

# **Problems and Prospects of Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MMS) in Telanagana State**

**Dr. Etikala Purushotham**

*Associate Professor*

*Dept. of Economics, Osmania University, Hyd.*

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## **Abstract:**

*The aim of the study is examining the problems of prospects of Mid-day Meals Scheme in Siddipet district. Study used mutli-stage sampling method. The primary data have been collected during the 2018-19 academic year. Most of the schools have been facing a different problem. Therefore, Government should provide LPG connection to each school or provide solar cooking system to save further degradation of forest or vegetation. Every school should have kitchen shed consisting of proper ventilations, proper height, light, water and with store facility. The location of kitchen shed should be away from the classroom or it cannot be seen from classroom, which will help the students to concentrate on education rather than watching kitchen. Every essential commodity like salt, chilli, daal, edible oil, gas etc. should be supplied by the government along with the foodgrains to the schools. This process will decrease the total cost of the program. Drinking water contains unsafe levels of contaminants, it can cause health effects on students, such as gastrointestinal illnesses, nervous system and chronic diseases such as cancer. Therefore, the government should provide safe drinking water to the students.*

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Date of Submission: 05-05-2022

Date of Acceptance: 20-05-2022

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## **I. Introduction**

Education plays an important role in every aspect in the society. It is the main instrument for disseminating the accomplishments of human civilization and essential for civic order and good citizenship, and also it contributes to social, cultural and economic development of a country. Education produces the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes which are necessary for the development of society and economy. Further, maintains of higher living standards, better health and nutrition, increased productivity and sustained economic growth and the reduction of poverty and social and economic inequality and good governance all depend on widespread education. Therefore, these multiple rules of education make education a key area of public policy in all developing countries. Hence, the Government of India launched Mid-Day Meal Scheme to boost to universalization of school education by increasing enrolment, attendance and simultaneously, improving the nutritional status (quality of food) of students in primary and upper primary classes.

## **II. Importance of MMS Study:**

Mid-Day Meal Program is the world's largest school children feeding program satisfying the hunger of lacks of students per day throughout the country. The Government of India launched Midday Meal Program in 15th August, 1995 with the objective of giving a boost to universalization of education by increasing enrolment, attendance and retention and simultaneously improving the nutritional status of students in schools. Midday Meal Scheme is one of the pioneer work started for the betterment of deprived section in the education and fight against the under-nutrition problem, especially, in Below Poverty Line (BPL) families. This is a good scheme to attract the students towards Government schools. But, due to lack of proper monitoring of higher officials and practical implementation of the program, it is really unable to flourish correctly. Earlier few studies focused on problems and prospects of MMS in various states. Since that, there is need to do a comprehensive and grass root level study on problems and prospects of MMS in Telangana State. Therefore, the present study is examining the problems and prospects of MMS in Siddipet District, Telangana State.

## **III. Objective and Methodology**

The aim of the study is examining the problems of prospects of Mid-day Meals Scheme in sample area. Siddipet district has been selected purposively. For sample data collection, used mutli-stage sampling method. There are 22 mandals in Siddipet District, out of that, two mandals (Maddur and Kondapak) have been selected randomly. 5 schools were selected randomly from each mandal. In the present study, students are the main

beneficiaries of the programme. Therefore, 10 samples have been collected from each school. Total sample size is 100. All the sample students are from 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> standard. At the same time, from each school, one parent, one cook and one helper have been considered to evaluate the problems, thereof, 30 samples have collected for this category. The primary data have been collected during the 2018-19 academic year.

#### IV. Results and Discussion

**Table:1 Drinking Water Facility in the School:**

Sl. No.	Drinking Water facility	No. of the Schools	Percentage
1	Govt. tap water directly used	1	10.00
2	Borewell water directly used	9	90.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Study.

Drinking water facility in the sample schools is given in table:1 The researcher visited 10 sample schools where the main (90.00 percent) source of water was Government Borewells. Only in one school where the main (10.00 percent) source of water was Government tap water. Interestingly, no school in the study area is using filtered water for their students. For drinking, cooking and washing utensils, these Government Borewells and Tap water is used directly in all the 10 sample schools. It is concluded that lack of clean water has more serious effects on children's academic performance and attendance rates. If drinking water contains unsafe levels of contaminants, it can cause health effects in students, such as gastrointestinal illnesses and chronic diseases such as cancer.

**Table:2 Availability of Toilets for Boys and Girls in Sample Schools**

Sl. No.	Toilets	No. of the Schools	Percentage
1	Separate toilets for boys and girls	5	50.00
2	Not separate for boys and girls	5	50.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Study.

The availability of toilets for boys and girls in sample schools are presented in table-2 It can be observed that all the sample schools have toilets in their schools. But, 50.00 percent of sample schools have their separate toilets for boys and girls and remaining 50.00 percent of the schools have not separate toilets for boys and girls. Therefore, female student and teachers are facing problem in this regards.

