



Mid-Day Meal Programme In Selected Schools At Kumarghat Sub-Division Under Unakoti District Of Tripura: A Study And Analysis Of The Present Condition.

Mr. Anirban Sen & Dr. Uttam Kumar Das,
Guest Lecturer (English), Assistant Professor (Physics)
College of Teacher Education, Kumarghat, Unakoti, Tripura

Abstract:

MDM, Presently PM-POSHAN (Prodhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman) considered as the largest programme in the world which provide lunch to school students in primary and elementary level without cost, introduced and implemented for serving the purpose of providing nutrition primarily along with the motive to increase the gross enrolment and retention a reality in school education. This scheme also provide free access to food for a large number of students which can cater the need of nutrition and food for economically backward areas of the nation state of India. This paper can be a useful document for validation in economically backward areas and rural villages where Mid Day Meal actually serving the primary objectives of the project. Schools under Kumarghat sub-division, Unakoti district of Tripura are taken into consideration for the study. This paper studies the impact of Mid Day Meal programme on students' at elementary level school children and the challenges faced after the implementation. For fulfilling the purpose 5 schools of kumarghat sub-division of Unakoti district been taken into consideration which aims at finding befitting measure to make Mid Day Meal more effective by providing more possible and appropriate ways for school children. This paper uses both primary and secondary data for meeting the need of the research. Purposive sampling is the method used intentionally in this paper.

Keywords:

Mid Day Meal, Tripura, Elementary Education, Unakoti, Kumarghat, PM Poshan.

Introduction:

The royal chronology of Tripura, i.e. Rajmala, noted the history of 184 kings reigned over the hilly land and terrains of the state of Tripura and the state's merging with Union of India, 1949. Which changed the entire political, social, and economical scenario of Tripura followed by obtaining the status of "C" category state in the year 1956 as a Union Territory (UT).

The North District, with its sub-division located in the city Kailashahar, official works are being done mostly from the city along with Kumarghat, another adjacent city but later the entire office been relocated in just one city. i.e. Kailashahar on November 13, 1987 at Gournagar, newly constructed complex. Following this, on 14.04.1995, North Tripura District was further divided, leading to the establishment of a new district named "DHALAI DISTRICT" with its district headquarters in Ambassa. In 2012, North Tripura District experienced another bifurcation, resulting in the formation of "UNAKOTI DISTRICT"

with its headquarters in Kailashahar, while the headquarters for North Tripura district was relocated to Dharmanagar.

Honourable Supreme Court of India directed the state government of MDM, where state government is liable to provide cooked meals maintaining the quality and hygiene for the primary school children, which was started from 1st April 2003, as the MDM programme presently PM-POSHAN. In the year 2008, MDM and its coverage become extended and Upper Primary school children from now onwards can enjoy free lunch and meals at school. At present the Central Government also grants financial support for cooking costs to the state at a rate of Rs. 3.47 for each children in primary and Rs. 5.20 to upper primary along with a collaboration of central and state further grants of Rs 0.50 and Rs.0.58 is been provided to the primary and upper primary successively, not just limited to these but also provides other allocations like honorariums for cook and helpers and for kitchen along with storage through a ratio of 90:10 central-state funding model.

This paper based on the primary data tries to find out effectiveness of Mid Day Meal scheme in students nutritional need and how Mid Day Meal can be a key pillar and initiative by the central and state government for over all upliftment of education and resource building based on the objectives and purpose. Primary and secondary schools under Kumarghat sub-division are the sources from where data been assembled and analyzed.

The five schools are:

- I. Chandrakha Para S.B School,
- II. Chittangangbasti Junior Basic School,
- III. Kumarghat Railway Colony S.B. School,
- IV. PM Shri Pabiacherra Colony H.S. School,
- V. Noydrone High School.

Objectives:

The objectives of the present paper are mentioned below:

1. To find out the rate of students having Mid Day Meal on daily basis.
2. To examine MDM schemes effectiveness in attendance, retention of children in schools.
3. To explore the quality of food items and hygiene maintained by the school authorities for MDM.
4. To understand the challenges faced by school authorities and people involve in MDM scheme in implementation.
5. To come up with effective and feasible ways to make MDM scheme more effective.

