

[BIJU ABRAHAM]

THE SHAME OF POVERTY

**A Comparative Analysis Of The Shaming Experience In Welfare
Programmes Provided By Public And Private Institutions**

**Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences,
Faculty of Social Sciences**

Abstract

Abstract

In recent years there has been an increase in the public expenditure for providing welfare assistance to the people. With the UN convention making the access to social welfare to maintain a decent standard of living as a fundamental human right, the government intervention has increased not only to reduce the general poverty but for enhancing the human capital. due to the universal coverage, the huge number of participants and the insufficient government resources, in addition to the public institutions, private institutions are also participate in its implementation. Mid Day Meal Scheme in India one of the welfare programmes covering all the school going students from class one to class eight are aimed to prevent class room hunger, increase school enrolment and retention and to enhance quality of education. The free meal is provided to students of public school and also students who are enrolled in private aided schools.

There are a number of studies which examine the shame experienced by the beneficiaries of the social benefit at different stages of implementation. These studies mainly covers the public institutions. Hence this study is undertaken to make a comparative analysis of the shame experienced by the beneficiaries of social welfare programmes provided through public and private institutions.

The study was carried out in two schools, one public school and one private school situated the District of Wayanad, Kerala state, India. Information were collected from the students, teachers and the cooks through in-depth interview.

The study found that the scheme is shaming to the beneficiaries in one way or the other. The selection of beneficiaries, the poor quality material used for cooking, the poor quality of the meal, monotonous menu, the process of distribution of food, lack of sufficient infrastructure including the lack of safe drinking water are all shaming to the beneficiaries. The meager fund allotted is the main hindrance in providing a decent meal to the students.

The students also experience shame in various stages of the receipt of the benefit. The students of the private school are forced to stand in the open space even in adverse climate. There is lack of discipline during distribution, unequal distribution and at times insufficient quantify of food. Since there is no alternative to what is provided, those students who cannot take the food for various reasons including their religious belief have to go hungry. The study shows that the experience of shame is more in private school compared to that of the public school.

The public school adopt a few strategies to reduce the feeling of shame or the stigma associated with the meal. They active involvement of the benefit providers at different stage of implementation, the community participation and improvement in the quality of the meal are some of the strategies adopted to reduce the feeling of shame.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

In recent years there has been an increase in the public expenditure for providing welfare assistance to the people. International Labour Organization holds the view that a citizen must have entitlement to these benefit as his right and what is provided must be sufficient to meet his basic requirement. The government and policy makers must ensure that there is no discrimination on any basis including ethnicity or gender while providing this support (ILO 2011). International treaties including International Declaration of Human Right recognize the social welfare assistance as a right of the citizen. Article 9 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) uphold the right of every citizen to social security whereas article 11 obligates the government to realize the right of everyone to have an adequate standard of living which include adequate food, clothing and housing (UN 1966) : Articles 22 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states “ *Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization through national effort and international cooperation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.*” making access to social security one of the basic human right (United Nation 1948).

Benefit of the state intervention in education does not limit to the child or to his family but spread to the entire society at large resulting to the ‘neighbourhood effect’. The positive externalities include the input education gives for the successful functioning of the democracy, the labour force it can provide for improving productivity and for adopting new technology and increased peace or reduction in crime rate with in the society. (Poterba 1996) Education is also used as an agent to improve the welfare of the children through the delivery of social services such as nutrition and health since last century (Katz 2016).

Shaming process in the Anti-poverty programs

Even though social security is considered as a fundamental human right, “*Amartya Sen’s contention that shame is an attribute of poverty in all societies*” has inspired and

challenged scholars across the globe in examining how poverty can be shaming in different social and cultural settings (Walker, et al. 2013). Study conducted by Darab and Hartman on the workfare policies in Australia shows the awareness among the recipient of their low social standard and lack of respect they were accorded within welfare structure (Darab and Hartmen 2011).

