CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS
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CHAPTER-V
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Mid-day-Meal scheme is to feed the students jointly by the Central and the State government. The question of success and failures, good and bad, laxity and improvements are inherent from day one of the beginning of this scheme. Mid-day meal scheme in the schools of India was envisaged to stop hunger and to improve enrolment. Children come to school and meal is served but quite often terrible incidences take place. Sometimes hygiene plays the devil role while sometimes adulteration which cause all the harms reportedly finding pesticides etc in the meals. Several investigating teams of the doctors found organo-phosphorus compounds and mostly found insecticides in the meals served in the schools. The lunch killed 27 children (between the age of 4-12 years) in the government primary school of Chhapra district in Bihar about 80 kms from the state capital Patna, while more than a dozen were critical. Now the question arises—Why are the children dying of the food which is meant to nourish them and to draw them to schools? Groundswell’s opinion on mid-day meals seem to suggest a host of wrongs that happen in the name of providing food to children. The diversion of funds and food grains, teachers preparing meals and spending less time in teaching and lack of food hygiene, underlining institutional apathy and lack of concerted efforts in the implementation of this scheme were also flagged in the parliamentary committee report. The primary schools’ enrolment increased but the largest and the most robust increment came from classes 1st and 2nd. Enrolment in classes 4th and 5th remained considerably less responsive to the scheme by suggesting that though effective at encouraging early school enrolment the scheme may be less effective at retaining students or encouraging re-enrolment in upper primary school. A worrying observation of the mid-day meal’s impact on learning: the report cited anecdotal evidence that the administration of mid-day meals distracts from teaching.

The delivery of mid-day meal scheme may be improved by partnering it with the private entities and the Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and by including chikki, sukhdi, fortified nutrition bar, and fruit in the weekly menu. This will not only complement nutritional intake but will offer safety and variety also and by reducing the distribution time may offer more contact
time between the students and the teachers for studies. Economist Amartya Sen had opposed the proposals to serve biscuits and pre-packaged food to pre-school children by questioning its nutritional value. Despite all the flaws the way to go on mid-day meals is forward and not backward. The report argues that the possibilities of this program far outweigh the problems involved in its operation. One of the highlights of the study had been the tremendous impact of mid-day meals on the parental aspiration of acquiring education by their children. Despite of the limited resources and the absence of supervision a clear chain of responsibility and accountability among teachers and the community will bring about accountability.

This chapter consists of conclusion, implications, recommendations and suggestions regarding the scheme on the basis of primary and secondary data collected from the 40 different schools of Western Uttar Pradesh.

5.1. Summary
This study found that the mid-day meal scheme has been extremely successful in raising the enrolment rates particularly among the children of the lowest socio-economic backgrounds. The paper says, “The effect was more pronounced for those with the least educated parents and lowest economic statuses. The scheme improved the enrolment and the retention of children in the schools and also checked drop-out rates. However, the changing educational profiles, nature of problems encountered and the rationale behind the scheme should be re-examined.

This research study measured the level of enrolment and retention with and without Mid Day Meal in the government primary schools. As a consequence several other things also came into the scanner of the researcher. The concerns of stakeholders of the MDM scheme were the most important outcomes. This research has also evaluated the efforts of the functionaries and its direct and indirect impacts over the scheme. The study was sampled out in the Western Uttar Pradesh to inculcate the idea of its success and failures. The objectives of the study were as follows:
5.1.1. Objectives

1. To investigate the opinions of the stakeholders (teachers, parents, headmasters, Grampradhans, ABSAs) regarding the impact of Mid-Day-Meal scheme on the enrolment of the students in the government primary schools.

2. To find the effects on the number of enrolment of children in the government primary schools in 6-14 years of age due to Mid-Day Meal scheme in comparison to the enrolment without Mid-Day Meal scheme.

3. To investigate the opinions of the stakeholders (students, teachers, parents, headmasters, Grampradhans, ABSAs) regarding the impact of Mid-Day-Meal scheme on the retention of enrolled students in the government primary schools.

4. To find the effects on the strength of retention of children in the government primary schools in 6-14 years of age due to Mid-Day meal scheme in comparison to the strength of retention without Mid-day Meal scheme.

5. To investigate the level of quality and quantity of cooked MDM supplied in the government primary schools.

6. To identify the problems during implementation and coordination with the stakeholders of the cooked MDM scheme.

7. To investigate the laxity of the officers and the workers responsible for the execution of the cooked MDM scheme.

8. To investigate the most effective reason for Enrolment & Attendance in the government primary schools due to the possible incentives offered by the government.

9. To know the exact opinion of the cooks regarding the management and the execution of MDM Scheme.

10. To observe on the spot the difference between the natural settings and the actual settings of MDM execution in the government primary schools.

The above objectives were measured and tested through the following null hypotheses and research questions:
5.1.2 Hypotheses:

1. There is no significant difference in the enrolment of the students from class I-V in the government primary schools due to Mid-Day Meal scheme in the opinions of the stakeholders (teachers, parents, Headmasters, Grampradhans, ABSAs).

2. There is no significant difference in the number of enrolment of the students from class I-V in the government primary schools during post MDM period in comparison to the number of enrolment of the students during Pre-MDM period.

3. There is no significant difference on the level of retention of primary schools' students from class I-V due to Mid-Day Meal scheme as per the opinions of the stakeholders (students, teachers, parents, Headmasters, Grampradhans, ABSAs) of MDM.

4. There is no significant difference in the level of retention of the students from class I-V in the government primary schools during post MDM period in comparison to the level of retention of the students in the government primary schools during Pre-MDM period.

5. There is no significant problem in the quality and quantity of cooked MDM supplied in the government primary schools.

6. Research Question: Is there any significant problem during implementation and coordination with the stakeholders of the cooked MDM scheme in the government primary schools?

7. There is no significant laxity from the officers and the workers responsible for the execution of the cooked MDM scheme.

8. There is no significant reason for Enrolment/Attendance in the government primary schools due to the possible incentives offered by the government.

