CHAPTER-I
INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Education can be considered to be the most vital asset that the society has because knowledge is the priceless wealth that people will never misused under any circumstances, and the future the knowledge get shared, the future it will advance. Therefore Elementary Education forms the formation for gaining basic knowledge without which the dream of children will become impossible. Elementary Education can be compared to the first stride that a person takes in life, it is impossible for a people to run without first learning how they can walk. Elementary Education is the first stage of formal education which is the next stage after kinder garden. The next stage after the Elementary Education is middle school. The children in these classes are generally aged between 6 to 15 years. Elementary Education is very important for society and contrary at large, whether you are living in a developing country or a developed country. However important of Elementary Education is increasing day by day, as it is reducing poverty and illiteracy and to do well in the Higher Education. As we know India’s main challenges is poverty, we need to uplift millions of people out of poverty and for that we need social mobility and social mobility cannot be achieved until and unless we focus on elementary Education and Health.

1.1 Elementary Education does not only mean a classroom, books and a teacher( that is bare minimum) that any government could provide, but nutrition, clothes, infrastructure like chair, table, stationary, usable toilet for children, separate girls toilet, electricity, drinking water facilities, compound wall, playground, transportation, availability of teacher with teacher’s home, separate teacher’s toilet and creating an environment where a child can learn new things every day, an
environment that can help in bringing out best within a child. Higher Education starts when you come out of high school or 10+12. So if a child is 5 year old and live in a family which is below poverty line then the child needs Elementary Education not Higher Education. Therefore if a government is spending only on Higher Education that is not going to change the status of child because Higher Education is all about colleges. And by the time the child living in a family below poverty line reaches the age of 16 his or her mind has already been shaped. So, it is no use if the government is spending on Higher Education. There is a world of difference between the importance of Education provided in Elementary Education and Higher Education.

Elementary Education is important because it ensures that people are not illiterate but more important is the quality of education they get determines the level of their intellectual capacity when they are adults. Having access to this basic knowledge helps people in making wise decisions regarding issues they face later in life. Usually the skills, attitudes and knowledge that a children gain in Elementary Schools paves a way for High School and College material and it also provides a foundation for success in the future. A recent study in Africa which had considerably invested in Elementary Education years ago are now deriving Economic Development form this investment. Moreover, this Education has resulted in Social and Economic Development. Elementary Education plays an important role in a Child’s Overall Development attending a good pre-school and primary school has more impact on children’s academic progress than their family background or their gender, researchers have claimed. A study by The Institute of Education found that the quality of teaching children receive is more important than their family income, gender or parents’ education. A high quality of pre-school education followed by an academically effectual primary school gives children’s growth a significant boost, the
researchers found. However, they also said children also need an inspiring early year’s home-learning environment to build upon. Elementary Education that is poor leads to the creation of negative effects on the learners in which children develop bad habits and behaviors, poor habits of studying, as well as poor academic excellence. Therefore, having poor quality of primary education or the absence of it leads to high levels of illiteracy such that people who works in factories, ministries, farms and hospitals are not efficient due to lack of the appropriate skills and knowledge. Elementary Education is very beneficial not only to children, but also the nation at large. It is the foundation of advance learning. It shapes the lives of people even into adulthood by promoting wise decision making. Children who obtain this Education develop many skills. They also rapidly develop socially and emotionally as compared to those who never got this basic education. In additional, when a population is Educated, the nation does not suffer many losses due to innovativeness of its people who are able to bring about Economic Development both at the grass root levels and nationally.

1.2 Universalisation of elementary education means universal access, enrolment, retention and qualitative education up to the age of 14. Universalisation of education implies five things namely; universalisation of provision, universalisation of enrolment, universalisation of retention universalisation of participation and universalisation of achievement. Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) has been accepted as a national goal in India since Independence. The founding fathers of our Constitution recognised UEE as a crucial input for nation building. UEE is also a Constitutional directive.
1.3 Constitutional, legal and national statements for universalization of elementary education

**Constitutional mandate, 1950** - "The State shall endeavour to provide, within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education to all children until they complete the age of 14 years."

**National Policy of Education, 1986** - "It shall be ensured that free and compulsory education of satisfactory quality is provided to all children up to 14 years of age before we enter the twenty first century".

**Unnikrishnan Judgement, 1993** - "Every child/citizen of this country has a right to free education until he completes the age of fourteen years."

Universalisation of elementary education has been long accepted as a pre-condition to socio-economic and political development of any society. Although this has been recognized as a need of an individual, this need has been given an expression of fundamental right in Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Constitution of India does not recognize right to education as a fundamental right but has placed it explicitly in Article 45 under the Directive Principles of the State Policy. This Article places an obligation on the State to endeavour to provide for free and compulsory education to all Children up to the age of 14 years. The International Instruments which have been ratified by India including the convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Convenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights explicitly provide for Right to Education up to the elementary level or up to 14 years of age. The National Policy on education also emphasizes the responsibility of the State in providing educational facilities to all. However, the legal duties on the part of
the State are not clearly stated in the Constitution for the domestic status on education. The remedies in case of violation of the right are also not clearly stated in the present legal frame works other than the remedies available under writ jurisdiction of the Supreme Court and the High Court. The present understanding of compulsory education is limited to right to schooling although the term education means much more than just what is offered in the present school system.

Elementary Education has become a justifiable Fundamental Right. The provisions contained in the Constitution of India, insists on providing elementary education to all children. Educational facilities at the primary education stage have expanded tremendously during the post independence period. This expansion has definitely helped in making primary level education more accessible to a larger section of the population. However the large-scale expansion has resulted in the creation of education facilities with widely varying quality in terms of institutional infrastructure, teaching-learning processes as well as the quality of students passing out of these institutions.

At the time of Independence, India inherited a system of education which was not only quantitatively small but also characterised by structural imbalances. Only fourteen per cent of the population was literate and only one child out of three had been enrolled in primary school. The low levels of participation and literacy were aggravated by acute regional and gender disparities. As education is vitally linked with the totality of the development process, the reform and restructuring of the educational system was recognised as an important area of state intervention.
The need for a literate population and universal education for all children in the age group of 6-14 was recognized as a crucial input for nation building and was given due consideration in the Constitution as well as in successive Five Year Plans.

1.4 Measures Adopted by the Government of India to Ensure/Achieve UEE

The important measures adopted by the Government of India to achieve UEE include the following:

- Disaggregated target setting and decentralised micro-planning, which will provide the framework of universal access and community participation.
- Strengthening alternative channels of schooling such as the non-formal education system for those who cannot avail of conventional full-time schooling.
- Introduction of minimum levels of learning at primary and upper primary stages to improve learner’s achievement.
- Improvement of school facilities by revamping the scheme of Operation Blackboard.
- Establishing linkages between programmes of early childhood care and education, primary education, literacy and UEE.
- Addressing the more difficult aspects of access, particularly to girls, disadvantaged groups and out-of-school children.
- Restructuring of teacher training in view of the changed strategies and programmes.
- Availing of external financial support for basic education.
• Launching the National Elementary Education Mission (NEEM).
• Launching of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

There are many government interventions which aim towards achieving elementary education. They are

1.5 District Primary Education Programme

The Centrally-Sponsored Scheme of District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) was launched in 1994 as a major initiative to revitalise the primary education system and to achieve the objective of universalisation of primary education. Under the Programme parameters, investment per district is limited to Rs. 40 crore over a project period of 5-7 years. There is a ceiling of 33.3 per cent on civil works component and 6 per cent on management cost. The remaining amount is required to be spent on quality improvement activities. DPEP, over several phases, covered 272 districts in 18 states of the country. The expenditure on the programme was shared by the Central Government (85%) and the State Governments. The Central share was funded by a number of external agencies, including the World Bank, DFID and UNICEF. By 2001, more than US$1500 million had been committed to the programme, and 50 million children covered in its ambit. In an impact assessment of Phase I of DPEP, the authors concluded that its net impact on minority children was impressive, while there was little evidence of any impact on the enrolment of girls. Nevertheless, they concluded that the investment in DPEP was not a waste, because it introduced a new approach to primary school interventions in India. At present external assistance of about Rs. 6,938 crore composing Rs. 5,137 as credit from IDA and Rs. 1,801 crore as grant from EC/DFID/UNICEF/Netherlands has been tied-up for DPEP.
DPEP is based on the principle of “additionally” and is structured to fill in the existing gaps by providing inputs over and above the provisions made under central and state sector schemes for primary education. The state governments are required to at least maintain expenditure in real terms at base year level. Adopting an “area specific approach” with district as the unit, of planning, the key strategies of the programme have been to retain the sensitivity to local conditions and ensuring full participation of the community. It also seeks to strengthen the capacity of national, state and district institutions and organisation, for planning, management and professional support in the field of primary education.