Shame is understood to be an inherent part of poverty as seen in the from the writing of Adam Smith to the present day world renowned scholar A K Sen (Walton 2011) The poor people are often ignored, disrespected and pushed around by the rest of the society – the rich, the bureaucrat and the people in power (Welsh 2009). In recent years, attention of researchers and policy makers has increased on the psychological dimension of poverty especially the shame that people can experience in a society as a result of economic deprivation (Walker, et al. 2013). Poverty can result to low self-esteem resulting to a poor mental health. This is particularly true when the experience of poverty in the childhood are shaming. This will result into a downward spiral of insecurity which in turn damage capabilities such as mental health, civic and political engagement, social capital and social cohesion (Walton 2011).

The stigma or shame associated with the receipt of benefit can be classified into: (a) *Persona Stigma*: a person's own feeling that claiming benefits is shameful (b) *Social stigma*: the feeling that other people judge claiming benefits to be shameful and to confer lower social status and (c) *institutional stigma*: Stigma that arises from the process of claiming benefits (Baumberg, et al. 2012).

The receipt of benefit can be stigmatizing or shaming from many reasons. The perception of '*undeserving*' or feeling the responsibility for being in the situation they are can generate the feeling of stigma in the mind of recipient (Sepulveda and Schutter 2015)

Statement of problem

There are a number of poverty alleviation programmes implemented in India and in the state of Kerala. Among the innumerable schemes, few programmes like Mid-Day Meal scheme and National Employment Guarantee Scheme has gained global attention for its successful implementation and for its universal coverage. There were a number of studies carried out to see whether the beneficiaries experience shame at any stages of the receipt of social benefit. Previous studies on the programme implemented through public institutions have concluded that beneficiaries are experiencing shame at various stages of its implementations (Walker, et al. 2013, Walton 2011, Gubrium, Pellissery and Lødemel 2013). The focus of these studies were

on the beneficiaries who were receiving assistance provided through public institutions only. Many welfare programmes like health insurance, Mid Day meal Scheme are implemented in the state through public and private institutions. There was no attempt made for a comparative analysis of the different types of institutions to see where the process of shaming is less and what strategies are used to reduce the feeling of shame.

Research aim

The aim of the present study is to make a comparative analysis of the shame experienced by the beneficiaries of social welfare programmes provided through public and private institutions.

Research questions

The present study is an attempt to find answer to the following questions.

- (a) What are the ways under which poverty eradication programmes such as Mid-Day Meal Scheme are shaming to the beneficiaries under public and private programmes?
- (b) How do beneficiaries experience shame in welfare programmes provided by public and private institutions
- (c) What strategies are adopted by the implementing agencies to reduce the feeling of shame to the beneficiaries?

Scheme of the report

This study report is divided into Six chapters. The first chapter – the present chapter— gives a brief introduction to the study, the study problem and the research questions. The Second chapter discusses various literature related to the present study. They include the studies that are used to give a theoretical base and other studies which analyse the importance and impact of the school feeding programmes. The third chapter discusses the research method adopted in this study. The chapter gives a brief idea about the key concept used, the type of data, the data collection and analysis method, the limitation of the present study and the ethical

consideration. The fourth chapter gives a brief explanation about the basic feature of the study area and take a quick glance at the right to education act and educational status of the region. The fifth chapter analysis the information collected during interview to find an answer to the research questions. The final chapter provides a summary of the findings.

Chapter II

Review Of Literature

Human right and Human Dignity

The whole edifice of human right rest on the notion of human dignity and this is recognized in the charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union as well as in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (Darab and Hartmen 2011)The preamble of the Human Right declaration calls for the “*recognition of the inherent dignity . . . of all members of the human family*’ and for a reaffirmation of faith “*in the dignity and worth of the human person*” (United Nations 1948). In other words, any action or words leading to the disrespect of a human being violate the of the dignity of the people which in turn leads to the violation of the human right.