9. Research Question: What exactly is the thinking of the cooks regarding the management and the execution of MDM scheme?

10. Research Question: There is not any difference between the natural settings and the actual settings of MDM execution in the government primary schools?"
5.1.3 Methodology of the Study:
The study was based on the primary and secondary sources of data. The sample of the study comprised of the Students, Teachers, Parents, Headmasters, Grampradhans, ABSAs and cooks of 40 schools of 40 different villages from the 2 blocks each out of four selected districts of Western Uttar Pradesh (UP, India). The data was collected on the basis of stratified random sampling. The researcher visited to all the 40 selected schools to collect primary data via six exhaustive questionnaires along with the checklist/schedule for the cooks and the spot observation forms to investigate and to verify the conditions personally. The secondary data for the purpose was collected from the schools' records provided by the headmasters of all the 40 schools from the school records, various monitoring reports on MDM and VEC manual & all official documents etc.

All the above mentioned tools of investigation were developed by the researcher herself. The tools had passed through the valid reliability tests by the researcher. The collected data was tabulated in the MS Excel sheets and was processed for the analysis by using SPSS (version 19), a statistical package for obtaining the results of paired sample t-test, frequencies of responses, ANOVA, and Mean Value etc. for the purpose.

5.1.4. Findings of the Study:
The current study has come-out with several valuable findings, which accomplish the fulfillment of the objectives and hypotheses mentioned above. The major findings may be noted down as follows:

5.1.4.1. The opinions of the stakeholders (teachers, parents, headmasters, Grampradhans, ABSAs) regarding the impact of Mid-Day-Meal scheme on the enrolment of the students in the government primary schools.

1. The opinion of the teachers of the surveyed schools indicated that there was a huge impact of MDM scheme on the enrolment in the government primary schools. The ratio of increment in the girls' enrolment was more than the boys' enrolment. Approximately 83% teachers were agreed that the volume of enrolment during post MDM period had
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increased while on the basis of ANOVA test it was found that the teacher's opinion was significantly matching with the opinion of the other stakeholders about the increment of the enrolment due to MDM scheme.

2. As per primary information collected from the parents it was found that there was significant positive impact on the enrolment especially of the girls' students from the villages of western Uttar Pradesh. There were about 90% parents who were of the view that they were ready to send their wards to the schools even if there would not be any provision of meals in the schools. This shows the desperation of the parents towards education. The findings from ANOVA had also indicated that the opinion of the parents regarding enrolment was significantly matching with the opinion of other stakeholders.

3. It was observed on the basis of the primary information collected from the headmasters of the schools that MDM scheme had contributed positively in terms of enrolments in the schools. Both boys and girls students were attracted, though the girls were more in numbers. About 88% headmasters were in the view of that the enrolments in primary schools had increased due to MDM.

4. The opinion of the Grampradhans of the concern surveyed schools indicated that the impact of MDM scheme on the enrolment of the primary schools was significantly positive. The impact on the girls was comparatively better than the boys' students of the villages. Approximately 80% Grampradhans were either strongly agreed or agreed that there were improvement in the volume of enrolment in the Grampanchayat.

5. The results of the analysis of questionnaires filled by the ABSAs clearly supported positive results of impact of MDM scheme over enrolment in the government primary schools. About 90% ABSAs were agreed that the enrolment of the girls had improved by miles due to MDM scheme so as for the enrolment of boys the agreement level was about 90%.
5.14.2. Comparison of enrolment of children in the government primary schools in 6-14 years of age due to Mid-Day Meal scheme in comparison to the enrolment without Mid-Day Meal scheme:

1. The outcome of the paired sample t-test conducted on the secondary data collected from the records of the schools indicated that the impact on the enrolment of boys students of class-I during post-MDM period was comparatively not much significant than the pre-MDM period while the volume of enrolment among the girls students with the mean 12.00 during post MDM in comparison to pre-MDM which was 6.41. This difference in the values had the significant positive impacts.

2. The level of enrolment of the boys’ students of Class-II had less significant impact as the t-test results showed during the post-MDM (18.96 mean value) in comparison to the pre-MDM periods (14.82 mean value) while the impacts upon the enrolment level of the girls students had noticed the huge positive significant impacts.

3. The t-test results for the comparison for Class-III students showed that there was positive impact in the enrolment of both the boys and the girls’ students during post MDM era in comparison to Pre-MDM era. The mean value of enrolment during pre-MDM was 14.84 in comparison to 17.96 during the post-MDM period.

4. The impact of MDM on Class-IV students was also obtained from the results of conducted paired sample t-test on the number of enrolments during pre-MDM with mean value 14.14 and post-MDM periods with mean value 17.15. The results clearly indicated that the impact on the girl’s candidates during post-MDM era was significantly positive in comparison to boys.

5. There was substantial change in the enrolment level of boys and girls students of Class-V during the post-MDM period in comparison to the pre-MDM periods. Finally the mean value 11.15 in class-V during pre-MDM and 15.27 during post-MDM clearly certified that there were positive changes.
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5.1.4.3 The opinions of the stakeholders (students, teachers, parents, headmasters, Grampradhans, ABSAs) regarding the impact of Mid-Day-Meal scheme on the retention of enrolled students in the government primary schools.

1. The outcome of the questionnaire processed among the students regarding the impact of MDM upon the retention of the students in the premises for full school time showed that the students were agreed that there was positive impact on the retention level due to MDM in the school. About 78% students refused to accept that they leave the school after receiving the meal. Moreover, approximately 60% students also refused that they attended the schools only for the MDM. These two findings indicated that the students were in the frame of mind to attend the schools even if there was no provision of MDM,

2. The group of surveyed teachers was agreed that the retention level in the school premises had improved due to MDM scheme along with the rate of dropouts also declined due to MDM scheme. About 90% teachers though that the students had become more regular in the schools. Moreover, approximately 70% teachers had the opinion that the retention in the schools had improved.

3. As a result of the opinion of the parents, it was proven fact that the dropout levels had decreased throughout the MDM era and the students remained in the school premise during the whole school hours. About 63% parents viewed that their wards were willing to attend the schools daily.