Illustration of the Study:

The five schools are investigated and observed thoroughly, Mid Day Meal record, Menu chart, Feeding Register, Cash book are scrutinized along with thorough talk with the assigned personas liable to look after matters of MDM scheme in those schools and also the cook and support staff for further understanding the present scenario of those schools which leads to findings like continuous daily basis check of quality assurance of food items and tasting register, awareness of students guardian, School managing committees liabilities discipline and cleanliness maintained in kitchen where Mid Day Meal is prepared, sincerity of the teachers along with limitations and few areas needed improvement like proper water facility for washing hands and utensils, maintenance of cash book, seasonal availability of raw materials for cooking, store area for keeping rice and others, maintenance of sitting places where lunch being taking i.e. dining room of the schools are the some areas. The uniform mid day meal menu of the 5 school is mentioned below in table 1.

Table 1: Mid Day Meal Menu Chart:

Menu chart	
MONDAY	KHICHDI
TUESDAY	EGG-CURRY
WEDNESDAY	VEG-CURRY
THURSDAY	EGG- CURRY
FRIDAY	VEG-CURRY
SATURDAY	KHICHDI

Review of Literature:

Mid Day Meal scheme of India, presently PM Poshan has a vast impact along with its affect it also draws attention of critics, literature review on this can be further proof though it has changed many aspects in school education but many more can be done and those studies of. Researchers can be considered as the fundamental documents which can contribute to the further progress and more realistic and appropriate implementation of the scheme.

Singh Manju and Mishra Niharranjan (2010), in a research titled "Evaluation Study on Mid Day Meal programme in Meghalaya", talked about the challenges and obstacles faced by the authorities by evaluating the programme and the involvement and contribution of stakeholders at separate levels.

Thapa Smrutisikta (2017) on a research titled "Impact of the midday meal programme on primary education in Odisha: A study in the Tarbha block of Subarnapur district." Not only illustrated about the teaching learning process but also put light on MDM scheme which helps to reduce the classroom struggles of student due to hunger, particularly in backward areas with economical strains. This study further mentioned the importance of regular food grains supply, infrastructural development and the upkeep of cleanliness and hygiene for smooth and effective running of MDM scheme.

Hamid Yawar and Hamid Asmat (2012), in their study "Mid-day Meal Scheme and Growth of Primary Education: A Case Study of District Anantnag in Jammu and Kashmir," their study shows the effectiveness of MDM in retention and reducing dropout rates in school and contributing to greater no of enrolment while at the same time pointed out the various implementation issues limiting the overall efficacy.

Kaushal Savita (2009) conducted a study titled "Study of best practices in the implementation of midday meal programme in Rajasthan", this study of them also identify the best practices at state and school levels in forming good habits among students and how cooked meal had become a part and parcel of daily school routine without any disruption in classroom activities.

Methodology:

Study Design: In this present study on Mid Day Meal scheme, (PM Poshan) both qualitative and quantitative approaches are adopted for the sake of better understanding, relevance and validation of the study and also to promote further research based on it to mitigate the challenges faced after implementing Mid Day Meal in schools under Kumarghat sub-division.

Quantitative and Qualitative component of the study:

Quantitative components like numerical data and statistical analysis has done to understand rate of students having MDM regularly along with analysis of components like documents, observation of the MDM register, food tasting register, cash book register are observed for developing a solid base for evaluating, accessing, analyzing, interpreting the present status of MDM scheme run by the selective school to make enrolment and mass retention a reality.

Area of Study:

The research focused and limited to the 5 selective schools under Kumarghat sub-division of Unakoti district.

Study Population:

Students from class (I-V) and class (VI-VIII) are the targeted group or the population under study of the schools selected purposefully.

Data Collection tools:

Statistical analysis and illustration: Those data assimilated are presented using data tools like Microsoft graph chart and tables simultaneously for all 5 schools serially to understand the present condition and find out the challenges.

Survey of documents and register: MDM register/ feeding register, taste register, cash book register of schools are collected and data taken accordingly.

Questionnaire: structured questionnaire was used to collect data for quantitative purpose. And lastly a table been inserted based on the data collected which mainly focus on the health and hygiene level of MDM scheme on those schools.