**The basic objectives of DPEP are:**

1. To provide all children access to primary education through either the formal or non-formal stream.

2. To reduce differences in enrolment, drop-out rates and learning achievement among gender and weaker section groups to less than five percent.

3. To reduce overall primary dropout rates for all children to less than 10 percent.

4. To raise the average achievement rates by 25 percent by measured baseline level and ensuring achievement of basic literacy and numeracy competencies and minimum of 40 percent achievement in other competencies by all primary education children.

**Major Achievements of DPEP:**

1. DPEP has so far opened more than 1,60,000 new schools, including almost 84,000 alternative schooling (AS) centres. The AS centres cover nearly 3.5
million children, while another two lakh children are covered by Bridge Courses of different types.

II. The school infrastructure created under DPEP has been remarkable. Works either complete or in progress include 52758 school buildings, 58,604 additional classrooms, 16,619 resource centers, 29,307 repair works, 64,592 toilets, and 24,909 drinking water facilities.

III. The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for Phase-I states was around 93 to 95 per cent for the last three years. After the adjustment for the Alternative Schools/Education Guarantee Centers enrolment, the GER in the 2001-02 works out above 100 per cent. In the districts covered under subsequent phases of DPEP, the GER including enrolment of AS/EGS was above 85 per cent.

IV. The enrolment of girls has shown significant improvement. In DPEP-I districts, the share of girls enrolment in relation to total enrolment has increased from 48 per cent to 49 per cent, while this increase in the subsequent phases of DPEP districts has been from 46 per cent to 47 per cent.

V. The total number of differently bled children enrolled is now more than 4,20,203 which represents almost 76 per cent of the nearly 5,53,844 differently-abled children identified in the DPEP States.

VI. Village Education Committees/School Management Committees have been setup in almost all project villages/habitations/schools.

VII. About 1,77,000 teachers, including para-teachers/Shiksha Karmis have been appointed.

VIII. About 3,380 resource centers at block level and 29,725 centers at cluster level have been set-up for providing academic support and teacher training facilities.
1.6 **Operation Blackboard** is a scheme implemented by the government of India in 1987 as per the recommendation, produced by the NPE of 1986 during the regime of Rajiv Gandhi. The major aims of Operation Blackboard were to improve the quality of primary education: reducing the rate of wastage and stagnation; attracting more children, especially girl children, into the primary educational sector for realizing the dream of education for all. The scheme mainly focused on providing at least two classrooms in every primary school; necessary toilets exclusive for girls and boys; appointing women teachers at least fifty percent of the total teachers; etc. Operation Blackboard is a centrally sponsored programme which was started in 1987 immediately after the Rajiv Gandhi NPE of 1986 was released to supply the bare minimum crucial facilities to all primary schools in the country. The objective of the scheme is providing students studying in primary settings with the necessary institutional equipment and instructional material to facilitate their education. There is a provision to provide salary for an additional teacher to those primary schools that have an enrolment of more than 100 students or for a consecutive period of two years. In the ninth five-year plan, the scheme was extended to all upper primary schools as well.

In an attempt to improve the implementation of this scheme, a few additional provisions have been added. All teachers will be trained in using the materials provided by the scheme under a particularly designed teacher preparation programme. The state will provide for replacement of broken or non-functioning materials. At the local level, there will be some flexibility for purchasing additional items and teaching aids, which are applicable to the local situation. At least fifty percent of the teachers will be women, which in turn will affect the girl enrolment in school. School building will be designed according to local needs. The central government provides funds for school
equipment and the buildings; the state government also raises funds through the Jawahar Rojgar Yojna scheme. An amount of Rs. 12.80 lakhs has been spent on the scheme from 1987 to 1994. The scheme of Operation Blackboard was launched in 1987 in pursuance of NPE-POA, to provide minimum essential facilities to all primary schools in the country. External evaluation of the scheme has indicated that lack of training of teachers in using the teaching material, specification of a large number of uniform facilities to be provided without modification according to local needs and lack of provision for breakage of equipment have been some of the draws of implementation of the scheme. In order to operationalise the Revised Policy Formulations, the modified OB will contain the following three sub schemes:

i) Continuation of ongoing OB to cover all the remaining primary schools especially those in SC/ST areas;

ii) Expanding the scope of OB to provide three teachers and three rooms to primary schools wherever enrolment warrants them; and

iii) Expanding OB to upper primary schools to provide (a) at least one room for each class/section (b) a Headmaster-cum-office room, (c) separate toilet facilities for girls and boys, (d) essential teaching learning equipment including a library, (e) at least one teacher for each class/section and (f) a contingency grant for replenishment of items, consumable and minor repairs, etc.

The following measures will be taken to improve the quality of implementation of OB:

i) Teachers will be trained in using the OB teaching materials under a specially designed teacher training programme.
ii) State Governments will make provision for breakage and replacement of equipment.

iii) Enough flexibility will be provided for purchase of teaching learning materials relevant to the curriculum and the local needs.

iv) At least 50 per cent of the teachers appointed will be women. This will have a positive impact on girls’ enrolment and retention.

v) Wherever Micro-planning projects are taken up OB will form an integral part of Micro planning.

vi) As far as possible low cost and locally available designs relevant to the local conditions will be adopted for school buildings. Nirmithi Kendras (Building Centres) and local technical institutes will be associated in this endeavor.

1.7 Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme aimed at the universalisation of elementary education "in a time bound manner", as mandated by the 86th Amendment to the Constitution of India making free and compulsory education to children between the ages of 6 to 14 (estimated to be 205 million children in 2001) a fundamental right. The programme was pioneered by former Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. As an intervention programme, it started on 2001 and SSA has been operational since 2000-2001. However, its roots go back to 1993-1994, when the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) was launched, with an aim of achieving the objective of universal primary education. The Right to Education Act (RTE) came into force on 1 April 2010. Some educationists and policy makers believe that, with the passing of this act, SSA has acquired the necessary legal force for its implementation. This programme is also an attempt to provide an opportunity for
improving human capabilities to all children through provision of community-owned quality education in a mission mode. It is a response to the demand for quality basic education all over the country.

Main Features of SSA

i. Programme with a clear time frame for universal elementary education.

ii. A response to the demand for quality basic education all over the country.

iii. An opportunity for promoting social justice through basic education.

iv. An expression of political will for universal elementary education across the country.

v. A partnership between the central, state and the local government.

vi. An opportunity for states to develop their own vision of elementary education.

vii. An effort at effective involving the Panchyati Raj Institutions, school management Committees, village and urban slum level Education Committees, parent’s Teachers’ Associations, Mother-Teacher Associations, Tribal Autonomous councils and other grassroots level structures in the management of elementary schools.

Aims of SSA:

i. To provide useful and elementary education for all children in the 6-14 age group.

ii. To bridge social, regional and gender gaps with the active participation of community in the management of schools.
iii. To allow children to learn about and master their natural environment in order to develop their potential both spiritually and materially.

iv. To inculcate value-based learning that allows children an opportunity to work for each other’s well being rather than to permit mere selfish pursuits.

v. To realize the importance of Early Childhood Care and education and looks at the 0-14 age as a continuum.

Objectives of SSA:


ii. All children complete five years of primary schooling by 2007.

iii. All children complete of elementary schooling by 2010.

iv. Focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life.

v. Bridge all gender and social category gaps at primary stage by 2007 and at elementary education level by 2010.


Srarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) has two aspects:

i. It provides a wide convergent frame work for implementation of Elementary Education Schemes.

ii. It is also a programme with budget provision for strengthening vital areas to achieve universalization of Elementary Education.
1.8 RTE 2009

The Right to education Act is a fundamental right which allows every child between the age group of 6 to 14 to have access to free and fare education. The Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act, 2002 inserted Article 21-A in the Constitution of India to provide free and compulsory education of all children in the age group of six to fourteen years as a Fundamental Right in such a manner as the State may, by law, determine. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, which represents the consequential legislation envisaged under Article 21-A, means that every child has a right to full time elementary education of satisfactory and equitable quality in a formal school which satisfies certain essential norms and standards.