4. The result of the processed questionnaire regarding retention from headmasters indicated that there was positive and significant impact over the retention level due to the MDM scheme in the schools. On the contrary the dropout level had decreased due to the same reason. The findings from the opinion of the headmasters stated that approximately 63% of them viewed that the students had become more regular due to MDM scheme. About 65% headmasters expressed that the students loved to stay in the school premises.

5. The Grampradhans’ viewed that there was absolute positive impact on retention level of the students in the school premises. On the other hand the number of dropout was
dropped significantly due to MDM program. The findings from the opinion of Grampradhan stated that about 50% of them supported that the MDM had the capacity to retain the students in the school premises and 75% of them also viewed that the school attendance had improved due to MDM.

6. The outcome of ABSAs’ opinions regarding the impact of MDM on the level of retention in the schools was observed which also indicated that there was positive impact on the level of retention. On the other hand it was also indicated that there was decrease in the level of dropouts from the schools in the case of both girls and the boys’ students. On the same point of ‘capacity to retain’ about 90% ABSAs stated that the MDM had great capacity to retain the students in the school premises as well as throughout the year.

5.1.4.4 Comparison of the retention of children in the government primary schools in 6-14 years of age due to Mid-Day meal scheme in comparison to the strength of retention without Mid-day Meal scheme.

1. The rate of dropouts in class-II showed that the volume of dropout measured through paired sample t-test applied on the data collected from the school records during pre-MDM period and the post-MDM period were significantly reduced at the later stage. The ratio of dropouts of the girls’ students was significantly reduced in comparison to the boys students. Thus it was found that there was improvement in the level of retention in the school for further studies at the next level. The findings from the test indicated that the mean value in the pre-MDM was 1.6 while it remained 1.35 during the post MDM period.

2. In case of dropout among the students of Class-III it was found that there was significant decline in the dropouts of the girls’ students in comparison to the boys’ students. In totality the reduction in the rate of dropouts during post-MDM period was significant. Thus it was obvious that the girls’ student showed more intensity to retain in the school to continue for the next level in comparison to boys. The mean values of the paired sample
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t-test during pre-MDM were 1.23 while it remained only 0.78 during the post-MDM period.

3. There were huge fall in the volume of dropouts during post-MDM period with mean value 0.99 in comparison to the pre-MDM periods with mean value 1.35 of the Class-IV students. The test also indicated that the volume of dropouts among the girls students were comparatively less than the volume of dropouts among the boys students during post-MDM period. On a contrary the level of retention of the students for further studies increased especially among the girls’ students in comparison to the boys’ students of the class.

4. As result of comparison of the volume of dropouts between the pre-MDM with mean value 2.83 and post-MDM with mean value 1.94, the girls’ students of Class-V experienced comparatively less with the mean value 1.38 during post MDM while it was same during pre MDM. in terms of boys’ students of the same class. Overall there was significant reduction in the volume of dropouts during post-MDM period in comparison to the pre-MDM period. The reduction rate of dropouts intended to the researcher that there was improvement in the level of retention for the next level of studies in the schools during the post-MDM period in comparison to the pre-MDM period.

5.1.4.5. The opinions of the stakeholders (students, teachers, parents, headmasters, Grampradhans, ABSAs) regarding the level of quality and quantity of cooked MDM supplied in the government primary schools.

1. The opinions of the students regarding the quality and quantity of MDM served in the schools were measured through primary data collected from the students. The outcome of the percentage and ANOVA on the processed data showed that still there was a long way to improve the quality of MDM distributed in the schools. Though the quantity of the MDM was the subject to the age group of the students. It was satisfactory for the students of class I and II but the quantity for class-III to V students was insufficient.
2. The findings regarding the quantity of MDM served in the schools from the data collected from the teachers were more or less insufficient while quantity of the MDM provided to the students were satisfactory. About 60% teachers viewed that the quantity provided were not sufficient to the students. About the quality about 50% teachers were of the view that there was improvement in the quality of MDM. Moreover, about 63% teachers viewed that there were continuous complaint about the quality of the foods by the students.

3. The opinion of the parents on the basis of percentage and ANOVA outcome indicated that there were dissatisfaction regarding the quality and quantity of MDM served to the students in the schools. Majority of the parents were with the opinion that the quantity and quality of MDM provided to the students in the schools was not even up to the mark.

4. The results of ANOVA and percentage from the data collected from the headmasters of the schools indicated that the quantity of the MDM in the schools was satisfactory but the quality was more or less not up to the mark. About 63% headmasters were found agreed that the quantity served to the students was not satisfactory. Moreover about 75% headmasters were admitted that the grains qualities were not up to the mark.

5. The outcome of the ANOVA and percentage of the data collected from the Grampradhans of the villages showed that there were enough quantity provided to the students and the quality of MDM provide in the schools was also good. About 75% Grampradhans agreed that the quantity provided as MDM was not sufficient.

6. Data collected from the ABSAs was analyzed by using the statistical tool ANOVA and the same were presented in the form of percentage. The outcome showed that the quality and quantity of MDM provided in the schools was absolutely as per the guidelines provided by the concerned authorities. About 90% ABSAs responded that the quantity distributed was not sufficient.
5.1.4.6. The problems during implementation and coordination with the stakeholders of the cooked MDM scheme.

1. The opinion of the students regarding the level of problems in the coordination with stakeholders was analyzed through the primary data collected from the students. Later on the data was processed by calculating the percentages or average and the outcomes indicated that there was still intense and an acute problem existed in the coordination with the stakeholders. The coordination of the beneficiaries and the responsible authorities still needed to improve and to go a long way.

2. The teachers of the schools had almost a similar opinion about the coordination amongst the stakeholders of the MDM scheme. The outcomes showed that there were problems in the coordination among the stakeholders of the MDM scheme.

3. In the opinion of parents it was found that there were problems in the coordination among the stakeholders during the implementation of the MDM scheme.