There is a strong symbiotic relation between social protection and human right. Social protection should not be just delivery of goods and services or aimed to replace the traditional family based informal system of protection to the needy. They must become a platform for enabling people to understand their rights. Social welfare schemes also becoming an instrument to learn how to democratically shape their environment for the better (Truell 2015). By empowering the poor to engage in the income generating activity through transfer of resources, making improvement in their human capital and/or through asset building, social protection contribute to the realization of a number of economic, social and cultural rights including right to adequate standard of living which includes right to adequate food, clothing and housing, right to education and right to health (Sepulveda and Schutter 2015).

When social protection is made a human right, it becomes legal and obligatory in nature. It mandate a standard for design, implementation and evaluation of the programme (Sepulveda and Nyst 2012). The achievements of the social protection in realizing human rights is determined by whether such systems are established and implemented in accordance with the obligations and standards that human rights requires. If the programmes fails to follow

the human right standard, they may reinforce inequalities particularly gender based inequality and the rights of the social welfare beneficiaries remains at risk.

Traditionally, dignity had been based on the rank or the position and was reserved for high status people. But with the advent of democracy, the social status also underwent the process of democratization. Now everyone is “levelled up” as “dignitaries”. This is because, human dignity has to be viewed as ‘inherent’ rather than conferred by status, rituals dress, office etc. (J. Waldron 2013, 2013). Conferring this dignity of right *“paying due respect to individuals as autonomous agents and right-bearers commits one to conferring on them the ‘right of rights’.... the right to participate in debates and decision about rights themselves”* (Fabre 2000).

Honneth’s Theory of Recognition

Axel Honneth’s concept of recognition is a systematic rehabilitation of Hegelian and Fichtean writings. Rooted in the writings of Hegel, Honneth refined it incorporated his social theory and theory of justice. Drawing upon the ideas of Jena Hegel and George Herbert Mead he developed a tripartite account of recognition grounded in a theory of inter-subjective relations between persons (Pilapil 2011). According to him, the primary places where this identity is formed are family, civil society and states. He further notes that the positive and negative feedback one get during the struggle of recognition is the basis on which one’s morality is formed (Fleming and Fergal 2007). Recognition is fundamental in the social life of an individual. *The way we apprehend our identity and self-image is a more significant condition for a good life than material goods* (Pettersen 2009) Honneth, shifted the emphasis Hegel placed on the institutions to *“broader social spheres”* (Fleming and Fergal 2007) and has categorized it into Primary relationship, Legal Relationship and community value (Pettersen 2009) . According to Honnet, in the modern society there are three levels of recognition – *self confidence, self respect and self esteem*

Self Confidence

Self-confidence, the first form of recognition is based on the Primary relationship such as love and friendship which is usually build up in childhood. The childhood is characterized by *“strong emotional attachments among a small number of people”* like parents, siblings or people close to the family. The recognition in the primary relationship is mutual and characterized by a double process—contributed by both the parties. One is capable of forging

an identity by receiving recognition from other. To achieve an identity, to recognize one's own uniqueness, and to develop a positive image of one's ability, it is necessary to have a special relationship with other people with whom the child interact. The experience of love one get help him to create a sense of love for self and for others and also enable one to express one's needs without fear of rejection or abandonment. This being an essential ingredient of development must be given to the child in correct time. If the message is not given on the correct time or a negative message about the self-worth of the child is given, it will damage the child personality and the child (the person) may find (Fleming 2015) "*expression through negative emotional reactions of shame, anger, offence or contempt*" (Honneth 1995).

Self-respect

Self-respect, being the second form of recognition is the community oriented right where a person is recognized as a legally matured person. In legal rights, the second form of recognition, all individuals are treated as rational beings and show recognition by respecting each other. The individual recognizes and respect other right the way he receives it from other members of the community. Each individual of the society is free, equal and has one's own right and duties. There is a mutual give and take of right and duties, meaning without rights there is no respect. Everyone agrees to the norms of the society as it expresses the universal interest of all its members. This does not mean that the individual just hold a good opinion of other but build up a sense to possess the universal dignity of persons as morally responsible agents and become capable of participating in public deliberations known as *discursive will-formation* (Fleming 2015).