Article 21-A and the RTE Act came into effect on 1 April 2010. The title of the RTE Act incorporates the words ‘free and compulsory’. ‘Free education’ means that no child, other than a child who has been admitted by his or her parents to a school which is not supported by the appropriate Government, shall be liable to pay any kind of fee or charges or expenses which may prevent him or her from pursuing and completing elementary education. ‘Compulsory education’ casts an obligation on the appropriate Government and local authorities to provide and ensure admission, attendance and completion of elementary education by all children in the 6-14 age group. With this, India has moved forward to a rights based framework that casts a legal obligation on the Central and State Governments to implement this fundamental child right as enshrined in the Article 21A of the Constitution, in accordance with the provisions of the RTE Act.
The Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009 empowers children belonging to the backward section of the economy to free and compulsory education. The Right to Education Act was earlier termed as The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act came into function after Gopal Krishna Gokhale’s famous impassionate plea to the Imperial Legislative Council for introducing free and compulsory primary education throughout India. The Right to Education Act made compulsory all government and private sector schools across India to provide 25 percent reservation to children between the age group of 6 and 14 belonging to the weaker section of the country access to free and compulsory education. India became one of the 135 countries to make education a fundamental right of every child, when the act finally came into practice in April 2010.

The following salient features provide the basis of implementation of the RTE Act, 2009.

i. Every child in the age group of 6-14 has the right to free and compulsory education in a neighborhood school, till the completion of elementary education.

ii. The act prohibits donation, capitation fee, screening test/interview of child or parents, physical punishment or mental harassment, private tuition by teachers, and running schools without recognition.

iii. The Section 12(1)(c) of the RTE Act mandates unaided and non-minority schools to keep aside 25% seats for underprivileged children of society through a random selection process. Government will fund education of these children. No seats in this quota can be left vacant. These children will be treated on par with all the other children in the school and subsidized by the State at the rate of average per learner costs in the government schools (unless
the per learner costs in the private school are lower). All private schools will have to apply for recognition, failing which they will be penalized as per the laid down norms. If implemented enthusiastically, this can have a far reaching impact in improving the education system of the country by inclusiveness. It allows parents to send their kids to schools of better quality. The only constraint is the distance between the school and home, rather than financial capacity. It puts students from the economically weaker sections and disadvantaged groups among the relatively privileged children of rather sound financial background. This mix up goes a long way towards inclusive education making all children more pro-social and accommodative, without affecting their academic outcomes. Finally, it enables children from poor family’s access quality education.

iv. No child can be held back, expelled and required to pass the board examination till the completion of elementary education. [This is now set to change through The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Second Amendment) Bill, 2017.] The first time enrolled child is to be admitted to an age appropriate class.

v. The Act lays down the norms and standards of Pupil Teacher Ratios (PTRs), buildings and infrastructure, school working days, teacher working hours. Schools that do not fulfill these standards will not be allowed to function. Specification of the PTR ensures that there is no averaging at the State or District or Block level, preventing urban-rural imbalance in teacher postings.

vi. The Act provides appointment of appropriately trained teachers. Norms and standards of teacher qualification and training are clearly laid down in the Act.
vii. The Act prohibits deployment of teachers for non-educational work, other than decennial census, elections to local authority, state legislatures and parliament, and disaster relief.

viii. There is provision for establishment of commissions to supervise the implementation of the act. All schools except private unaided schools are to be managed by School management Committees with 75% of parents and guardians as members.

ix. The Act specifies the duties and responsibilities of appropriate Governments, local authority in providing free and compulsory education, and sharing of financial and other responsibilities between the Central and State Governments.

x. The Act provides for development of curriculum in consonance with the values enshrined in the Constitution, for the all-round development of the child, building on the child’s knowledge, potentiality and talent and making the child free of fear, trauma and anxiety through a system of child friendly and child centered learning.

Food is any substance consumed to provide nutrition support for the body and produced energy, maintain life or stimulate growth. Food makes your body work, grow and repair itself. The kind of food you eat can affect the efficiency of these processes. Food plays very vital role in maintaining proper health and also helps in prevention and cure of diseases. Our cells, tissues and all organs work properly only with nutrition food which we eat. October 24 is the food day in the United States, everyday is a food day since finding your next meal is a daily problem that every person on the planet faces every day.
**Major nutritional deficiencies** affecting young children in India are –
(1) Protein-Energy malnutrition,
(2) Iron Deficiency Anemia,
(3) Vitamin A Deficiency, and
(4) Iodine Deficiency Disorders (IDD).

**Protein Energy Malnutrition** among school age children assessed through weight deficit for age is the most sensitive indicator of their nutritional status. Percentage of under-weight children of elementary school-going age (6-13 years), as per Gomez (weight for age) classification, is as under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Under-nutrition /under-weight Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mild</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-9 years</td>
<td>31.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-13 years</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: NNMB, NIN & ICMR, 2002*

**Nutritional Anemia** due to iron and folic acid deficiency is widely prevalent among young children and adolescents. 67.5% children under five years and 69% adolescent girls suffer from anemia (NNMB 2003). Percentage prevalence of anemia in school age children (6-14 years) as per studies conducted during 1981 to 1996 ranges from 14% to 96%, as under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Percentage of anaemic children (with Hb &lt; 12g/dl)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Baroda</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Kolkata</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Hyderabad</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Chennai</td>
<td>4.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vitamin A deficiency affecting growing children is also a public health problem in the country. Vitamin A is important for promoting growth of the child, and building immunity and resistance to diseases. Prevalence of Vitamin A deficiency contributes to diarrheal diseases, respiratory infections, measles, etc.

Iodine deficiency during childhood, the period of maximum growth, can result in loss of I.Q. points and poor physical and mental growth and development. Although, on an average, prevalence of total goiter among 6-12 year old children is about 4%, it is 12.2% in Maharashtra and 9% in West Bengal which is much above the WHO cut off level of 5.0%. No State in the country is free from Iodine Deficiency Disorders (IDD). 260 districts out of 321 districts surveyed have more than 10% prevalence of IDD.

High levels of malnutrition particularly among growing children are directly and indirectly associated with high morbidity and mortality. Iron deficiency in school-going children affects their learning ability and concentration power. Even mild deficiencies of micronutrients (vitamin A, iron, folic acid, zinc etc.) affect their growth, development and immunity. Malnourished children tend to have lower I.Q. and impaired cognitive ability which affects their school performance and productivity in later life.

In this modern world, most of the country’s or region’s people experience improved nutrition, health care, Standard of living and quality of life but there are millions of people in India who are so poor that they are unable to meet both ends meet. Children have been the most cherished possession in any society from time
immemorial. However, it is unfortunate that most of them are victims of malnutrition especially in the Indian context, which affects not only their health, but also their attendance and performance in school. The poor people, who do not have money to buy food, have nothing to do with all the facilities provided by the government. They have to work day and night to feed themselves and their children. In such situation in spite of sending their children to school they used them as their helping hand. The National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education commonly known as Mid Day Meals Scheme was launched in August, 1995 with the aim of giving a boost to Universalization of Primary Education by increasing enrolment, retention and attendance and simultaneously impacting upon nutritional status of students in primary classes.

Education plays a vital and important role fulfilling the basic needs of a common man viz, food, shelter, and clothing. The aim of education is to prepare and develop the child physically, mentally and spiritually to lead quality life. Four important factors identified for achieving the goal of education for all. There are accesses to education, enrolment of children, retention of the enrolled children and achievement. Mid day meal scheme is an effort to achieve and facilitate all the four above said objectives.

It is well accepted fact that the Mid-Day Meal Scheme works for making the education effective and productive on nature across the globe. Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam (former president of India) says that nutrition food and good health always provide a sound basis for good education. Further it is important to note that the Govt. of India (2004) under Common Minimum Programme intended to launch a national cooked nutrition Mid-Day meal scheme funded mainly by central government for primary and upper primary school-going students. From October, 2002 the
programme has been extended to children studying in Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative & Innovative Education (EGS&AIE) Centers. Private unaided schools are not covered under the programme. Government of India vides its D.O. No. 9-1/2008-EE-2 (MDM) of dated 14-01-2008 allowed the extension of Mid Day Meal Scheme to upper primary stage across the country from the year 2008.