**Table-3: Availability of Kitchen for Cooking of Midday Meal**

Sl. No.	Cooking Place	No. of the Schools	Percentage
1	Kitchen	2	20.00
2	Open place	8	80.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Study.

The availability of kitchens for cooking of Midday Meal in sample schools is given in table-3. It shows that only 20.00 percent of the sample schools have kitchen shed for cooking Midday Meal and 80.00 percent of the schools cooks Midday Meal in open place of their school premises. Therefore, the students are getting more problems while cooking and it is also impact on their studies.

**Table-4: Utensils for Midday Meal in the School**

Sl. No.	Utensils Availability	No. of the Schools	Percentage
1	Sufficient	9	90.00
2	Not sufficient	1	10.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Study.

Table-4 gives the information about cooking and serving utensils for Midday Meal in selected schools. It reveals that 90.00 percent of the sample schools have sufficient cooking utensils for Midday Meal and only 10.00 percent of the schools have not sufficient cooking utensils.

**Table-5: Cooking Fuel for Midday Meal in the School**

Sl. No.	Cooking Fuel	No. of the Schools	Percentage
1	Firewood	10	100.00
2	Gas	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Study.

Table-5 presents the details about cooking fuel for Midday Meal in sample schools. It can be seen in the table that all (100 percent) the sample schools used firewood as fuel for cooking Midday Meal and firewood is common fuel in the rural areas in Telangana. No sample school is using cooking gas for cooking midday meal because it is expensive. That is why most of the sample schools in study area prefer firewood as cooking fuel which is easily found in the locality.

**Table-6: Dining Hall for Distribution of Midday Meal**

Sl. No.	Dining Hall	No. of the Schools	Percentage
1	Yes	--	--
2	No	10	100.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Study.

Table-6 shows the information of dining hall for distribution of Midday Meal in schools. It reveals that no sample school have separate dining place for distribution of Midday Meal in the study area.

**Table-7: Availability of Store Room in the School**

Sl. No.	Store Room	No. of the Schools	Percentage
1	Yes	3	30.00
2	No	7	70.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Study.

The availability of store rooms in sample schools is presented in table-7. It can be found from the table that only 30.00 percent of the sample schools have store rooms to storage of foodgrains and remaining 70.00 percent of the schools do not have store rooms in the study area.

**Table-8: Availability of Cook/Helpers for Midday Meal**

Sl. No.	Cook/Helpers	No. of the Schools	Percentage
1	1 Cook & Helper	9	90.00
2	2 Cooks	1	10.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Study.

The availability of Cook/Helpers for Midday Meal is shown in table-8. It is observed that 90.00 percent of the sample schools have 1 cook & 1 helper and only 10.00 percent of the schools have 2 cooks & no helper in the study area.

### Perceptions

Teachers are the functionaries of the Midday Meal Scheme. They are responsible for the implementation of majority of the aspects of the MDM scheme. Receiving and storage of food grains, condiments to supervision of cooking and serving of meals, maintenance of records and handling of medical emergency in case of school accidents while cooking or serving meals are some of important responsibilities. Thus, their feedback is significant.

**Table-9: Perception of the Teacher about the Funds Provided is Sufficient to Ensure Quality Food**

Sl. No.	Response	No. of the Teachers	Percentage
1	Yes	18	90.00
2	No	2	10.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey.

With regard to the question whether the funds provided by Government is sufficient to provide food quality food for the children. For this 90.00 percent of the respondents say that it is sufficient while only 10.00 percent of them opined 'no', because they do not have kitchen garden and no support from the SDMC members. Their opinion of the teacher about the funds provided is sufficient to ensure quality food is shown in table-9.

**Table-10: Opinion about Sufficient Infrastructure for Midday Meal**

Sl. No.	Response	No. of the Teachers	Percentage
1	Yes	14	70.00
2	No	6	30.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey.

The infrastructure facilities are more important to implement Midday Meal scheme. The opinion of teachers about sufficient infrastructure for MDM is given in table-10. It is observed that 70.00 percent of the teachers say that infrastructure like kitchen, utensils, storage etc. is available is sufficient while 30.00 percent of them opined that the infrastructure to keep kitchen items available is not adequate.

**Table-11: Opinion about the Rating on Quality of the Foodgrains Supplied for Midday Meal**

Sl. No.	Response	No. of the Teachers	Percentage
1	Very good	2	10.00
2	Good	3	15.00
3	Average	15	79.67
4	Poor	1	5.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey.