4. As far as the opinion of the headmasters was concerned there was absolute acceptance of the lack of coordination amongst the stakeholders of the MDM scheme implemented in the government primary schools.

5. The outcomes from the Grampradhans indicated that there were problems in the coordination amongst the stakeholders of the MDM scheme.

6. It was found that the ABSAs were agreed that there were acute problems in the coordination amongst the stakeholders of the MDM scheme implemented in the government primary schools.

5.1.4.7. The opinions of the stakeholders regarding the laxity of the officers and the workers responsible for the execution of the cooked MDM scheme.
1. The opinions of the students regarding the laxity in the implementation of the MDM scheme in the schools were collected and analyzed through the ANOVA and percentage. The results from the analysis indicated that there were laxities in the implementation of the MDM scheme especially at the ground root level.

2. The obtained results from the ANOVA and percentage done on the data collected from the teachers of the government primary schools had indicated that there were laxities in the execution of the scheme.

3. The data collected as the opinion of the parents of the students of primary schools were analyzed through ANOVA and percentage. The results indicated that the implementation of the MDM scheme was not free from the laxities. There were laxities at both school-level and the officers'-level responsible for the execution MDM scheme in the schools.

4. The findings from the data collected from the headmasters and analyzed by the use of ANOVA and percentage showed that there were laxities in the implementation of the MDM scheme in the government primary schools.

5. It was found from the results of ANOVA and percentage of the processed data collected from the Grampradhans which clearly indicated that there was no such laxity at the school or the village level but there were still laxities in the implementation of the MDM scheme.

6. The ABSAs opinion were analyzed and found that there were laxities at the school and village level during implementation process of the MDM scheme. They were with the opinion that there was not any kind of the laxity at administration level but at the ground-root level.

5.1.4.8 Reasons for Enrolment/Attendance in the primary schools among the possible incentives offered by the government:

1. The outcome of the opinions of the parents regarding the reasons of enrolments and attendance in the government primary schools was noted down. There were several
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reasons including the incentives like scholarships, free books and free distribution of uniforms to increase the enrolment and the attendance in the schools. The result of the data analyzed through the Mean differences indicated that the MDM scheme had played a pivotal role in the increment of enrolment and attendance of the students in the government primary schools.

2. The Mean differences conducted on the collected data from the headmasters indicated that there were several reasons for the improvement in the enrolment and retention in the schools. The role of MDM especially in the girls’ attendance and enrolment was remarkable in comparison to the boys’ students throughout the post-MDM period.

5.1.4.9. Opinion of the cooks regarding the management and the execution of MDM Scheme

It was found from the analysis of cooks’ checklist that -

1. approximately 53% cooks responded that due to MDM the students’ enrolment had increased, 47% cooks were in the view of that the students usually stay in the schools for full school time, about 32% cooks observed that the average attendance in the schools had improved.

2. About 57% cooks observed that the quantity of MDM supplied to the students was insufficient and on the other hand about 44% cooks felt that the sufficiency of the foods was subject to the menu of the day.

3. About 44% cooks said that all the teachers taste the MDM before distribution, while about 38% of them said that the MDM was being tasted by only one teacher in the school.

4. About 50% cooks contact to the Grampradhan in case of shortage of food materials, while about 31% of them contact to any school teacher in case of the shortage of the food-materials.
5.1.4.10. On the spot observations of the difference between the natural settings and the actual settings of MDM execution in the government primary schools.

The observations were made in all 40 selected schools to know the difference between the actual and the natural settings of execution of MDM. It was found that the execution of MDM scheme and its difference from the actual conditions were substantially visible but at the same time the outcome of one-sample t-test and two-tailed significance value showed that there was a significant difference between the assumed conditions and actual conditions observed about the implementation of the MDM scheme in the schools.

5.2. Conclusions:

The MDM scheme is considered as a nationwide scheme to meet out the hunger and nutrition, especially in the rural India. The number of beneficiaries increased substantially since 1995. Moreover approximately 60% of the beneficiaries were from the families having low per capita income. The status of the enrolment in the government primary schools increased substantially due to the implementation of this scheme. The students of the schools retained for the full school time due to the fulfillment of the appetite and nutritional requirements of the students. The real face of the scheme can be seen through the perceptions of beneficiaries regarding the implementation and the success & failure of the scheme.

Following important points were concluded on the basis of findings from the analysis of the primary data:

5.2.1 Perception of Students:

The students of the benefitted schools and villagers were quite satisfied to have this positive step towards nutrition and the war against hunger especially among the low per capita income group. They feel that the scheme is quite successful in dragging and retaining the students in the government primary schools. As far as the quantity of the MDM provided in the schools was concerned, the students' perception was different as per the age groups. But over all they feel that the quantity is still not sufficient. The quality of the food provided was not up to the mark.
and was not up to the expectations of the beneficiaries of the MDM scheme. As per the perception of the students the quality and quantity of the foods still have huge scope to improve. Regarding the coordination among the mechanism during the implementation of MDM scheme the students’ perception was somehow okay or most of the time they were unable to understand the real reason behind any kind of laxity. They were not in the position to adjudge the reasons and responsibilities for the acuteness of the problems they faced. As a result, they feel that there are laxities during the execution of the MDM scheme in the schools.

5.2.2 Perceptions of Teachers:
The teachers were little dissatisfied due to the extra burden apart from the teaching tasks they needed to perform to implement the scheme in the schools. They felt that the scheme was successful in terms of dragging the students from home to schools. They considered that the MDM scheme was the strongest incentive for supporting and increasing the level of enrolment. The perception of the teachers regarding the retention of the students in the schools during the school times had substantially improved due to MDM. The teachers were with the perception that the quantity of the foods provided was quite insufficient. They also felt that the quality of the foods provided was not up to the mark. The quality and quantity of the foods provided in the form of cooked MDM still required to go a long way. The teachers’ perception regarding the efficiency in the execution of MDM scheme in the schools was quite indifferent. They felt that the coordination at the ground level of the execution was good but the support from the officials and decision makers was lacking the coordination badly.