1.9 Concept of Midday Meal Scheme:

The Midday Meal Scheme is a school meal programme of the government of India designed to improve the nutritional status of school-age children nationwide. The programme supplies free lunches on working days for children in primary and upper primary classes in government, government aided, local body, Education Guarantee Scheme, and alternate innovative education centres, Madarsa and Maqtaba supported under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, and National Child Labour Project schools run by the ministry of labour. Serving 120,000,000 children in over 1,265,000 schools and Education Guarantee Scheme centres, it is the largest such programme in the world.

Under article 24, paragraph 2c of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which India a party, India has committed to providing "adequate nutritious foods" for children. The programme entered the planning stages in 2001 and was implemented in 2004. The programme has undergone many changes and amendments since its launch.

The MDM was introduced primarily to protect the nutritional as well as the educational rights of the children. This is due to the fact that children are not able to concentrate in their studies with empty stomach and there is need to focus upon the MDM, to overcome child’s short term hunger. Thus, initiating this kind of meal programme, Government of India aimed at helping the children especially belong to
the poor socio-economic background to attend school and have at least MDM through which their education as well as food related issues could be tackled. Significantly, the scheme was intended for the tribal areas of various states in the country where, the level of food insecurity and starvation is much higher and children are sold to acute poverty of the parents. The objectives of MDM Scheme are:

1. Improving the nutritional status of children in class I – VIII in Government, Local Body and Government aided schools, and EGS and AIE centres.

2. Encourasing poor children, belonging to disadvantaged sections, to attend school more regularly and help them concentrate on classroom activities.

3. Providing nutritional support to children of primary stage in drought affected areas.

Therefore, MDM is perceived as a major means to impart positive habits among the children and also in educating them on the importance of health, sanitation, and socialization. It is also seen as a factor for economic support to poor parents and educating them about the value of sending their children for meager daily earnings.

More importantly, it was aimed to facilitate and increase the school participation among the underprivileged children which would lead to their educational as well as economic up liftment. Further, the MDM promises to provide each child one third of the daily nutrient requirement in the form of cooked meal to combat his/her food and nutritional deficiencies. The MDM is the India’s second largest food security programme. For the children and, it is perhaps the largest food security programme in the world.
1.10 Mid Day Meal Programme in India: Origin and implementation

In India, however, the history of MDM goes back to the much before the initiation that has come from the United Kingdom in 1945. In fact this kind of programme was introduced, in India, way back in 1925 in the erstwhile Madras Presidency, presently Tamil Nadu where the meal was provided to poor children. Interestingly, the food was distributed in the form of snacks to the children who attended the schools in rural areas so that they will not go with hungry. It has been stated, in Tamil Nadu, the scheme worked efficiently in rural areas in the age group of seven to nine year old. The food was distributed without any gender discrimination and it will target among the needy households.

In eastern India, the Keshav Academy of Calcutta introduce compulsory Tiffin (a kind of snacks) item for the boys on payment basis in 1927. Though the scheme excluded the girl children still it could able to cover a major segment of boys. Consequently, in the state of Kerala similar kind of programme was started in 1941 providing meals to the school-going children. This was followed by the Bombay in 1942, Bangalore in 19473, Utter Pradesh in 1953, and Orissa in 1962. Since 1950, food in some form or other was distributed to the children in few states. In the year 1950 many Indian states started MDM with the assistance from different international donor agencies like: the UNICF, FAO, CARE, WO, etc. The CARE has supported in particular the MDM in many states in India from 1950 to early 1980. With the assistance from international co-operation, the Indian government introduced the MDM for the age group of 6-11 in 1962-63 where food was provided to the children for 200 days in an academic year with an input of 300 calories and 8-12 grams of protein per child per day.
It was on Madras state which was distributing cooked meal to the children in the schools since 1957. In 1956, K. Kamaraj, the then chief minister of Madras, set up a feeding programme to distribute food to the poor children from rural areas. In 1982, M. G. Ramachandran, the then Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, set up a state wide scheme called the *Nutritious Meal Programme* even before the introduction of MDM programme at national level in 1995. This was a major attempt taken by the government of India to protect the child from gross hunger. Later on the MDM was included in the Minimum Needs Programme (MNP) of the Government of India under the congress government. Even in the policy framework through Five Year Plans the children’s rights were included and the MDM received greater priority. However, the MDM received full attention only in the year 1995 and it was initiated widely and in full fledged manner all over the country with maximizing enrolments and reducing drop outs in the age group 6-11 years of children with paramount importance on the nutrition aspect of the programme.

Thus the idea of MDM has been the serious interest of the Government of India since early 1980’s. But the scheme got attention in nationwide only in 1995 with the aim of “the universalization of primary education by increasing enrolment, retention and attendance and simultaneously impacting on nutrition of students in primary classes”. With these objectives, many Indian states started implementing the scheme in their respective states. But later it found that until 2001 the MDM was implemented neither in letter nor in spirit and was limited to providing dry ration. After November 28, 2001, in its historic judgment the Supreme Court of India in the *right to food* case directed all states to provide *cooked meals* to all primary school children. Thus the MDM have become a part of the daily routine across the country providing 120 million school children in their respective schools.
The government of India initiated the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (NP-NSPE) on 15 August 1995. The objective of the scheme is to help improve the effectiveness of primary education by improving the nutritional status of primary school children. Initially, the scheme was implemented in 2,408 blocks of the country to provide food to students in classes one through five of government, government-aided and local body run schools. By 1997–98, the scheme had been implemented across the country. Under this programme, a cooked mid day meal with 300 calories and 12 grams of protein is provided to all children enrolled in classes one to five. In October 2007, the scheme included students in upper primary classes of six to eight in 3,479 educationally backward blocks, and the name was changed from National Programme for Nutrition Support to Primary Education to National Programme of Mid Day Meals in Schools.

Though cooked food was to be provided, most states (apart from those already providing cooked food) chose to provide "dry rations" to students. "Dry rations" refers to the provision of uncooked 3 kg of wheat or rice to children with 80% attendance.

In April 2001, the People’s Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) initiated the public interest litigation (Civil) No. 196/2001, People’s Union for Civil Liberties v. Union of India & Others popularly known as the "right to food" case. The PUCL argued that article 21 – "right to life" of the Indian constitution when read together with articles 39(a) and 47, makes the right to food a derived fundamental right which is enforceable by virtue of the constitutional remedy provided under article 32 of the constitution. The PUCL argued that excess food stocks with the Food Corporation of India should be fed to hungry citizens. This included providing mid day meals in primary schools. The scheme came into force with the Supreme Court order dated 28 November 2001, which requires all government and government-assisted primary schools to provide cooked midday meals.
In 2002, the Constitution of India was amended (86th amendment) to alter the provision of Article 45 of the Constitution (Rampal, 2005). This makes the provision of free and compulsory education a fundamental right and affirms the old commitment of the state towards education of the citizens. The 86th amendment inserted a new Article -21A which reads: ‘The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age group of 6 to 14 years, in the manner as the state may, by law, determine’. The Tenth Plan has laid adequate emphasis on Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) with a view to ensuring completion of five years of primary schooling for children by 2007. The Tenth Plan is guided by five parameters in providing elementary education.

**Universal Access:** All children in 6-14 age groups have access to primary school, upper primary schools or their alternative with in a walking distance of 1 and 3 km. respectively.

**Universal Enrolment:** Enrolment of all children including girls, disabled children and children belonging to SCs and STs etc. in primary classes and provision of upper primary education for them.

**Universal Retention:** Universal retention in primary stage by 2007 and dropout rates to be reduced to less than 10 percent for grade VI-VIII by 2007.

**Universal Achievement:** Emphasizes the importance of quality aspects in all respects (content and process) to ensure reasonable outcomes at the elementary level.