Data tools used in this study are morally ethically considered and the people and participants identity been kept confidential.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

Table 2: Description of MDM register collected from School (Chandrakha Para S.B. School)

DAY	Class wise attendance of student			Total no. of students Served meal	Total Enrolment (72)	% of Students availed MDM (col 5X 100/ col.6)	Menu
	Class VI	Class VII	Class VII				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
MONDAY	30	17	11	58	72	80.55%	KHICHDI
TUESDAY	29	17	12	58	72	80.55%	EGG-RICE
WEDNESDAY	28	18	12	58	72	80.55%	VEG-RICE
THURSDAY	31	18	12	61	72	84.72%	EGG-RICE
FRIDAY	30	20	07	57	72	79.16%	VEG-RICE

SATURDAY	26	20	09	55	72	76.38%	KHICHDI
----------	----	----	----	----	----	--------	---------

The above Table 2 shows the day wise mid day meal consumption by no. of students of Chandrakha Para S.B. School and the food menu for each day from Monday to Saturday. A weekly chart has been used and showed based on the primary data collected from school. where enrolment and percentage of students having lunch under MDM scheme is quite well though 20-30 percent still needs to be included, where total enrolment is 72 and day wise attendance ranging between seventy six to near about eighty five percent which shows still some are debarred and need to be included.

Table 3: Illustration of Data in graphical manner taken from school (Chandrakha Para S.B. School)

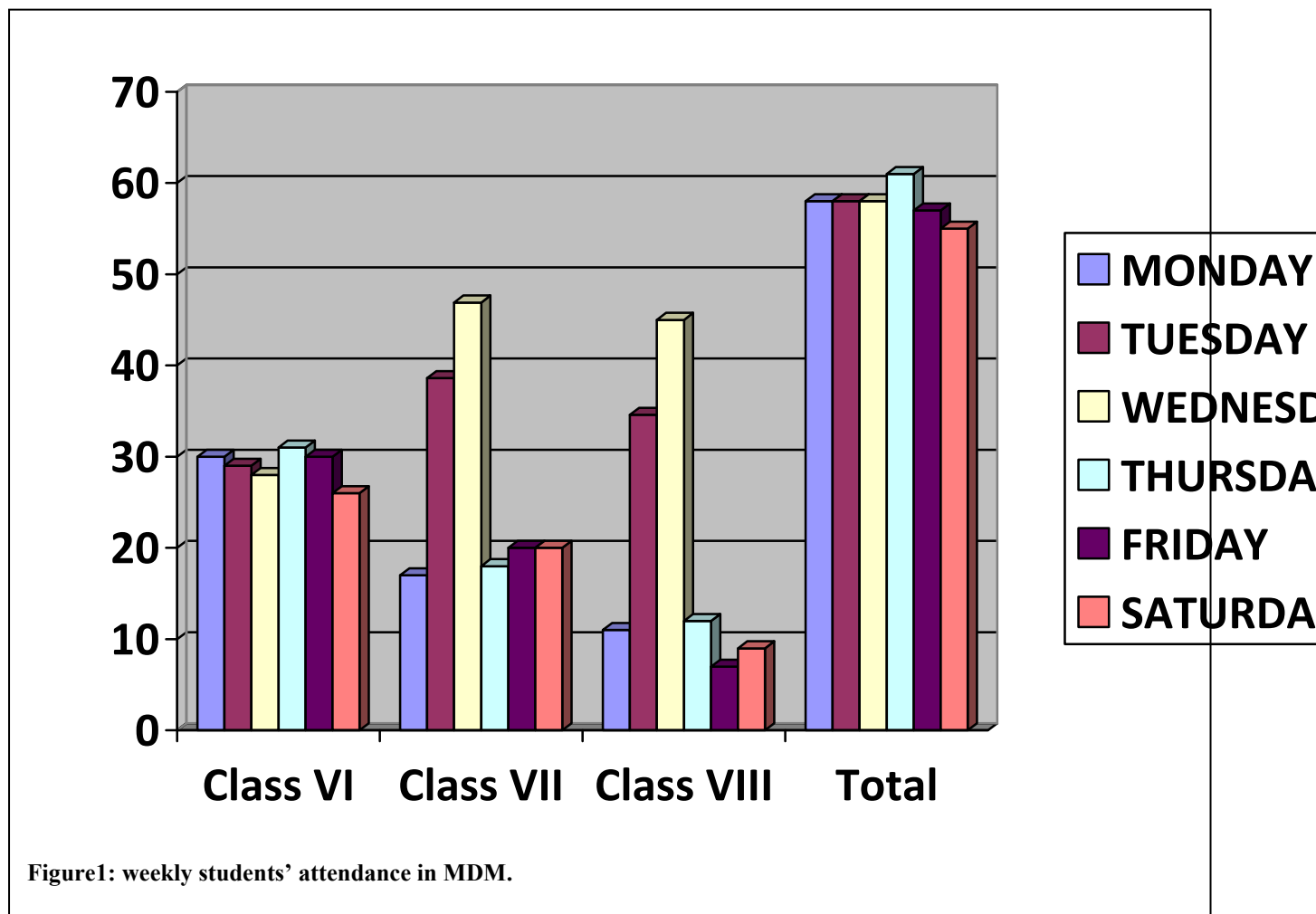


Table 3 gives an over view in a graphical manner of the day and class wise the no of students been attended MDM. It is just what the table 1 describes mentioning exact no along with percentage.