5.2.3 Perceptions of Parents:
About the role of MDM on the level of enrolment the perception of parents are indifferent. They accepted that the level of enrolment in the schools have improved, but the absolute reason is not only the MDM. There were several other reasons like free books, uniforms and scholarship which contributed to drag the students from home to schools. Parents were hesitant to accept that their wards are attracted by the MDM only. They still advocated that all the incentives the schools facilitated were secondary factors; they were only concerned about the academic achievements of their wards. The parents were critical in terms of quality and quantity provided in the form of MDM. They think that the quantity of MDM provided by the schools were well
less of the quantity required. The quantity was not enough to serve the purpose of hunger free children. The quality of the grains, spices, milk, whole gram and other ingredients used in the preparation of foods for MDM were not up to mark. The concerned parents were in perception that the execution of the MDM was not free from the laxities. There were lacks of coordination among the authorities as well as among the ground level responsible for the execution of the MDM.

5.2.4 Perceptions of Headmasters:
The findings regarding the perceptions of the headmasters related to MDM scheme were noted down in terms of impact on the level of enrolment. It was concluded from the findings that the headmasters appreciated the program with conformity that there were improvement in the enrolment especially among the girls students. Although the headmasters were also with contrast perception that the credits must be given to other incentives such as scholarships, uniforms, bicycles and free books for the students. Headmaster were in perception that the level of retention in the schools had substantially improved due to MDM. As far as quantity of the foods provided as MDM in the schools was concerned the headmasters though that the quantity of the foods for the classes I, II and III was appropriate but for the students of class IV and V it was surely inappropriate. It was also accepted that the food quantity were subject to the students appetite level. Headmasters of the different schools were indifferent in their perceptions regarding the quality of the foods provided as MDM but most of them were not satisfied with the quality of the foods. The headmasters also thought that the coordination in the execution of the MDM scheme was good at the school level but there were huge problems among the coordination with the authorities accountable for the logistics of inputs for the MDM.

5.2.5 Perceptions of the Grampradhans:
The findings from the primary source regarding the perceptions of the Grampradhans of the government primary schools were convinced that there was huge impact over the number of enrolment in the schools. The girls’ turn-up in the schools was remarkably due to MDM scheme. The retention level of the students also increased due to the direct impact of the MDM in the schools. The perception of the Grampradhans also indicated that the qualities of the MDM were quiet below mark and quantities of the foods were subject to the age and classes of the students.
The Grampradhans also believed that there were several problems in the coordination as well as the process of execution was not free from the laxities. According Grampradhans the laxities were not at the ground level rather it was from the top level where we were not able to say anything in time and the logistics management from the top authorities was blamed to be the worst.

5.2.6 Perceptions of the ABSAs:
Being a vital part of the execution of school activities the officers felt that the figures of the enrolments in the government primary schools substantially increased. The program was quite successful to drag the students from their houses. They also accepted that the ratios of girls' enrolment in the schools were increasing day by day after the introduction of MDM scheme in the schools. According to the ABSAs the retention ratio had the same story throughout the MDM scheme implemented in the schools. Again the officers happily praised the increment in the girls' retention in the schools throughout the school time. They admitted that the full credit should be given to the mission against hunger in the form of MDM scheme. About the quality of the food provided the officers were in dilemma that some schools maintained the good quality whereas there were still a long way to go to improve the quality of foods upto the mark. They also accepted that the foods provided were less in quantity for some students sometimes subject to the appetite level and the age of the students. They praised the efforts of the concerned officers in the coordination and implementation of the scheme at the same time it was also accepted that there were laxities in the execution process of the MDM scheme at the ground level.

5.2.7 Perceptions of Cooks:
Most of the concerned questions were crucial to be answered by the cooks of the concerned schools. Eventually they praised the scheme in terms of its overall achievements and admitted that there was a good deal of increment in the enrolment of the students due to this. They also felt that the students stay in the schools for almost full school time. The most crucially thing was that the cooks were not satisfied by the quality of ingredients and grams provided to them for the preparation of the foods. The cooks directly admitted that they suffer the most because of laxities in the logistics of cooked MDM. They faced so many problems including sometimes shortage of fuels (cooking gas) and other related to ingredients etc. which led them to alter the menu and to
compromise with the quality of cooked foods. Mostly they manage the best what they can do with the available resources at that time. They also felt that the quantity of all the required materials was never satisfactory rather they were not allowed to use the required quantities. They also admitted that the requirements of the quality utensils for proper cooking were not provided by the competent authorities. Thus according to the cooks it was quite clear that there existed an acute level of laxities in the coordination and execution of the cooked MDM scheme in government primary schools.

5.2.8. Spot Observation:
The researcher herself observed the real conditions of the schools especially the infrastructural and managerial conditions related to the MDM scheme in the government primary schools. It was found that the claims, blames and the perceptions of beneficiaries / stakeholders were more or less right. There were positive evidences in terms of enrolments in the schools. The boys’ students were out-figured by the girls’ students in all the classes in terms of enrolments. Approximately similar story was observed regarding the retention of the students in the schools during full school time. It was quite clear from the observation that the scheme still require a long way to standardize as per even through the available guidelines from the authorities. Starting from the basic infrastructures, management, ingredients & grains, fuels, utensils, kitchen stores, serving place, health & Hygiene, security & safety and attitude of the stakeholders were in need of large scale of improvement to make this valuable scheme more successful.

5.2.9. According to the strata investigations on the basis of Secondary Data
Apart from the above findings & conclusions the findings from the collected secondary data highlighted almost similar situations in the government primary schools. The class-wise evidences regarding enrolments and retentions were found as positively responded to the schemes. The enrolment in Class-I increased substantially with the remarkable change among the girls’ students. Almost similar changes were found in all other classes also especially with the positive changes in the enrolment of girls’ students.

The secondary data remarkably provided another important dimension of ‘retention’. It was noted that there was significant decline in the volume of dropouts since the Introduction of
MDM scheme in the schools in comparison to the schools without MDM scheme. Most of the students were retained for the next classes and achieved the highest possible academic goals from the schools. As usual the girls’ students were more intended towards completing the schools successfully, in comparison to the boys’ students.