**Equity:** Bridge all gender and social gaps in enrolment, retention and learning achievement.

On 28 November 2001, regarding the basic entitlement, the Supreme Court ordered that “ Every child in every Government and Government assisted Primary Schools with a prepared mid day meal with a minimum content of 300 calories and 8-
12 grams of protein each day of school for a minimum of 200 days”. On 20 April 2004, regarding the charges on conversion cost” The conversion costs for a cooked meal, under no circumstances, shall be removed from the children or their parents”. On 20 April, 2004, regarding central assistance “The central Government …shall also allocate funds to meet with the conversion costs of food-grains into cooked midday meals”. On 20 April 2004, regarding kitchen sheds “The central Government shall make provisions for construction of kitchen sheds”. On 20 April 2004, regarding Priority to Dalit cooks “In appointed of cooks and helpers, preference shall be given to Dalits, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes”. On 20 April 2004, regarding the Quality safeguards “Attempts shall be made for better infrastructure, improved facilities (safe drinking water etc.), closer monitoring (regular inspection etc.) and other quality safeguards as also the improvement of the contents of the meal so as to provide nutritious meal to the children of the primary schools”. On 20 April 2004, regarding the Drought areas “In drought affected areas, midday meals shall be supplied even during summer vacations”.

1.11 The nutritional guidelines for the minimum amount of food and calorie content per child per day are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Primary (class one to five)</th>
<th>Upper primary (class six to eight)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calories</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein (in grams )</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice / wheat (in grams )</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dal (in grams )</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables (in grams )</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil and fat (in grams )</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the case of micronutrients (vitamin A, iron, and folate) tablets and de-worming medicines, the student is entitled to receive the amount provided for in the school health programme of the National Rural Health Mission.

The central and state governments share the cost of the Midday Meal Scheme, with the centre providing 75 percent and the state’s 25 percent. The central government provides grains and financing for other food. Costs for facilities, transportation, and labor are shared by the federal and state governments. The participating states contribute different amounts of money. While the eleventh five-year plan allocated INR.38, 490,0000,000 for the scheme, the twelfth five-year plan has allocated INR .90,1550,000,000, a 134 percent rise. The public expenditure for the Mid Day Meal Programme has gone up from Rs. 73,240,000,000 in 2007–08 to Rs. 132,150,000,000 in 2013–14. The per day cooking cost per child at the primary level has been fixed to ₹3.59 while at the upper primary level is ₹5.38.

1.12 Mode of Implementation:

a) Decentralized model -This is the most widespread practice. In the decentralized model, meals are cooked on-site by local cooks and helpers or self-help groups. This system has the advantage of being able to serve local cuisine, providing jobs in the area, and minimizing waste. It also allows for better monitoring (e.g., by parents and teachers).

In the absence of adequate infrastructure (such as kitchen sheds, utensils etc.), it can lead to accidents and maintaining hygiene can be difficult. In 2004, 87 children died when the thatched roof of a classroom was ignited by sparks from a cooking fire,. In 2011, a child died after succumbing to burn injuries she sustained after accidentally falling into a cooking vessel.
b) **Centralized model** - In the centralized model, an external organization cooks and delivers the meal to schools, mostly through public-private partnerships. Centralized kitchens are seen more in urban areas, where density of schools is high so that transporting food is a financially viable option. Advantages of centralized kitchens include ensuring better hygiene as large scale cooking is done through largely automated processes. Various NGOs such as the Akshaya Patra Foundation, Ekta Shakti Foundation, Naandi Foundation, and Jay Gee Humanitarian Society provide mid-day meals.

A study of centralized kitchens in Delhi in 2007 found that even with centralized kitchens, the quality of food needed to be improved. The study also found that when the food arrives and is of inadequate quality, even teachers feel helpless and do not know whom to complain to.

The Ministry of Human Resource Development reported that 95% of tested meal samples prepared by NGOs in Delhi did not meet nutritional standards in 2010–12. In response, the ministry withheld 50% of the payment for the deficient meals.

International voluntary and charity organizations have assisted. Church World Service has provided milk powder to Delhi and Madras Municipal Corporation; CARE has provided corn soya meal, Bulgar wheat, and vegetable oils; and UNICEF has provided high proteins foods and educational support. In 1982, 'Food for Learning' was launched with assistance from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Initially the programme was aimed at scheduled caste and scheduled tribe girls. In 1983, the federal Department of Education prepared a scheme under the auspices of the World Food Programme to supply meals to 13.6 million scheduled caste girls and 10.09 million scheduled tribe girls in classes one to five in 15 states and three union territories. The value of the food itself was $163.27 million
per year. Labour, facilities, and transportation costs were to be paid by the state governments. The reaction among the states and union territories was mixed. Many states were interested, but some were concerned about their ability to afford it if the FAO support were to be withdrawn.

1.13 Programme Management

A programme of the scale and magnitude of the Mid Day Meal Scheme requires a Management structure which is robust and dynamic. It is imperative that the Management system at various levels is clearly articulated and the roles of the different agencies involved clearly delineated. The programme requires close cooperation and coordination of the various agencies involved in the implementation of Scheme. NP-NSPE, 2006 envisages putting in place the following Management structures at the National, State, District/ Block and Local levels.

National level

(i) National level Steering cum Monitoring Committee: Vide Notification dated 20.12.04 read with Notification dated 31.12.04, the Department of School Education and Literacy has set up a National Level Steering cum Monitoring Committee (NSMC) to oversee the implementation of the programme. The NSMC is mandated to:

(a) Guide the various implementation agencies,

(b) Monitor programme implementation, assess its impact, and take corrective steps,

(c) Take action on reports of independent monitoring/evaluation agencies,

(d) Effect coordination and convergence among concerned departments, agencies (e.g. FCI), and schemes, and
(e) the programme. Under NP-NSPE, 2006, the NSMC will also, in addition, be expected to perform the following functions:

(f) Provide policy advice to Central and State Governments, and

(g) Identify voluntary agencies and other appropriate institutions to undertake training, capacity building, monitoring and evaluation and research connected with the programme at the national level.

(ii) Programme Approval Board: Vide Order dated 9.3.06, the Department of School Education and Literacy has also set up a Programme Approval Board under the chairpersonship of Secretary, School Education and Literacy with membership of nutrition experts and representatives, inter alia, of the Departments of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Panchayat Raj, Planning Commission, Food Corporation of India, etc. The Programme Approval Board meets at the beginning of each financial year in order to consider and sanction the Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWP&B) submitted by the State Governments and UT Administrations.

(iii) National Mission for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)

The General Council and Executive Council of the National Mission for Sarva Shaksha Abhiyan (SSA) will, in addition to SSA itself, review, from time to time, Mid Day Meal Scheme also.

State/UT level

(i) States and UT administrations are also required to set up Steering cum Monitoring Committees at the State, District and Block levels to oversee the
implementation of the programme. Besides, city level SMCs should also be constituted for all cities having a Municipal Corporation. A representative of the Department of School Education and Literacy, Government of India, should be invariably invited to meetings of the State/UT level Steering cum Monitoring Committee.

(ii) Every State Government /UT Administration will designate one of its Departments as the Nodal Department, which will take responsibility for the implementation of the programme. State Governments / UT Administrations may set up Implementation Cell attached to the State Nodal Department to oversee the implementation of the programme by using a part of funds under MME.

1.14 State/ UT-specific Norms of Expenditure

Taking into account the Central assistance available under NP-NSPE, 2006, every State Government/UT Administration will prescribe and notify its own norms of expenditure on the Scheme, based on which it will allocate funds for the implementation of the programme. The norms, thus notified, will be referred to as “State norms”. The State Norms would spell out inter alia, modalities for ensuring regular and uninterrupted provision of nutritious cooked meal. To ensure uninterrupted supply of cooked food in thousands of primary schools and EGS-AIE Centres scattered across the State is a challenging task. State Governments/UT Administrations will have to develop and circulate detailed guidelines taking into account common obstacles which may come in the way of regular supply of cooked mid-day meal, including for example:

(i) Delay in flow of monetary assistance from the Centre to the States (e.g. due to late or defective Utilization Certificates or unspent balances). State Governments will
have to make adequate provision for the programme (both for centre and state) in their annual budget, in anticipation of actual flow of Central assistance. However, if for any reason, there is some delay in its actual transfer, that must not be allowed to interrupt actual provision of cooked mid-day meal to children.

(ii) Delay in release of funds sanctioned by the Central Government from the State Finance Department on account of the State’s ‘ways and means’ position. State Nodal Departments will need to ensure that the State Finance Department releases the funds intended for mid day meals expeditiously.