Self Esteem

The third form of recognition *self esteem* is experiences when one is honoured by the community for one's contribution through work. Self-esteem provides for recognition on an individual basis based on one's own accomplishments and abilities. Here the recognition one get is based on one's value to the society. Since every individual in a society is valuable and contribute in one's own way for its development, one is protected from being disrespected and the feeling of solidarity among the members is the basis for recognition. "*People with high self-esteem will reciprocate a mutual acknowledgement of each other's contribution to the community. From this grow loyalty and solidarity*" (Fleming 2015).

Honneth argues that the three forms of recognition – respect, love and esteem constitute the social precondition for the formation of personal identity. It would be very difficult or even impossible for a person to have personal integrity without the experiences of social recognition (Pilapil 2011)

Disrespect

Since there is an interdependency in the society there are possibilities that some of the actions can either intentionally or unintentionally cause disrespect or misrecognition to other members. The experience of injustice by one according to Honneth is the disrespect one has by way of misrecognition. Disrespect in general is understood as an act that hurts, damages, neglects, embarrasses or threatens someone (Finnegan and Fleming 2010). Honneth classifies disrespect into three forms. The first form is the Violation of body which causes physical, emotional and psychological damage to one. The physical maltreatment prevents one from taking control of one's body, bringing forth physical pain, loss of reality and losing basic self-confidence. This ultimately results in losing the ability to express oneself publicly without fear or rejection, loss of trust in oneself and others and feeling of shame and the person consequently suffers "*psychological death*" (Pilapil 2011)

The second form of disrespect according to Honneth is the denial of rights. People can be denied access to participating in social or political institutions, or may not be allowed to be included because they are treated as less responsible compared to the rest of the society. Excluding persons from the enjoyment of equal rights makes one to ponder on the moral autonomy enjoyed by self and reduced to the state of considering oneself as second-class citizen (Honneth 1995). This leads to social exclusion resulting to a feeling of shame and loss of self-respect and "social death" (Pilapil 2011). Finally one can be disrespected for the way of life one is leading. A segment of society may be looked down by others, denigrate the individual and cultural practices, may be assigned a lower social status because they are not up to the accepted norms of the society. This loss of self-esteem will result in moral scars and injuries making them unable to relate positively to their way of life (Fleming 2011). This will be stigmatizing leading to the feeling of shame and loss of self-respect and can act as a demotivating factor in their personal and social life. The disrespect one suffers is destructive and harms subjects emotionally and psychologically as it injures them with regards to the positive understanding of self. The mal-distribution of recognition damages self-esteem and

“inflict wounds upon the self and cause humiliation—the feeling of being unwanted or unworthy in society as if ones life possesses no significance or integrity of its own” (Pilapil 2011) .

The Honneth’s theory showing the various forms of recognition, how it help to build a strong personality and the various forms of disrespect can be summarized in the following table.

Table No. 1
Summary of various forms of Recognition and Disrespect

Mode of Recognition	Emotional Support	Cognitive Respect	Social Esteem
Dimension of Personality	Needs and Emotions	Moral Responsibility	Traits and abilities
Forms of Recognition	Primary Relationship (Love, friendship)	Legal relations (rights)	Community of value (solidarity)
Developmental Potential		Generalization, de-formalization	Individualization, equalization
Practical relation to self	Basic self confidence	Self respect	Self esteem
Form of self respect	Abuse and rape	Denial of rights, exclusion	Denigration, insult
Threatened Component of Personality	Physical integrity	Social integrity	Honour, dignity

Source: Alex Honneth 1995; *The struggle for recognition, the Moral Grammar of social Conflicts* page 129

Honneth theory attempts to bring private matter to the center of social attention and explains how internal conflict leads to social change. *“The theory of recognition establishes a link between the social causes of experiences of injustice and the motivation for emancipatory movements”* (Fleming 2015). Each member in the society need to have their individual

identities recognized in the same way they value themselves. This is needed for every one to flourish as a matured human being in the society and carry out his role in the best way possible.