5.3. Implications of the Study:
MDM scheme is considered as the National level scheme therefore this study is expected to put a good impact over the government at the local, state and center level. The implication of this study may be explained as follows:

5.3.1. Implication for the Government:
The MDM scheme is the shared responsibility of all three central, state and local (Grampanchayat) level executive bodies. Therefore it would be fair enough to examine the implications of the study for all the three executive bodies separately:

5.3.1.1. Implication at Central Government Level:
The study examined the laxities in the execution of MDM scheme from the competent authorities of Central Government department. Thus the findings from the study would certainly be very helpful for the executives of central government especially the concerned executives. More specifically the officials concerned to the planning, execution, control and evaluation of the MDM scheme, the officers responsible for planning and policy making may take all the conclusions and findings of the current study into consideration. They may continue, alter, modify or change the policy on the basis of feedback and results of the study to make the MDM scheme much more effective. For instance the outcome of this study such that there is lack of coordination among the executives of the scheme may provide an opportunity to improve the channel of distribution for the food material etc.

5.3.1.2. Implication at the State Government Level:
By considering the fact that the major proportion of the implementation of MDM scheme is the responsibility of the state government the results of this study will be equally helpful for the state government. The implication of this study may be witnessed at the state level department of
MDM. The department of MDM monitoring and its evaluation may consider the strengths and weaknesses highlighted in the conclusions and suggestions of the current study. More particularly they may revisit the policies, budget, guidelines, health & hygiene, safety & security and logistics related to this precious scheme.

5.3.1.3. Implication at Local (Grampanchayat) Level:
The shortcomings highlighted by this study at the ground-root level may be positively considered by the Grampradhan, Sarpanch and village / ward level committees. These authorities may play a vital role to improve the qualitative & quantitative aspects of MDM scheme. The timely vigilance on the basis of the conclusion, suggestions and recommendations of the study may improve the standard of the MDM provided in the government primary schools.

5.3.2. Educational Implications of the Study:
Since primary education is considered to be the basis of secondary & higher education especially in India so the mission to cope-up with the early age hunger, which is directly supported to the excellence in the academic achievement as well.

Findings of the study will contribute substantially to the existing stock of knowledge in the field of education. In addition of this the study is providing empirical data to fill the gap of the International literature. This study provides useful information that may be of value to the researchers in other developing countries also. In the light of the findings of the study further researches can be undertaken to generate more information on similar and related aspects in order to strengthen the means and ways to identify the problems & prospects of MDM and its implementation among the students.

Thus the MDM scheme has its own importance in the field of education. This study is the evaluation of the impact of MDM scheme on enrolment & retention in the government primary schools of Western Uttar Pradesh. The feedbacks, recommendations, suggestions and conclusions of the current study are supposed to be helpful in better management of this scheme. The study will directly support to the policy makers to evaluate the scheme and to develop new and effective policies for the MDM scheme. The findings of the study indicate that the students
are intended to stay in the schools during full school time which in turn will help the students to achieve more as academic learning.

5.4. Recommendations of the study:

The conclusions and the findings of the study have summarized the following recommendations for all the stakeholders of the MDM scheme. To run the scheme more effectively each stakeholder is recommended to play his/her role honestly. The researcher has identified some potential factors which are adversely affecting the implementation of the MDM scheme. Thus the factors given below deserve due attention from the implementers of the scheme.

1. It is the responsibility of the nodal ministry to review the infrastructural development meant for mid day meal scheme in the meetings of SMC and representatives of other nodal ministries which run the infrastructural developmental schemes should be invited to these meetings.

2. There is a scope of convergence with the schemes like National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (NREGP) for the construction of kitchen sheds and honorarium of cooks cum helpers, drinking water/toilet through Rajiv Gandhi Drinking Water Mission and Health check-up and micronutrients through school health program under National Rural Health Mission.

3. District level SMCs should be made effective and their meetings should be held regularly so that the monitoring and the supervision by the ABSAs/BSAs is ensured through these meetings.

4. The Guidelines issued by the Government of India regarding the delivery of food-grains by PDS dealer directly to the schools should be implemented as this will help in:
   i. Averting the leakage of food grains from the delivery point and in reducing the supply channel.
   ii. Taking off pressure from the Headmasters or implementing authorities.
5. A copy of release orders of food-grains should be provided to the headmaster of the schools for cross checking the supply made by the fair price shop dealers every month.

6. Steering-cum-monitoring committees should be made functional and active at the district/block levels for the effective implementation, convergence and monitoring of the scheme.

7. With prior information to the block level committee and Grampanchayat Municipality, the funds should be electronically transferred to the account of Implementing Authority (IA).

8. One member of the block level committee should attend the meetings of school development and management committee so that the participation of member of Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and PRIs can be ensured.

9. The IA (Implementing Authority) agency should be made responsible for cooking, serving and cleaning of the utensils and plates and the school staff should be confined only for the supervision of serving of MDM.

10. District Nodal Authority (DNA) should be strict in getting utilization certificates from the implementing authority at the school level in time so that the funds/ food-grains are delivered timely.

11. As the prices of the ingredients especially the prices of oil and pulses are fluctuating frequently it is becoming quite difficult for the IA (Implementing Authority) to meet the costs. Therefore it is required that there must be a regular review of the charges being paid to IA at least once in 6 months.

12. The earmarked bags need to be stored with the village PRI Head or any place available in the village for which a nominal rent can be paid.
13. As an implementing agency local women self help groups or mothers of children studying in the schools may be preferred. This would not only ensure a mean of employment and income for the SHGs, but they will cook also as per the locally prevalent tastes.

14. PPP (Public Private Partnership) mode which has been successful in Andhra Pradesh can be implemented in other states which will ensure a better delivery of service and therefore a better performance of the scheme.

15. As per the MDM guidelines 2006 it is mandatory for the state governments/UTs to provide essential micronutrients and de-worming medicines and the periodic health check-up. Although most of the states have reported unutilized funds only Andhra Pradesh has been doing so. Therefore other states should also provide essential micronutrients and de-worming medicines as per the guidelines.