There is always a complaint that the foodgrains supplied by Food Corporation of India (FCI) are not good quality but often it is claimed that they supply good quality for Midday Meal. The opinion about the rating on quality of the food grains supplied for MDM is presented in table-11. It is observed that 10.00 percent of the teachers opined that the quality of food grains supplied for MDM is very good while 15.00 percent of them reported that it is good only. It is also observed that 75.00 percent of the beneficiaries replied that it is of average quality while only 5.00 percent of the teachers responded that the quality of the food grains received for MDM is of poor quality.

**Table-12: Perception of the Teachers about the Quality of Food Provided under Midday Meal**

Sl. No.	Response	No. of the Teachers	Percentage
1	Very good	1	5.00
2	Good	10	50.00
3	Average	7	35.00
4	Poor	2	10.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey.

The quality of food provided to the school students is one of the most important tasks in Midday Meal Scheme. The perception of the teachers about the quality of food of MDM is presented in table-12. It is observed that 50.00 percent of the teachers opined that the quality of food is good while 35.00 percent of them have reported that it is average. It is also observed that 10.00 percent of the beneficiaries said that it is poor quality whereas only 5.00 percent of the teachers responded that the quality of the food is very good.

**Table-13: Opinion of the Students about Quality of the Meal**

Sl. No.	Response	No. of the Students	Percentage
1	Very good	130	43.33
2	Good	104	34.67

3	Poor	66	22.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

Source : Field Survey.

The next factor which manipulates the attendance as well as enrolment in schools is the quality of the Midday Meals. The data mentioned in table-13 indicates that 43.33 percent of the children have admitted that the quality of the meal is very good whereas 34.67 percent of the students express that the quality of the meal is healthy. Hence, out of 300 students, 78 percent students have responded that the quality of the meal is good and only 22 percent of students replied that the quality is poor.

**Table14: Opinion of Students about Hand-wash Facility after Eating in the School**

Sl. No.	Response	No. of the Students	Percentage
1	Yes	290	96.67
2	No	10	3.33
	<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey.

The opinion of students about hand-wash facility after eating in the school is presented in table-14. It reveals that 96.67 percent of the students pinioned that there is hand-wash facility in the sample school premises while only 3.33 percent of them said that there is no hand-wash facility in their schools

**Table-15: Problems Faced by Students in Midday Meal**

Sl. No.	Problems	No. of the Teachers	Percentage
1	Poor drinking water facility	164	54.67
2	Lack of toilet facility	136	45.33
	<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey.

The students are facing some problems while eating, washing their utensils after they eat and using washrooms in the time implementing Midday Meal Scheme. The problems faced by them in implementing MDM are given in table-15. It reveals that 54.67 percent of the students opinioned that the sufficient water was not available in the schools to drink as well as to wash the utensils and 45.33 percent of them responded that there are not proper washroom facilities for boy and girls in the school.

**Table-16: Perception of Cooks and Helpers about Teacher's Involvement in Cooking Process**

Sl. No.	Teachers Involvement	No. of the Cooks & Helpers	Percent
1	Yes	2	10.00
2	No	18	90.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

Source : Field Survey.

Table-16 shows the information of perception of cooks and helpers about teacher's involvement in cooking process. It can be seen from the table that only 10.00 percent of the cooks and helpers replied that the teachers are involved in the process of cooking while 90.00 percent of them responded that no teachers are involved in cooking process

**Table-17: Perceptions of Cooks and Helpers about the Cooking Cost Provided by the Government**

Sl. No.	Response	No. of the Cooks & Helpers	Percent
1	Sufficient	1	5.00
2	Not Sufficient	19	95.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

Source : Field Survey.

The perceptions of cooks and helpers about the cooking cost provided by the government are shown in table-17. The government of Telangana has been providing cooking cost Rs.7 per child per day. According to majority of cooks and helpers (95.00 percent), the cooking cost provided by the government is not sufficient. Only 5.00 percent of the beneficiaries replied that the cooking cost is sufficient in the study area.

**Table-18: Opinion of Cooks and Helpers about the Releasing of Cooking Cost by Government in Time:**

Sl. No.	Response	No. of the Cooks & Helpers	Percent
1	Release in time	2	10.00
2	Not release in time	18	90.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

Source : Field Survey.

The opinions of cooks and helpers about the releasing of cooking cost by the government in time are presented in table-18. It reveals that 90.00 percent of the cooks and helpers reported that the government is not releasing cooking cost in time while only 10.00 percent of the respondents replied that the government is releasing cooking cost in time in the study area.