Table 4: Description of MDM register collected from School (Chittagangbasti J.B. School)

DAY	Class wise attendance of student					Total Meal served	Total Enrolment	%	Menu
	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MONDAY	12	10	14	9	12	57	58	98.27	KHICHDI
TUESDAY	10	8	14	8	11	51	58	87.93	EGG-RICE
WEDNESDAY	12	9	13	9	10	53	58	91.37	VEG-RICE
THURSDAY	12	10	11	9	11	53	58	91.37	EGG-RICE
FRIDAY	11	8	13	7	12	51	58	87.93	VEG-RICE
SATURDAY	10	10	12	8	12	52	58	89.66	KHICHDI

The table 4 shows the data of Chittagangbasti J.B. school where the no of students under MDM scheme is quite satisfactory with enrolment of 58 no. this table illustrates the day wise routine meal as per MDM in Tripura and the students present on that day along with the exact and definite no periodically.

Table 5: Illustration of Data in graphical manner taken from school (Chittagangbasti J.B. School)

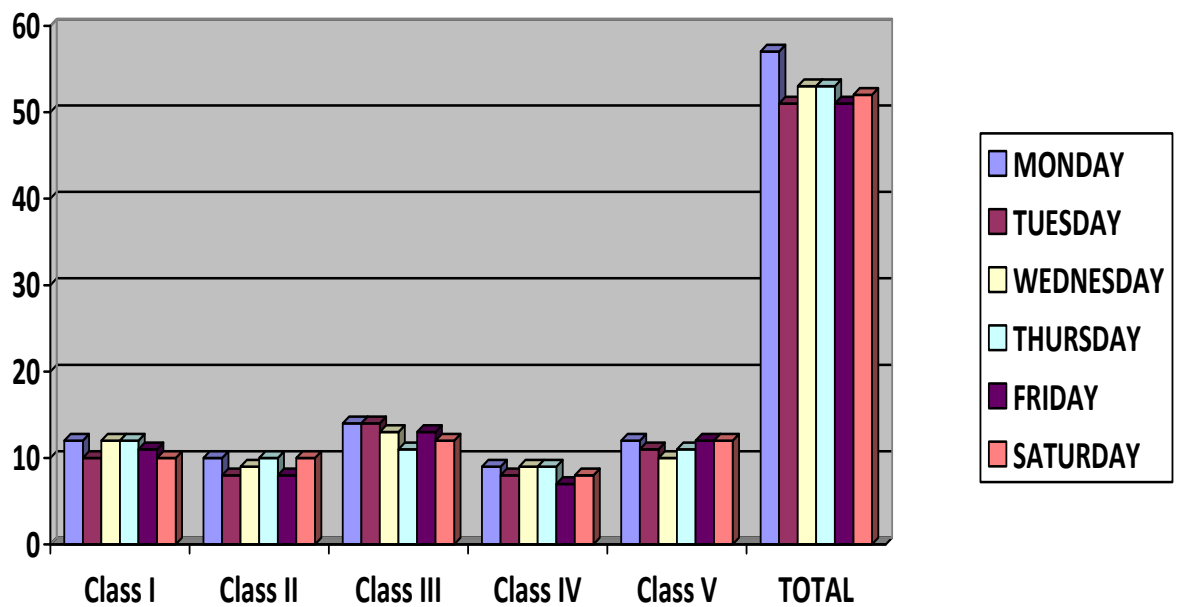


Figure 2: weekly students' attendance in MDM.

The above, table 5 is the graphical demonstration of data base mentioned above in the table no 5 of the same school.