Poverty: Meaning and present situation in India and Kerala

Poverty, a complex and multifaceted issue has been the center of academic, political and social debate for centuries and has remained a problem with no panacea to offer. Poverty is a social-economic phenomenon in which a section of society is unable to fulfill even its basic necessities of life such as food, clothing, housing, education and other basic minimum human needs. In the words of Sen, *“Poverty is not just a lack of Money: it is not having the capability to realize one’s full potential as a human being”* (Sen 1983). UN taking a wider concept has developed the concept of Human Poverty which included the material deprivation such as clothing, proper diet shelter and work, social deprivation such as denial of employment, participation in social institution and education.

In early days, poverty was viewed as lack of income which intern results into the inability to meet ones need at a satisfactory level. Later ILO broadened the focus and preceived poverty as inability to meet basic needs. In the 90s, the concept underwent further changes to include non-monetary aspects such as isolation, powerlessness, vulnerability and lack of security. Sens writing further inspired scholars across the world to reconsider poverty from human point of view. United Nations Development programmes (UNDP) introduced measure for progress and for deprivation that focus on poverty from a human development perspective. (United Nations n.d.)

Unlike World Bank or other international agencies, which uses dollar norms, Indian Government and planners uses calorie intake norm to calculate poverty. Accordingly, in the country a person who is not able to get a basket of goods of 2400 calories per day in rural areas and 2100 calories per day in urban area are treated as below poverty line. Based on this it is estimated that in the year 2011-12 there are 2, 69.783 million poor people which is about 21.92 % of the total population of the country. Of the total poor, 80.3 % live in rural areas where as 19.7% are living in urban areas. (Planning Commission 2014). According to the Global hunger index India is included in the group of serious countries. Further the index shows that there are 15.2 % of the undernourished populations and the children (under five) suffering from wasting (the low weight for their height due to acute under-nutrition) is 15 %. With 5.3 % of

under five mortality and the prevalence of stunting in children under five is 38.8 %, the people especially the children in India suffer from malnutrition and chronic hunger and need to take immediate action from the grass root level (Global Hunger Index 2015).

Kerala one of the southern state of the Indian Union, has gained wide attention among the academician, researchers and policymakers for its high human development index inspite of its low economic performance and high unemployment level. The high achievement of the state in the field of education and health, life expectancy and low infant mortality, which is at par with the developed countries, has prompted the researchers to coin the term Kerala model development (Parayil 1996).

Inspite of it development, the state is not completely free from poverty and unemployment. The estimate for the year 2011-12 shows that 2.35 million people in the state (7.05% of its total population) lives below poverty line. The poverty is more prominent in the rural area where 9.12 % are living below poverty line where as in urban area it is only 4.9 %. The comparatively lower level of poverty in the state is its approach of human development at its center. The focus of the public policies were on education and health without compromising gender parity. Public funds were used for creating better infrastructure facilities at schools and hospitals. With private participation the benefit of the services were distributed equitably leading to a reduction in poverty (Government of Kerala 2014).

The impact of income poverty is not limited to the material deprivation. People who do not have subsistence level of income for their living faces pain and miseries. It generate negative psychological feeling which affect their interaction with other and their social life. (Haushofer 2013)The psychological impact of poverty has been recognized long ago by scholars. Adam Smith in his celebrated work “Theory of moral Sentiments explain the impact of poverty when he said, *“The reason poverty causes pain is not just because it can leave people feeling hungry, cold and sick, but because it is associated with unfavourable regard.... The poor man...is ashamed of his poverty”* (A. Smith 1759) Further, they face social exclusion—voluntary or involuntary—resulting into the denial of opportunities and fulfilment of human potential (Kumari 2013)

Impact of poverty on children

Research and studies suggest that the household income influences the physical and mental health of the child. The poverty experienced by the mother at the time of consumption lead to low weight birth. The low birth babies are more likely to have heart problem, high blood pressure and diabetes as adults (Singer 2003). The first few years of the life of a person (child) is important as it sets the foundation for subsequent growth and development. Poverty during childhood also poses increased risk of lower functioning speech, vision, hearing, mobility, dexterity and cognition. Among the many things that influence the growth and development of a child, family income is recognized as a key determinant (Gupta, Wit and McKeown 2007) .