5.4.1. Recommendations for Implementations:
1. Good quality MDM ration must be provided to the students,
2. The strict monitoring and supervision should be by proper authority (responsibility be fixed in case of misdeed) so that the cases of cheating can be checked.
3. MDM should be distributed to the students in packed form to remove the burden of teachers which in turn will also create minimum disturbance in the academic environment.
4. Proper coordination among the suppliers of MDM ration, distributors of MDM, guardians and teachers at school needs to be established so that the scheme may further be strengthened.
5. Parents are to be educated properly to utilize the facility of MDM in right perspective and they should be made to understand the significance of regularity, punctuality and retention of their child in the school.
6. The students who remain most regular in the class may be rewarded with cash prizes along with appreciation letter in public functions.
7. The Panchayats may also be associated with the scheme of Mid-Day Meal and the best Panchayat should be awarded prize and recognition publicly if all school-going age children of their Panchayat get enrolled in the school and complete their schooling also.

5.5. Suggestions

Researchers are not the end of an investigation but they always open the ways for further endeavors. By studying the results obtained through this study the researcher would like to make the following suggestions:

5.5.1. Suggestions for Students:
The students are the soul beneficiaries of MDM scheme along with their parents therefore the feedback and the true reflection from them is important to improve this valuable scheme. The students are required to participate in the implementation of the MDM scheme with positive attitude. They should be communicative to the higher authorities with the hidden realities during the execution process but in a healthy spirit to improve the existing status of the scheme. Students should take full advantage of the scheme and should keep their minds free from all other things and should concentrate over the academic achievements including curricular and co-curricular activities only. They should keep their minds free from the thoughts related to hunger, foods and lunch etc.

5.5.2. Suggestions for Teachers:
Being a ground root level executive of the MDM scheme the teachers are suggested to play a vital role in its efficient execution. More specifically they need to involve positively for the successful and better implementation of the scheme. Teachers are required to keep a keen watch over the quality and quantity of the ingredients, grains, grams, pulses, flours, cooking oils and milk etc. which are made available from the vendors. Actually only teachers can report to the competent authorities regarding any kind of deficiency in the quality or quantity of the food-materials. The teachers are also required to create a pleasant environment in the schools where the MDM scheme can flourish as an opportunity for all the stakeholders to improve their professional performance.
Furthermore, the second purpose of the MDM scheme i.e. health, hygiene & nutrition is more or less linked with the quality of its execution. Teachers are suggested to play a very constructive role in maintaining healthy & hygienic habits among the students. They can also have a proper record of the required calories as per age, height and weight of the student to compare it with the recommended standards specified by the Health & Nutrition Departments. Teachers are also suggested that in the process of training the students regarding healthy habits the students should be involved interestingly rather than they consider it as a burden to follow those habits.

5.5.3. Suggestions for Parents:
On the basis of the findings of this study the parents are suggested to increase their awareness about the roles and responsibilities regarding the implementation of MDM scheme for their children in the government primary schools. They should visit regularly to take a view on the process and execution of the MDM in the schools. If possible the parents should maintain the records that when or where the MDM was according to the guidelines and when it was not. In the view of the researcher the role of the parents as a feedback regarding MDM is the most important to judge its success and failures. At the same time the parents are also requested that they should keep the limitations of this scheme in their mind so that they would be able to come-up with positive and constructive criticism for this valuable scheme. As per the guidelines the parents have full rights to discuss or suggest any issue regarding MDM as a member of PTA (Parents Teachers Association). During survey the researcher noticed that PTA in most of the schools was inactive or only a formal column to fill the paper formalities. Therefore it is requested to the parents to understand the rights, duties and spirits of the PTA properly. The seriousness of this association may be linked with the future of their children directly.

5.5.4. Suggestions for Headmasters:
Headmasters are the highest authority in the schools so the roles of headmasters are equally crucial. In other words they are accountable for the success and failures of the MDM scheme in a particular concerned school. Headmasters are strongly suggested that they should not work on the basis of local political influences. They are required to maintain the check and balance for the execution of such a vital scheme. As per guidelines, the headmasters are authorized to maintain the qualities and quantities of the executed MDM scheme thus the accountability of quality and
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Quantity is inherent. More particularly the headmasters are suggested to maintain the detailed records of ingredients, grains, pulses, flours, rice, grams, sugar, cooking oils and LPG as a benchmark of the available qualities in the market. Moreover the headmasters have the responsibility to compare the qualities of all the above materials they receive for MDM with the available qualities in the market as per the MDM guidelines. They are suggested to maintain the complaint register for parents/students of the villages regarding MDM without mentioning the name or address of the complainer. The headmasters are suggested that the process and scrutiny of the bills and registers may be made easy and less complicated as most of the members of the implementing agencies are either illiterate or semi-literate. It would be advisable to process the bills through the heads of the schools.

5.5.5. Suggestions for Grampradhans:
The identified roles of the Grampradhans are so important that they are the real representatives of the state Government. They are authorized to look-after the logistics and inventories of the MDM inputs. Thus they are suggested to be accountable as well as responsible for the availabilities of all the materials in time. In case of students, parents and teachers dissatisfaction regarding MDM the Grampradhan should take the responsibility to satisfy them. Being the head of the Grampanchayat, the Grampradhan should appoint the vigilance officer to look after the MDM process and it’s execution in the schools. The Grampradhans are the vital chain of the coordinating bodies among the government and the other stakeholders like, ABSAs, BSAs, cooks and other officials at the Panchayat level. Thus the most important suggestion for the Grampradhans is to coordinate well with each executive body related to MDM. As far as logistics are concerned the Grampradhans are requested to be out of local political influences with regard to the supply of MDM materials. The vendors and suppliers must be benchmarked and put in the situation to compete with the supply of better quality at the cheapest possible prices.