Table 6: Description of MDM register collected from School (Kumarghat Railway Colony S.B. School)

DAY	Class wise attendance of student			Total no. of students present	Total Enrolment (68)	% of Students availed MDM (col 5X 100/ col.6)	Menu
	Class VI	Class VII	Class VII				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
MONDAY	6	4	6	16	68	23%	KHICHDI
TUESDAY	6	7	11	24	68	35%	EGG-RICE
WEDNESDAY	9	12	12	33	68	49%	VEG-RICE
THURSDAY	7	10	10	27	68	40	EGG-RICE
FRIDAY	8	5	6	19	68	28%	VEG-RICE
SATURDAY	3	6	7	16	68	24%	KHICHDI

Table no 6 demonstrates the weekly attendance of no of students and the percentage having mid day meal day wise with a total enrolment of 68 all together, Kumarghat Railway colony facing challenges regarding Mid Day Meal where the data shows minimum willingness from students .

TABLE 7: Illustration of Data in graphical manner taken from school (Kumarghat Railway Colony S.B. School)

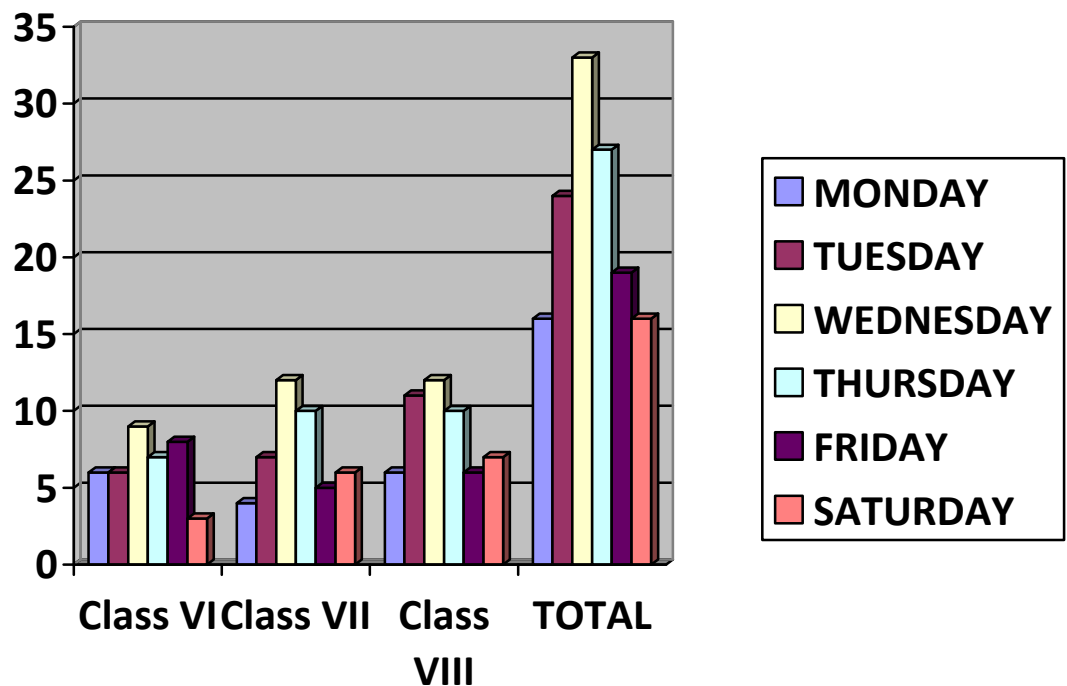


Figure 3: weekly students' attendance in MDM.

Table 7 is the graphical representation of weekly students attended MDM.

Table 8: Description of MDM register collected from school (PM Shri Pabiacherra Colony H.S. School)

DAY	Class wise attendance of student			Total no. of students present (138)	Total no of students Enrolment (162)	% of Students availed MDM	Menu
	Class VI (44)	Class VII (58)	Class VII (60)				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
MONDAY	32	48	50	130	162	80.25%	KHICHDI
TUESDAY	30	46	48	124	162	76.54%	EGG-RICE
WEDNESDAY	31	47	50	128	162	79.01%	VEG-RICE
THURSDAY	34	46	51	131	162	80.86%	EGG-RICE
FRIDAY	35	44	52	131	162	80.86%	VEG-RICE
SATURDAY	30	45	50	125	162	77.16%	KHICHDI

Table 8 it the data of MDM register of that school collected which indicates a good number of enrolment in Mid Day Meal of that school with total of 162, and students weekly rate of attending the MDM programme is quite well ranging between seventy seven to eighty one percent (rounded up).