On the psychological side, the parent's employment, educational status, family size, maternal mental health, parental divorce, unsafe living environment and parental behavior affect the mental health and psychological adjustment of the child. The low income level gives greater stress to parents which in turn affect the interaction to their child, often giving negative input (Lovisi, et al. 2005). This will act as reinforcing factors in developing anti-social behavior such as bullying, being cruel, breaking thing, cheating , telling lies or such behavior. Poverty also results in a less favourable family environment and poor quality parenting. It can affect the parents ability to have consistent behaviour or being supportive (Kumari 2013).

The impact of material poverty on children have its implication on physical, emotional, mental and educational health and development. The effect of social, physical and cognitive development will affect the educational and employment opportunities (Singer 2003) . Child poverty is not only a political or economic problem as it involve ethical issues and social justice. The impact of poverty on environment and the effect of living in an environmentally hazardous situation affect the present and the future generation.

Anti poverty measures in India: Public Interventions

One of the important area of concern for the planners and policy makers are the number of poor in the country and the resources or methods to improvement their economic and social condition. *The complex nature of poverty in India may be related with the vulnerability, natural adversities, shocks and uncertainties coupled with inequality and unemployment.* Hence there

is a need to address poverty from different dimensions. So poverty eradication strategies in India consists of a wide range of strategies which is broadly classified into Self employment programme, wage employment programme and social security measures (Yesudian 2007).

Among the number of programmes introduced in the country under different plans, Integrated Rural Development programme introduced (IRDP) in 1970, Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) in 1999, National Rural Employment Programme (1980), Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) 1983, Public Distribution system, etc are some of the noteworthy initiatives. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme (MGNREGA) began in 2005 which caught the attention of the academicians and policy makers across the globe aims at enhancing the livelihood security of people in rural areas by guaranteeing hundred days of wage employment in a financial year to at least one adult member of the rural household belonging to the Below Poverty Line segment. Through these initiatives, the government and the planning commission aimed to reduce the number of people living below poverty line and improve their economic and living condition. Statistical data shows that the percentage of people below poverty line has decreased from 54 % in 1973-74 to 21.92 % in 2011-12 (Kumari 2013).

The anti poverty policies of the state government also included social security measures such as free or subsidized food through public distribution system, various cash transfers such as pension schemes for the disables, aged, widows and destitute. The government also focused on capacity building measures through various schemes implemented with the help of Kudumbashrees and other Self help Groups. Provision of basic amenities such as housing, sanitation and water supply also have helped in improving the living standard of the people.

Inspite of these achievements, there are many issues to be addressed. Inequality in the state still prevail and instead of caste system there emerges the class system where the difference between the upper class and the lower class increase day by day. The tribal and the fisher men communities are the most marginalized and suffer all forms of deprivation. The benefit distributed through decentralization process fails to reach the most needy ones. There are very limited steps taken to reduce the dependency on social security measures and to increase the effort of capacity building to provide a livelihood.

Private Intervention.

Though the public interventions are universal in nature, they at times fail to reach all segment of the society across the country due to the vastness of the country and the huge population. This situation is further worsened with asymmetric information, lack of transparency and accountability and the non-participatory nature of some programmes (Bandhyopadhyay 2007). In these circumstances, private intervention like religious organisations, NGOs, and other agencies are made to bring the excluded to the main stream of development.

Though it is one of the basic duty of the state to provide education to the children under school going age, the shortage of huge resources required for the purpose has forced the government to permit private intervention in the field. Based on the type of management, there exist three type of educational institution in the state. (a) *Government Institutions*:- those purely owned and managed by the state; (b) *Government aided institutions* :- those owned and managed by the private individuals/ private agencies but salary of the teachers and officials are paid by the government. (c) *Private Institutions* :- those that are purely owned and managed by individuals or private agencies. The salary of the teachers and other officials are met by collecting fees from the students. Neither the institution nor the students are entitled for any benefits enjoyed by the students in Government and government aided institution.