5.5.6. Suggestions for ABSAs:
The ABSAs are suggested to establish a monitoring cell to check illegal sale of the rice meant for the same scheme by the ration depot dealers so as to ensure good quality of rice supplied to the implementing agencies. The ABSAs are also suggested to take some more responsibilities to
increase the vigilance in the schools especially at the lunch time to check the foods quality and quantity. It is the sole responsibility of the ABSAs to ensure the delivery of foods according to the guidelines provided so the coordination between the BSAs of the districts, MDM officers at the district level, FCI (Food Corporation of India), local political pressure groups and village level committees are required to achieve the goals and objectives of this vital scheme of MDM. The responsibility of ensuring the coordination should be proficiently shouldered by ABSAs.

5.5.7. Suggestions for Cooks:

Cooks are the first information source of MDM execution process. It is indeed suggested that they should play a positive role and need to think beyond the source of income only. The cooks are required to maintain a register or the checklist of quantities of all the inputs for cooking of the meal according to the guidelines. They are required to inform all the concerned stakeholders in advance regarding the future requirements.

5.5.8. General Suggestions:

1. The members of the implementing agencies need to be trained on budgeting and for the preparation of nutritious and tasty food. For this, the services of Food and Nutrition Board, Government of India and Chartered Accountants can be drawn to impart training to the members engaged in the execution of the MDM scheme in the government primary schools.

2. It is strongly suggested to all the executive members of the MDM scheme that the management of this scheme should be outsourced especially in Uttar Pradesh. It is hence proved that the private agencies have already executed this scheme successfully and efficiently in Tamil Nadu and Gujarat.

3. As contemplated by the Government of India, the mothers of the school children can be engaged in the supervision process (on daily stipend basis) of cooking and serving the meal to the school children.
4. The State government and the Central government are suggested to shorten the supply chain of MDM inputs. More elaborately the responsibilities, logistics of food raw-materials and other related materials should be given to any one agency on contractual basis for certain time period and the performance of the same should be adjudged and evaluated from time to time by the third-party agencies.

5. For the motivation of the concerned community members the participation, involvement and suggestions of the community members should be encouraged by the government through award/reward functions. The best participants/contributors in MDM scheme of the community should be awarded and recognized by the District Magistrate (DM) publicly.

6. The ultimate purpose of the MDM scheme is to ensure the war against hunger especially in remote India and also the assurance of the health and hygiene through inducement of healthy habits among the students. To motivate the students towards being habitual of the healthy habits and dining mannerism, the students should be awarded and recognized by the local political leaders periodically.

7. The real clue of the successful implementation of the scheme may always be found through the feedback of the stakeholders. Thus it is suggested that the feedback mechanism should be developed in such a manner that the unbiased outcome should be expected. More clearly the evaluation process for the MDM scheme should be automated to know the reality.

5.5.9. Suggestions for further Researches:

Research is not the end of the road or end of the investigation but it always opens the ways for the new researches. The findings of this study provide the clues for the further researches which are as follows:

(i) A similar study can be conducted on larger sample including the schools of all the blocks in the selected districts of Western Uttar Pradesh.
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(ii) This study was conducted to evaluate the impact of Mid-Day-Meal Scheme on Enrolment and Retention similar studies can be conducted to evaluate the impact of Mid-Day Meal Scheme on educational achievement, health and nutritional status etc. of the children also.

(iii) The researcher has made a genuine effort to evaluate the impact on Enrolment and Retention by taking into consideration the most effective incentive i.e. Mid-Day-Meal. The outcome of the study may motivate to the researchers to evaluate the impact of other incentives too. For instance the educationists may evaluate the impact of free text-books, uniform and bicycles etc. as an incentive on the enrolment and retention in the government primary schools.

(iv) This study has also opened a wide scope to do some researches on the mechanism of logistics of MDM. The educationists may also try to evaluate the conditions of MDM outside the Western Uttar Pradesh.

(v) The scope for further researches is also identified that the study may be conducted on the roles of the stakeholders of the MDM scheme such as parents, teachers, headmasters and the officials in the execution of the scheme.

(vi) There is still the scope to investigate the MDM mechanism, its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to make the system more perfect.

(vii) The researchers may also investigate the financial allocation for the MDM, its quantitative justification and further suggestions to increase the allocation amount.

(viii) The researchers may be guided towards the investigation of health and hygiene of the students in the primary schools.

(ix) The nutritional values of the MDM scheme should be investigated separately with the help of human autonomy and nutritional standards prescribed by the physicians & dieticians.

5.5.10. Suggested Research Problems:
The present study is a noble attempt to conduct the study in this area and on these variables. The research findings of this study provided an insight to the researcher for further researches. The
follow-up researches related to present study may take the following research problems to conduct the researchers in future:

1. Impact of different incentives on enrolment and dropout in the Government Primary schools.
2. Trends of enrolment in the Government Primary schools: an impact of Mid-Meal Scheme.
3. Evaluation of Incentive schemes to enhance the enrolment in Government Primary Schools.
5. Mid-Day Meal Scheme in India; an evaluation of success and failure since its implementation.

5.7. Final words:

The MDM scheme in the government primary schools was observed as a new lifeline to revive the importance of village primary level education. The practical fact about the success of MDM scheme is still at below par but we have to appreciate the policy makers of this scheme to provide good and effective guidelines to fulfill the needs of the remote areas' students especially for those who suffer from the day time hunger in their families. Though during the investigation the parents were not exclusively accepting the fact that their wards were keen to go to school and that the MDM scheme was one of the bounty from the government but most of them were of the view of that educational standard of the students had improved due to this scheme.

On the other hand the existing scenario of the Indian society has no hidden fact that they are full of corruptions. Thus the MDM scheme is also in the clutches of corrupt officers in most of the places. The most dangerous status is the influence of the local politics on the governance of this valuable National level scheme therefore almost all the stakeholders of the MDM scheme are in the greed of attaining the short term benefits even at the cost of quality and quantity of MDM. Thus last but not the least there exists the generous request from the researcher to all the stakeholders of MDM scheme that they should think about the students, villages, societies, generations and nations before taking any decision regarding MDM Scheme.
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References:

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