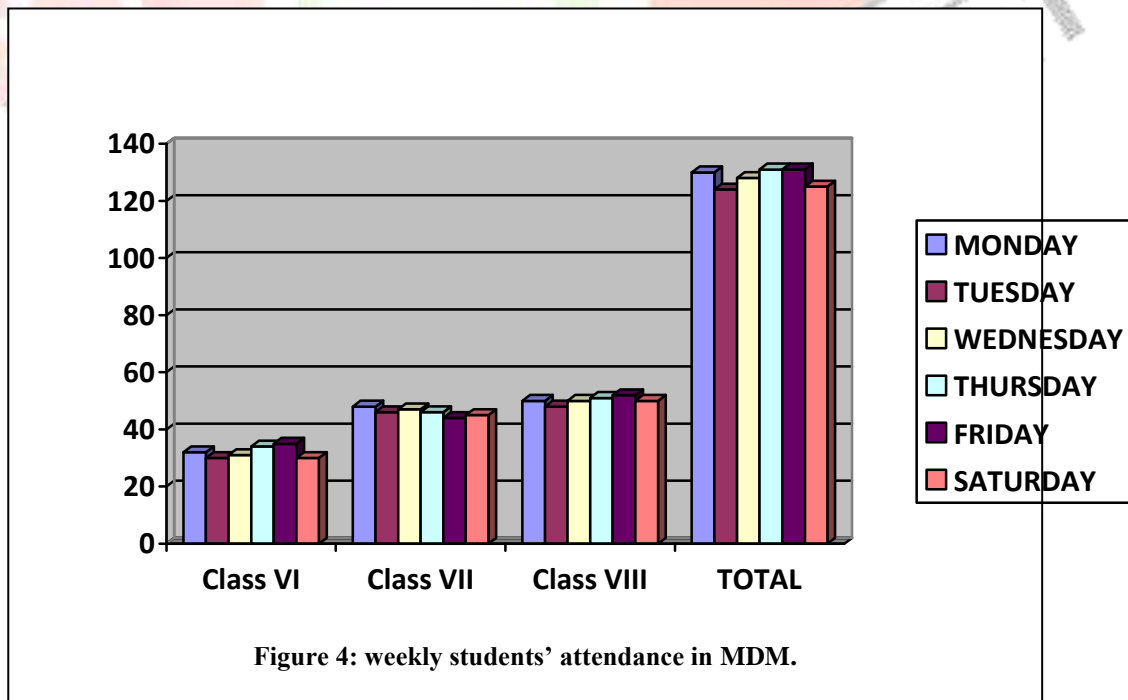
**Table 9: Illustration of Data in graphical manner taken from school (PM Shri Pabiacherra Colony)**

Table 9 is the weekly attendance in MDM programme by Students of PM Shri Pabiacherra Colony in graphical mode precisely bar chart graph.

Table 10: Description of MDM register collected from school (Noydrone High School)

DAY	Class wise attendance of student			Total no. of students Served meal	Total Enrolment	% of Students availed MDM (col 5X 100/ col.6)	Menu
	Class VI	Class VII	Class VII				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
MONDAY	29	46	36	117	163	71.78%	KHICHDI
TUESDAY	28	46	40	114	163	69.94%	EGG-RICE
WEDNESDAY	35	43	41	119	163	73.01%	VEG-RICE
THURSDAY	41	54	41	136	163	83.43%	EGG-RICE
FRIDAY	41	58	41	140	163	85.89%	VEG-RICE
SATURDAY	41	52	38	131	163	80.36%	KHICHDI

Table 10 is the textual data presented by survey and collection from Noydrone High School and it is the weekly data from Monday to Saturday. The no of enrolled students under MDM is 163 with seventy two to eighty six percent students attending Mid Day Meal in that week when the study is conducted.

