curriculum. Chi-square test has been used to examine the relationship between mid-day meal and enrollment & dropout rate of students. In order to test the significance of difference between mean scores t-test was used.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1 Mid-day meal scheme and school enrollment of students: Students t-test analysis

**Table 1:** Attitude of students on school enrollment in terms of calculated mean, SD, t-values and level of statistical significances.

Students	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	Significance level	
					5%	1%
Urban	100	31.45	9.40	2.84	P>0.05	P>0.01
Rural	100	29.45	8.61			

The table indicates that although these exists little variation regarding mean and SD of urban and rural students but in respect of t-test the calculated value of 't' is 2.84 still larger than the tabulated value both at 5% and 1% level of significance. Therefore, the rural students have been benefited more than the urban students in terms of mid-day meal on enrollment taken in to consideration all the surveyed primary schools in Pulwama and Srinagar districts: so there is a strong association and enrollment of students at primary level.

### 3.2 Mid-day meal scheme and dropout rate of students: student’s t-test analysis.

**Table 2:** Attitude of students on dropout rate /wastage from schools in terms of calculated mean, SD, t-value and level of significance

Students	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	Significance level	
					5%	1%
Urban	100	31.28	8.30	2.78	P>0.05	P>0.01
Rural	100	29.30	7.13			

Table 2 depicts the calculated values of Mean, SD and t-values of dropout of urban and rural students. This means that although there exists little variation regarding mean and SD of urban and rural students, but in respect of t-value i.e, 2.78 the estimated value is the larger than the tabular values both 5% & 1% level of significance. Therefore, there is no doubt to say that rural students are benefitted more in case of diminishing dropout rate by mid-day meal scheme ,taken into consideration all the surveyed schools in Pulwama and Srinagar districts.

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### 3.3 Mid-day meal scheme and enrollment & dropout: Multiple regression analysis.

**Table 3:** enrollment and dropout of students as impact assessment of mid- day meal scheme

Variable	Co-efficient	t-value
Constant	3181.428	2.234
Student Enrolment	0.044	2.123
Student Dropout	-0.059	-0.923

$R^2 = 0.504, F=9.304$

It is clear from table 3 that co-efficient of enrollment is found to be positively associated with the mid-day meal while co-efficient of dropout is negatively co related to mid- day meal scheme. That means the more the success of mid- day meal, greater would be enrollment and lower will be the dropout rate of students at primary level.

### 4. Conclusion

The research study explicitly concludes that mid-day meal has a positive impact on student enrollment, attendance and dropout rate of students which is essential for universalization of elementary education particularly in rural areas where illiteracy rate is high due to wastage and stagnation and other related causes. The study revealed that mid-day meal scheme plays and important role in reducing dropout rate and increasing enrollment. The result of chi-square test revealed a significant association between mid- day meal scheme and student enrollment and dropout rate of students. The result of multiple regression model further indicated that there has been positive influence of mid-day meal and student enrollment and dropout rate of students.

Furthermore, mid-day meal scheme has some other benefits like removal of classroom hunger, formation of good habits like washing their hands and utensils before meal, reducing mal nutrition, developing physic and social equity other than enrollment and dropout rate. But in order to satisfactory results, the govt. and concerned authorities should take extra care so that the basic objectives of the scheme may be served.

### 5. Reference

1. Dreze, Jean and Aparajita Goyal, Future of Mid-Day Meals, economic and political weakly, 2003.