(iii) Delays on account of hierarchical level-wise releases from State to district to taluk/ block to gram Panchayat to School. Wherever possible States/ UT Administrations may consider electronic transfer of funds from State to Village level through banking channels.

(iv) Irregular supply of food grains from FCI go down or interruption in their timely transportation to schools. States will need to ensure that FCI gives priority to the mid-day meal programme. States should also ensure that a minimum of one-month buffer stock of food grains and cooking costs is available in each school.

(v) Failure of the local implementation agency to adequately procure and stock up cooking ingredients.

(vi) Absence of cook for any reason, etc.

1.15 Functions of State Nodal Department

(i) The Department of School Education and Literacy, MHRD will convey the district wise allocation of food grains, cooking costs, construction of kitchen-cum-store, cooking-cum-kitchen devices as approved by the MDM-PAB to the State Nodal Department and the FCI. In addition the Department of School Education and Literacy, MHRD will also convey sanctions relating to MME allocations. The State
Nodal Department will convey district-wise allocations for the next financial year to all Districts Nodal Agencies.

(ii) In States where the function of Primary Education has devolved to Panchayat Raj Institutions, the State Nodal Department will convey the district-wise allocation to the District Panchayats. The State Nodal Agency will ensure that the District Nodal Agencies have sub-allocated the monthly district allocation to the sub-district level which in turn will further allocate to each school.

**Nodal Responsibility at the District and Block Level**

(i) Every State Government/UT Administration will designate one nodal officer or agency at the district and block level (e.g. the District Collector, District/Intermediate Panchayat, etc.) who shall be assigned over-all responsibility of effective implementation of the programme at the district/block level.

(ii) In States which have devolved the function of primary education either by legislation or executive order on Panchayats, the Chief Executive Officer of District Panchayats or the Executive Officer of Block Panchayats will be the Nodal Officer with overall responsibility for effective implementation of the programme at the district level. In such States, the responsibility for implementing the programme within their jurisdiction shall be that of the Panchayats and the Urban Local Bodies concerned which have been assigned the responsibility by the State.

(iii) The District Nodal Agency will ensure that each school is informed of its monthly allocation of food grains and financial sanctions for construction of kitchen-cum-store, cooking costs, kitchen-cum cooking devices, etc. It shall also identify the Transportation Agency to transport food grains from the nearest FCI godown to school. The transportations could be done once in a month.
(iv) The district/ taluk nodal agency will also take responsibility for developing indicative menus using locally available and culturally acceptable food items.

1.16 Management at the Local Level

(i) In States which have devolved the function of primary education through legislation and/or executive order on Panchayats and Urban Local Bodies, the responsibility of implementation and day to day supervision of the programme shall be assigned to the Gram Panchayat/Municipality. Standing Committees may be constituted by the Gram Panchayats and Municipalities to oversee the implementation of the programmes. Alternatively, already existing Standing Committees, which have been assigned the task of supervising education related issues may be entrusted the task of monitoring, review and taking other necessary steps for the smooth implementation of the scheme. The Gram Panchayat/Municipality may, in turn, assign responsibility of the day-to-day management of the programme at school level to the Village Education Committee/ School Management & Development Committee or Parent-Teacher Association as the case may be. The VEC/SMDC/PTA shall be responsible for the programme to the Gram Panchayat/Municipality.

1.17 Responsibility for Cooking/Supply of Cooked Mid-Day Meal

As far as possible, responsibility for cooking/supply of cooked midday meal should be assigned to one of the following:-

(a) Local women’s/mothers’ Self-Help Group,

(b) Local Youth Club affiliated to the Nehru Yuvak Kendras,

(c) A voluntary organization fulfilling all the requirements.
(d) By personnel engaged directly by the VEC/SMDC/PTA/Gram Panchayat/Municipality.

(iii) In urban areas where a centralized kitchen setup is possible for a cluster of schools, cooking may wherever appropriate, be undertaken in a centralized kitchen and cooked hot meal may then be transported under hygienic conditions through a reliable transport system to various schools. There may be one or more such nodal kitchen(s) in an urban area, depending on the number of clusters which they serve.

1.18 Responsibility of Food Corporation of India (FCI)

It will be the responsibility of the FCI to ensure continuous availability of adequate food grains in its Depots [and in Principal Distribution Centres in the case of North East Region]. It will allow lifting of food grains for any month/quarter up to one month in advance so that supply chain of food grains remains uninterrupted. For the NP-NSPE, 2006, FCI will issue food grains of best available quality, which will in any case be at least of Fair Average Quality (FAQ). FCI has also appointed a Nodal Officer for each State to take care of various problems in supply of food grains under MDM Programme.

The District Collector/CEO of Zila Panchayat will also ensure that food grains of at least FAQ are issued by FCI after joint inspection by a team consisting of FCI and the nominee of the Collector and/or Chief Executive Officer, District Panchayat, and confirmation by them that the grain conforms to at least FAQ norms. FCI will keep samples of such food grains supplied by it for future verification and analysis; this will be available in case of any complaints regarding the quality of food grains supplied.
1.19 Nodal Agency/Agencies for Transportation of Food Grains

Transportation of food grains from nearest FCI depot to each Primary School/EGS-AIE Centre is a major logistical responsibility. State Government will be expected to make arrangements in this regard in the following manner: -

(i) Wherever appropriate, a single Govt./Semi-Government agency with State wide jurisdiction and network, e.g. State Civil Supplies Corporation, may be designated as the State Nodal Transport Agency. This Agency will be responsible for lifting food grains from FCI go downs and delivering them to designated authority at the taluk/block level. State Government will also need to make foolproof arrangements to ensure that the food grains are carried from the taluk/block level to each school, etc., in a timely manner.

(ii) Alternatively, District/ Taluks Panchayats may be assigned the responsibility for different districts/ taluks or groups of districts/ taluks in the State.

1.20 Association of Voluntary Organizations in the Programme

The major groups of activities for which Voluntary Organizations may be associated with the programme are –

- Supply of cooked mid day meal, and

- Provision of resource support to the programme, e.g.
  - Training and capacity building,
  - Monitoring and evaluation, and
  - Research.
Assignment of supply responsibilities to Voluntary Organizations:

Identification of voluntary organizations, which are suitable for being assigned supply responsibility under the NP-NSPE, 2006 for a school or group of schools may be done by the City level SMC for Municipal towns and District level SMC for all other areas. Once a voluntary organization is so identified, the decision to actually award supply work to it for a school or a group of schools may be taken by a body empowered in this behalf by the State Government, e.g. the Gram Panchayat, VEC/SMC/PTA, Municipal Committee/Corporation, etc. The City or District SMC should keep the following aspects in mind while determining suitability of a voluntary organization for supply of cooked mid day meal:

(i) The voluntary agencies should not discriminate in any manner on the basis of religion, caste and creed, and should not use the programme for propagation of any religious practice.

(ii) The voluntary agency should be a body that is registered under the Societies Registration Act or the Public Trust Act, and should have been in existence for a minimum period of two years.

(iii) Commitment to undertake supply responsibility on a no-profit basis.

(iv) Financial and logistic capacity to supply the mid day meal on the requisite scale.

(v) Commitment to abide by the parameters of NP-NSPE, 2006 particularly with regard to the prescription of eligible children, nutrition content etc

(vi) Willingness to work with PRIs/ Municipal bodies in accordance with relevant guidelines of the State Government.
(vii) It will furnish to the body assigning the work to it an Annual Report along with audited statement of accounts in terms of all grants received from the State Government, both in cash and kind, duly certified by an approved Chartered Accountant.

(viii) The voluntary organization shall not entrust/ sub-contract the programme or divert any part of the assistance (food grains/money) to any other organization/agency.

(ix) Commitment to return to the State Government any permanent/semi permanent assets acquired by the Voluntary Organization from the grants received under the programme, once the voluntary organization ceases to undertake the supply work.

(x) All accounts, stock and registers maintained by the voluntary organization should be open to inspection by officers appointed by the State Government.

(xi) State Governments may prescribe such other conditions, as they may deem appropriate in addition to the conditions stated above.