### V. Conclusion and Suggestions

The present study is concentrated on Midday Meals Scheme in Siddipet district of Telangana state. Mid-Day Meal Program is the world's largest school children feeding program satisfying the hunger of lacks of students per day throughout the country. Midday Meal scheme which focused on various aspects such as infrastructure, enrolment, attendance, drop-out, nutritional status, implementation of MDM Scheme, opinions and involvement of functionaries and beneficiaries of Schools. The School Teachers are the important functionaries/observers of the Midday Meals Scheme and they are responsible for the implementation of the scheme. To examine the various issues related to infrastructure, implementation of the program, other arrangements of the scheme, quality & quantity of food, impact of Midday Meals Scheme on the academic environment of the students in Schools Midday Meal in-charges are the functionaries of the Midday Meal Scheme and they are responsible for implementation of majority of the aspects of the Midday Meal program e.g. receiving and storage of food grains, supervision of cooking and serving of meals, maintenance of the records and handling of medical emergency in case of school accidents while cooking or serving meals. Students are more important and ultimate beneficiaries of the Midday Meal Program. They are the reason for the implementation of the Midday Meal Scheme. Their opinions & views and problems faced by them are importance for the achievement of the scheme. The drinking water facility in the sample schools is given. The researcher visited 10 sample schools where the main (90.00 percent) source of water was Government Borewells. Only in one school where the main (10.00 percent) source of water was Government tap water. Interestingly, no school in the study area is using filtered water for their students. For drinking, cooking and washing utensils, these Government Borewells and Tap water is used directly in all the 10 sample schools. It is concluded that lack of clean water has more serious effects on children's academic performance and attendance rates. If drinking water contains unsafe levels of contaminants, it can cause health effects in students, such as gastrointestinal illnesses and chronic diseases such as cancer. The availability of toilets for boys and girls in sample schools are presented. It can be observed that all the sample schools have toilets in their schools. The availability of kitchens for cooking of Midday Meal in sample schools is also given. It shows that only 20.00 percent of the sample schools have kitchen shed for cooking Midday Meal and 80.00 percent of the schools cooks Midday Meal in open place of their school premises. Therefore, the students are getting more problems while cooking and it is also impact on their studies. The information about cooking and serving utensils for Midday Meal in selected schools is given. No sample school is using cooking gas for cooking midday meal because it is expensive. That is why most of the sample schools in study area prefer firewood as cooking fuel which is easily found in the locality. The information of dining hall for distribution of Midday Meal in schools is shown. It reveals that no sample school have separate dining place for distribution of Midday Meal in the study area. The availability of store rooms in sample schools is presented. It can be found that only 30.00 percent of the sample schools have store rooms to storage of foodgrains and remaining 70.00 percent of the schools do not have store rooms in the study area. Teachers are the functionaries of the Midday Meal Scheme. They are responsible for the implementation of majority of the aspects of the MDM scheme. Receiving and storage of food grains, condiments to supervision of cooking and serving of meals, maintenance of records and handling of medical emergency in case of school accidents while cooking or serving meals are some of important responsibilities. Thus, their feedback is significant. Teacher's views and opinion towards Midday Meal Scheme were studied by selecting a sample of 20 teachers (Headmasters & MDM In-Charges) working in Zilla Parishad High Schools of Siddipet District were analyzed and the results have been discussed in the following pages. With regard to the question whether the funds provided by Government is sufficient to provide food quality food for the children. For this 90.00 percent of the respondents say that it is sufficient while only 10.00 percent of them opined 'no', because they do not have kitchen garden and no support from the SDMC members. The perception of teachers about drinking water facility in the sample schools is given. It shows that 85.00 percent of the teachers opinioned that the main sources of water were Government Borewells. Only 15.00 percent of them said the source of water was Government tap. Interestingly, no school in the study area is using filtered water for their students. For drinking, cooking and washing utensils, these Government

Borewells and Tap water is used directly in all the sample schools. It is concluded that lack of clean water has more serious effects on children academic performance & attendance rates. If drinking water contains unsafe levels of contaminants, it can cause health effects in students, such as gastrointestinal illnesses, nervous system and chronic diseases such as cancer. Suggestions of the Study is; Government should provide LPG connection to each school or provide solar cooking system to save further degradation of forest or vegetation. Every school should have kitchen shed consisting of proper ventilations, proper height, light, water and with store facility. The location of kitchen shed should be away from the classroom or it cannot be seen from classroom, which will help the students to concentrate on education rather than watching kitchen. Every essential commodity like salt, chilli, daal, edible oil, gas etc. should be supplied by the government along with the foodgrains to the schools. This process will decrease the total cost of the program. Government Borewells and Tap water is used directly in the schools for drinking, cooking and washing utensils. It is concluded that Lack of clean water has more serious effects on student's academic performance and attendance rates. If drinking water contains unsafe levels of contaminants, it can cause health effects in students, such as gastrointestinal illnesses, nervous system and chronic diseases such as cancer. Therefore, the government should provide safe drinking water to the students.

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Dr. Etikala Purushotham. "Problems and Prospects of Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MMS) in Telanagana State." *IOSR Journal of Economics and Finance (IOSR-JEF)*, 13(03), 2022, pp. 53-59.