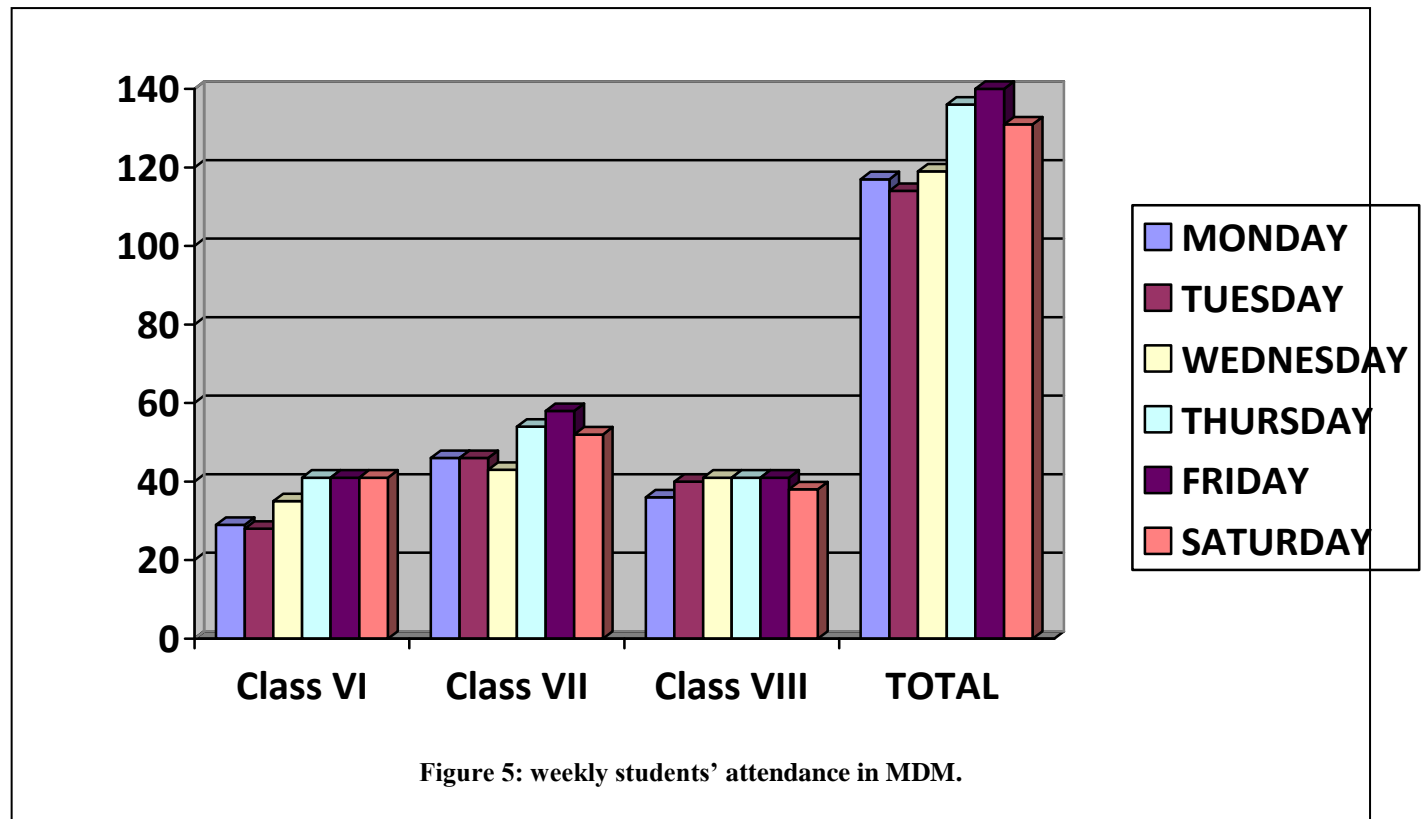
Table 11: Illustration of Data in graphical manner taken from school Noydrone High School)

Table 11 is the bar graph chart of Noydrone High school and it represent the attendance of students in MDM in a week.

Table 12: Comparative data table based on primary data collected from 5 schools

Items	CHANDRAKHA PARA S.B. SCHOOL	CHITTAGANGBASTI J.B. SCHOOL	KUMARGHAT RAILWAY CONOLY S.B. SCHOOL	PM SHRI PABIACHERRA CONOLY H.S. SCHOOL	NOYDRONE HIGH SCHOOL
1.KITCHEN:	Clean	Clean	Clean	Clean	Clean
a. Cleanliness Of kitchen:					
b. Utensils are kept:	Organized	Organized	Organized	Organized	Organized
c. Materials stored:	In Packet and plastic bottle	In Packet and plastic bottle	In Packet and plastic bottle	In Packet and plastic bottle	In Packet and plastic bottle
2.STORE ROOM	Clean	Clean	Clean	Clean	Clean
a. Cleanliness:					
b. Container for rice:	Steel container	Contained in jute bags	Steel container or iron pot	Steel container	Steel container
c. Quality of rice:	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good

3.COOK a. No of cook:	4	4	5	2	2
b. Wear cap and apron:	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.WASHING CONDITIONS a. Students washed hands and utensils (own use):	Very few	Few	Few	Few	Few
5.DINING ROOM a. dedicated dining room:	No, class room used as a dining room	No	No	No	No

The above table 12 is purposefully mention which shows the kitchen provision of the schools selected for conducting the study which also includes information like no of cook, store room facilities, condition of kitchen and the store, children awareness about health and hygiene, availability of water for washing utensil, hands.