Engaging Voluntary Organizations for Resource Support

The State/UT level SMC may identify voluntary organizations for providing resource support to NP-NSPE, 2006, in the form of training and capacity building programmes, monitoring and evaluation and research studies. Guidelines for this purpose will follow after consideration in the NSM.
1.2.1 Annual Work Plan and Budget

(1) Mid Day Meal Scheme assigns importance to the preparation of Annual Work Plan & Budget (AWP&B) by States/UT Administrations based on information maintained at school level and aggregated in Block, District and State level. It envisages a bottom-up approach, rather than a top-down approach to planning. It is necessary that there is documentation of the process of plan preparation to ensure that they have been prepared at the School level through participatory planning processes.

(2) The AWP&B framework is designed to provide a comprehensive picture of present scenario in the State as far as implementation of MDMS is concerned. It contains details of Management Structure, Implementation processes, Monitoring systems, sociological break up of target groups infrastructure position, findings of evaluation studies, strategies to tackle problems, community participation, best practices and new initiatives etc.,

(3) State governments and UT Administrations will prepare a comprehensive AWP&B, *inter alia*, with detailed district-wise information on the following:-

(i) Anticipated number of working days for schools, EGS and AIE Centers, i.e. total number of school days minus vacations and other holidays.

(ii) District-wise information on the average number of children who have availed of MDM in the previous year based on school level attendance register maintained for MDM and aggregated for the block, district and state level.

(iii) District-wise information on enrolment in classes I – V and number of children who are estimated to avail of MDM in the current year.
(iv) District wise details of lifting and utilization of food grains allocated in the previous year

(v) District wise details of allocation and utilization of Central Assistance towards cooking cost in the previous year

(vi) District-wise requirement of food grains and central assistance towards cooking costs for the current year

(vii) District-wise details for construction of kitchen-cum-store

(viii) District-wise details of cooking devices (Gas conversion)

(ix) District-wise details of cooking devices (Utensils for cooking and serving)

(x) Statement of Expenditure in respect of funds released under MME during previous year

(xi) Proposal for utilization of funds under MME with a detailed Action Plan for current year

(xii) Statement of Expenditure in respect of Transport subsidy received during the previous year.

(4) Assistance for Mid-Day Meal in Summer Vacations in Drought- Affected Areas:

(i) Central Assistance will also be given for a mid-day meal in primary schools during summer vacations in areas which are formally notified by the State Government as ‘drought affected’, in accordance with its established procedure and guidelines of Government of India, if any.

(ii) Since the notification is valid for a period of one year, the State Government may submit their Action Plan in the framework of Annual Work Plan & Budget itself.

(iii) In case notification declaring an area as ‘drought-affected’ is issued at a time when summer vacation has already commenced or is about to commence, State Govt.
should provide mid-day meal in primary schools located in such areas in anticipation of release of Central assistance. Food grains for implementing the programme in summer vacation should be drawn against the concerned district’s annual allocation, which will be suitably augmented by the Ministry in due course to cover the resultant additional requirement of food grains for the year.

(5) In States where the function of Education has been transferred to Panchayat Raj Institutions, the school plans will be consolidated at the Gram Panchayat, Taluk Panchayat and Zilla Panchayat level.

(6) The AWP&B presented by the State Governments and UT Administrations will be placed before the Programme Approval Board. Approval will be contingent on the budgetary commitments made by the concerned State Governments and UT Administrations for the State’s contribution towards cooking cost. Based on the deliberations and approval accorded by the MDM-PAB, Central Assistance for the following would be sanctioned/released:

(i) District wise allocation of quantity of food grains

(ii) District wise allocation of cooking assistance

(iii) Transport subsidy (based on quantity of food grains allotted to State/UT Administration as a whole)

(iv) Funds for Management, Monitoring and Evaluation. (1.8% of item [i] to [iii] above for State/UT Administration as a whole)

(v) District wise allocation for Construction of Kitchen-cumstores

(vi) District wise allocation for provision of kitchen devices.
(7) It will be mandatory for the State Governments and UT Administrations to ensure that their budgetary allocation for MDM Programme (Plan & Non-Plan) is not reduced below the level of BE 2005-06. While seeking Central Assistance States and UTs will be required to give an undertaking that they have not actually reduced their own budgetary allocation for MDM Programme in any year below the level of BE 2005-06.

(8) It will also be mandatory for State Governments and UT Administrations to ensure that the money saved as a result of enhanced Central assistance is not diverted to purposes other than mid-day meal. Savings, if any, shall be utilized in the following order of preference:

(i) To provide essential micronutrients and de-worming medicines, and for periodic health check-up.

(ii) To provide mid-day meal of a quality better than had been the case so far;

(iii) To improve infrastructure in Primary Schools required for Mid-Day Meal (e.g. Kitchen-cum-Store, Drinking Water facilities, Smokeless Chulha/ Gas-based cooking, etc.),

(iv) To improve supervision, monitoring and evaluation.

The following schedule of activities is proposed for timely and efficient release of funds:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No.</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>State Government/ UT Administration to forward AWP&amp;B to Department of School Education and Literacy, MHRD</td>
<td>January/ February each year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>AWP&amp;B appraisal by Department of School Education and Literacy, MHRD As received in January/</td>
<td>February each year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Placing AWP&B in PAB
   March/April each year

4. Issue of sanctions indicating food-grains allocations and other components of Central Assistance
   April each year

5. Release of 1st installment subject to unspent balances available with the State Government/UT Administration not exceeding 20% of the previous year’s releases
   April/May each year

6. Release of 2nd installment based on progress of expenditure incurred out of the first installment released.
   September/October each year

Source www.india.together.org

Reimbursement to FCI

The information on quantity of food grains supplied contained in the bills submitted by the FCI to the MHRD would be forwarded to the State Nodal Department for verification before reimbursements are made. The State Nodal Departments must certify that the figures of quantity of food grains submitted by FCI are correct. State Nodal Departments are also required to furnish monthly district-wise information on the lifting of food grains in Form 1 by the 15th of each ensuing month. State Nodal Departments must ensure that there is no discrepancy in the bills submitted by FCI and the monthly district-wise information on the lifting of food-grains furnished in Form 1 in the interest of efficient settlement of FCI’s reimbursement claims.

Release of Transport Subsidy

Reimbursement of Transport subsidy will be made on the basis of the information furnished in Form 2, viz., Quarterly Claim for Transport Subsidy. The Quarterly Claim for Transport subsidy must be furnished by the 15th of the month
following the Quarter. MHRD will release transport subsidy to the State Nodal Transport Agency / concerned directly, under intimation to the State Nodal Department. Transport subsidy for the extra food grains consumed on account of providing mid-day meal during summer vacation will be claimed in the same manner.

**Periodic Returns:** The State Nodal Department will furnish progress reports on the Scheme to the Ministry of HRD, as per following details:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No.</th>
<th>Title of Return</th>
<th>Due date for receipt in the Ministry</th>
<th>Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Monthly Report on Off-take of Food grains</td>
<td>15th of the following month</td>
<td>Form-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Quarterly claim towards transport subsidy</td>
<td>15th of the month following the Quarter</td>
<td>Form-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Quarterly Progress Report (QPR)</td>
<td>Within one month from the end of the Quarter</td>
<td>Form-3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source www.india.together.org*

It may be noted that the proforma for the QPR includes, *inter alia*, information regarding coverage of children, progress of provision of infrastructure, and unspent balance of Central assistance at the end of the quarter. Failure to furnish information about unspent balance will affect further release of Central assistance.

**Utilization Certificate**

Utilization Certificates (UCs) in respect of Central assistance provided by way of (a) free food grains, (b) food grains in drought-affected areas during summer vacations, will be expected to be provided by the State Nodal Department to the MHRD for each financial year as on 31st March of the previous year in respect of the
food grains lifted. This Utilisation Certificate will be required to be furnished by the 30th of June in Form 4 of the following financial year.

1.22 Display of Information under Right to Information Act

At the school level, the following information should be displayed on a weekly/monthly basis as suo moto information under the Right to Information Act.

(i) Quantity of food grains received, date of receipt.

(ii) Quantity of food grains utilized

(iii) Other ingredients purchased, utilized

(iv) Number of children given mid day meal.

(v) Daily Menu

(vi) Roster of Community Members involved in the programme

This is one of the steps the MHRD has initiated to monitor the implementation of the MDMS. State governments have been advised to fix monthly targets for inspection of MDM. As per the directives, on an average, 25 per cent of primary schools should be visited every quarter and the remaining at least once every year. In addition to above, the States and UTs shall also develop dedicated mechanism for public grievance redressal, which should be widely publicized and made easily accessible (like toll free call facility etc.).

The government of India proposed a mechanism monitoring MDM in India as follow:
### Committees to Monitor the MDM Programme:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Committee</th>
<th>Frequency of meeting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>The national level steering / monitoring committee Program Approval Board (PAB)</td>
<td>Quarterly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>The state level steering / monitoring committee</td>
<td>Quarterly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>The district level committee</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal</td>
<td>The municipal committee</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block</td>
<td>The Mandal level committee</td>
<td>Fortnightly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village</td>
<td>Panchayat level sub-committee</td>
<td>Day-to-day functioning of the implementing of the scheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>School management and development committee or Parent Teacher Association.</td>
<td>Monthly and as when it is required</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The government of India Review Missions on Mid Day Meal Scheme, comprising members from the central government, state governments, UNICEF, and the office of the Supreme Court commissioner was created in 2010 to review the programme and offer suggestions for improvement. The scheme is independently monitored twice a year.

According to the MHRD directives, the inspections need to be simple and to capture vital parameters required for the effective implementation of programmes at the ground level. Field visits should be made frequently but unannounced and it should be used for critical observation and interviewing broad range of individuals involved in the programme. Inspection reports are to be documented and they should
be analyzed in depth and linked with previous reports on the same centres. The findings of the report should be documented and reported in steering-cum-monitoring committee meetings at all levels and suitable remedial/corrective measures should be initiated without any delay. Most importantly the social science institutions are entrusted with the task of monitoring the MDMS.

1.24 Significance of the Study

To attain the goal of universal primary education, many schemes have been launched by the central Government in partnership with the states. The 93rd amendment of constitution has made free and compulsory education as a “Fundamental Right” for all children in the age group of 6-14 years. Many schemes like Sarva Shiksha Avhiyan (SSA), National Literacy Mission and Operation Blackboard have been started to achieve this goal. In the same way, “National Programme of Nutritional Support for Primary Education” which is popularly known as the “Mid-Day Meal Scheme” was launched by the Government of India in 1995. The main objective of the MDM is to attain the goal of universalisation of primary education. To achieve this objective, emphasis is laid on increasing the enrollment, attendance and retention of children in primary classes. Simultaneously, the aim of this scheme is to improve the nutritional status of these students. It is a known fact that many children of poor and backward families reach to school on empty stomach. Mid Day Meal Scheme aims to overcome the problem of classroom “hunger” which is a major obstacle in the path of effective and efficient education system. This scheme is also contributing to narrow down the gender and social distances in the society. The goals of “social equity” and “gender equity” are being realized with the help of MDM scheme.
Many studies conducted by the researchers to analyse the impact of MDM Programme and found that mid-day meal has become an integral part of the school-life. Some of the studies like, Lhungdim T. & Kapoor K.C. 2013, Josephine (2008), Chugh (2008), Josephine et al. (2008), Mallik (2008), S Kaushal (2009), Narula (2009), Jayaraman et al. (2009), Singh (2010), Chauhan (2011), Garg (2012), Paul and Mondal (2012), Uma (2013), Chaudhury and Mondal (2015), Sarkar and Bhattacharyya (2015), verma (2015), Giri et al. (2016), Acham et al. (2012), revealed that this scheme has had positive impact on student’s enrolment, retention and attendance. Most of the children and parents expressed their satisfaction on the implementation of MDMS. According to the parents of the children the education, health and nutrition of their children have improved because of MDM scheme.

The studies conducted by Lhungdim T. & Kapoor K.C. 2013, Josephine (2008), Chugh (2008), Josephine et al. (2008), Mallik (2008), Kaushal (2009), Narula (2009), Jayaraman et al.(2009), Singh (2010), Chauhan (2011), Acham et al (2012), Garg (2012), Paul and Mondal (2012), Uma (2013), Chaudhury and Mondal (2015), Sarkar and Bhattacharyya (2015), verma (2015), Giri et al. (2016) also found that MDM Programme has been one of the best means to cultivate good habits like washing hands before and after meals and in educating them about the importance of clean water, good hygienic environment and other related matters. By breaking the shackles of caste, creed and class among the children, MDM is also fostering egalitarian values among the children. MDM has fostered the feeling of co-operation, sharing, co-ordination and fraternity, thereby, leading the development of children emotionally and socially also. Because of the implementation of MDM, the children are feeling them more relaxed, stress free and secure.
Garg (2012), carried out a study on Impact of Mid Day Meal Programme on School Participation, Nutritional Status and Educational Attainments which showed that school attendance for girls and SC, ST children, particularly from lower economic classes, has improved after the introduction of MDM. Another study was conducted by Paul & Mondal (2012) on Impact of Mid-day Meal Programme on Academic Performance of Students which revealed that there is a significant association between mid-day meal program and academic achievement of students. Schindler (2010), conducted a study on the Effect of Nutrition Education on Children’s Healthy Food Choices, which shows that nutritional education has made significant difference in the food choices made by the students. Bonds (2012) has done a study on Food for Thought: Evaluating the Impact of India’s Mid-Day Meal Program on Educational Attainment and revealed that the Programme beneficiaries come from poorer, larger households in primarily rural areas, with both lower household income levels and lower levels of parental education. However, looking into the literature of research studies it was found that none of the studies related to the Mid Day Meal programme has been conducted in Arunachal Pradesh. Therefore, the researcher gets motivated to take the following research study in hand which forms an important area of research. This study also will help the policy makers and implementing agencies to monitor the programme and to find out the lacuna of failure if any so. This research has shown the true picture about the functioning of MDM in Arunachal Pradesh.

1.25 Statement of the problem

Mid Day Meal Programme in Arunachal Pradesh: A Critical Study
1.26 **Objectives of the study:** The researcher formulated the following objectives in accordance to the nature of the research problem. They were

1. To study the enrolment and coverage of children under MDM scheme in Arunachal Pradesh.
2. To find out the regularity of MDM in primary and upper primary schools.
3. To study the quality of MDM in Arunachal Pradesh.
4. To investigate the problems in implementation of MDM in Arunachal Pradesh.
5. To study the physical infrastructure for mid day meal in schools.
6. To study the participation of SMC’s and Parents in MDM programme.
7. To study the attitude of teachers and community members towards MDM scheme.

1.27 **Hypotheses of the Study**

In the view of above objectives of this study, the researcher formulated the following hypotheses:

i. The elementary teachers have favorable attitude towards MDM scheme.

ii. There is no significant difference in the attitude of male and female elementary school teachers towards MDM scheme.

iii. The community members have favorable attitude towards MDM scheme.

iv. There is no significant difference in the attitude of male and female community members towards MDM scheme.

v. There is no significant difference in the attitude of non-tribal and tribal community members towards MDM scheme.
1.28 Delimitations of the Study

The Present study was delimited to:

i. Three districts of Arunachal Pradesh, i.e. East Siang, West Siang and Papumpare only.

ii. Primary and upper primary schools of selected districts only.

iii. 600 teachers and 600 community members of 3 districts only.

1.29 Operational Term Used

The term used in the present study are defined as follows:

i. MDM: MDM stands for Mid Day Meal programme. It is a free school meal programme designed to improve the nutritional status of school age children nationwide.

ii. Elementary school: The school which covered Children studying Class I to VIII run by the government of Arunachal Pradesh.

iii. Attitude: Attitude usually means disposition or state of mind. In MDM we use attitude as tendency to react favorably or unfavorably towards MDM scheme.

iv. Quality: Quality talks about the standard of something as measured against other things of a similar kind; the degree of excellence of something. In MDM we talk about the exact amount ingredient and variety prescribe by government of India to be given to children in MDM scheme.
v. **Children:** A young person especially between infancy and youth are called children. Here, in the study we mean children of class 1 to VIII who are studying in schools run by the government of Arunachal Pradesh.

vi. **Physical infrastructures:** Infrastructure talks about the basic facilities, services and installation needed for the functioning of a community or society. In MDM infrastructures includes kitchen sects, Utensils. Gas, firewood.