Result and Discussion:

The study done on the 5 schools of Kumarghat sub-division under Unakoti district highlight the government holistic approach towards the circulation of education and literacy by providing nutritious food and making school education more enjoyable. The fertile ground of the study is based on its data which collected in a period of time through numerous tools. The results are also quite satisfactory for all school beside some factors which can be seen as an obstacle for further growth.

In schools though MDM (PM-Poshan) is a flagship programme which been implemented more than a decade before the state and the school of Kumarghat sub-division has quite abruptly adopted it and the community awareness also done by the authorities though helps people realize its importance. The study report of Chandrakha Para School with enrolment under MDM is seventy and highest attended students no in a week is sixty one which is eighty to eighty five percent, Chittagangbasti J.B. School with enrolment of fifty eight no students highest attendance is fifty seven which is quite well and percentage ranging between eighty eight to ninety-nine , Kumarghat Railway Colony S.B. School with enrolment no of sixty eight and highest attendance in a week is thirty and is the lowest among the five school studied in a weekly basis, with a percentage of twenty three to forty nine, PM Shri Pabiacherrra Colony H.S. School is the next school studied where enrolment is quite large under MDM is one hundred sixty two and the highest no of student present in a week is also well i.e. one hundred thirty one with a percentage ranging from seventy seven to eighty one, and the last school is Noydrone High School with the highest number of enrolment among the five schools i.e. one hundred sixty three and the highest no of students attended in a week is also one hundred forty with a percentage of seventy two to eighty six.

The schools management committee, stakeholders and the teaching and non-teaching staff of those schools are also quite aware of these matter though they are constantly trying and the comparative study in table 12 tells us that water crisis, dedicated dining room, store room facilities, availability of raw materials for cooking and students awareness and guardian involvement in health and hygiene needs more focus and efforts along with infrastructural development.

Benefits of MDM:

1. Increase in retention and enrolment after implementation of MDM in schools.
2. Students 'nutritional support and problem of malnutrition to some extent improved.
3. Child labor due to poverty also decreased.
4. Employment and workability in school increased.
5. Community involvement improved in schools.

Limitation of the study:

1. Limited number of school studied.
2. Only particular week is observed.
3. Some data got affected due to variables.
4. Stakeholder cannot be approached personally for data collection.
5. Limited time for assessment.

Conclusion:

Though MDM can be seen as a great initiative and success in the vast scenario also in the district of Unakoti Tripura with slight change and more involvement of authorities and stakeholder can be more fruitful also continuous monitoring from school as well as communities to enlarge the umbrella and also updating the overall food quality sometimes changes in menu can also break the monotony. More emphasis and government funding can be an effective step along with implementation of digital tools to measure quality of raw materials for health and hygiene can be revolutionary.

Reference:

1. North Tripura District, <https://northtripura.nic.in/history/>
2. Unakoti District, <https://unakoti.nic.in/>
3. Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman, (PM POSHAN), Ministry of Education Government of India, <https://pmposhan.education.gov.in/>
4. Tripura, Innovative Practices followed in the State, https://pmposhan.education.gov.in/Files/Best_Practices/Tripura/Best_Practices-Tripura-2015-16.html
5. Directorate of Elementary Education, Education (School) Department, Government of Tripura, <https://elementaryeducation.tripura.gov.in/mid-day-meal>
6. Singh, Manju. 2010, Evaluation Study on Mid-Day Meal Programme in Meghalaya, Council for Social Development South Regional Centre.
7. Thapa, Smrutisikta, 2017, Impact of Mid- Day Meal Programme in Primary Education of Odisha: A study in Tarbha Block of Subarnapur District.
8. Hamid, Yawar, Hamid, Asmat, 2012, Mid-Day-Meal Scheme and Growth of Primary Education: A Case Study of District Anantnag in Jammu and Kashmir.
9. Kaushal, Savita, 2009, a study of Best Practices in the Implementation of Mid-Day Meal Programme in Rajasthan.
10. Singh, Neha, 2019, Evaluation of Mid Day Meal programme on grass root level in India, Journal of Pharmacognosy and Phytochemistry, 8(3); 1039-1046.