Mid-Day meal Scheme: A Brief History

The Provision of Serving cooked meals in school is neither a new concept nor is localized to India. It is practiced both in developed and developing countries as a social welfare measure. Before becoming a state sponsored, universal programme, there were numerous initiative in different European countries to provide meals to the hungry school children. The first known initiative in this regard was carried out in Munich Germany by Benjamin Thompson known also as Count Rumford. In 1790 a combined programme of teaching and feeding hungry was initiated in his 'Poor People's Institute where he provided food and clothing to unemployed adult for their work and education and food for the part- time work done by children. The school feeding programme underwent various stages and a number of private and public organization were formed for better implementation. Studies conducted in late 1890s indicate that the school feeding programme was carried out in 239 cities covering about 111000 of school children (Brown n.d.).

In 1865, Victor Hugo in Guernsey, France took initiative in providing hot meals for children in the nearby school. Six years later ‘The Society for People’s Kitchens in the Public Schools’ was established in Angers, France with the objective of providing meals to the school children who were unable to pay. (Gunderson 2003) In Norway Christiania (Oslo) had been providing noon day meals since 1897 and later it was popularized by the new venture known as “Oslo Breakfast”. Initiatives were also made in Holland, Switzerland, US etc during this period to help the poor children to attend the school by providing them meal at least once in a day.

Great Britain was pioneered in making the noon-feeding a state intervention by passing the ‘Education (Provision of Meals) Act’ in the parliament in the year 1905 with the provision that *“when the local education authority..... resolve that many of the children in attendance at any public elementary school with in their area are unable to reason of lack of food to take full advantage of the education provided them the local education authority shall take such steps as they think fit to provide for such children, under such regulation and conditions as the local education authority may prescribe such food as the local education authority may consider requisite to enable the said children to take full advantage of the education provided for them”* (British Parliamentary Papers 1905) . It took still a few more decades to make the noon feeding a full-fledged state sponsored program aimed at preventing class room hunger in different countries as shown in the following table.

Table No 2
Year In Which School Feeding Programme Initiated
In Different Countries

Sl No	Country	Year
1	United Kingdom	1945
2	United States of America	1946
3	Switzerland	1946
4	Japan	1947
5	Australia	1950
6	China	1964
7	Indonesia	1967
8	Thailand	1970
9	Korea	1973
10	Singapore	1975
11	India	1995

Source: Compiled by the author

In India the noon feeding programme was universalized only in 1995. The basic philosophy guiding Mid Day meal Scheme is that “When children have to sit in class with empty stomachs, they cannot focus on learning” (Bhargav and Bhargav 2011). The first initiative in this direction was taken several decades ago when the then Madras corporation started to serve cooked meals to the poor students in the school under the corporation within the Madras city limit in the year 1923 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 hungry. The food was distributed without any gender discrimination and was well targeted among the needy. The programme was later extended to all students in Madras in 1960s under the Chief Minister ship of K. Kamaraj. In 1982 when the then Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Dr. M. G. Ramachandran, universalized the scheme for all children in government schools in primary classes and in taken

up by the success of the scheme, the programme was expanded to cover all children up to class 10.

There are 102.2 million children who avail free cooked meal supplied from 11.56 million schools across the country for the year 2014-15. This comes to about 52.3 % of the total enrolled students in the class I to VIII and covers about 97% of the total primary and secondary schools (Government of India 2016).

In the state of Kerala, India, (where the present study is carried out), the first initiative in this direction came in 1941 when in some parts of the state the ‘ the school Lunch Programme’ was introduced. Later in 1950, the programme was extended to many schools with the help of the assistance from different international agencies like UNICEF, FAO, and WHO. The state provided to give cooked meal since 1995 (Government of India 1995). On a landmark verdict, on 28th November 2001 the Supreme Court of India made it obligatory for the government to provide cooked meals to all children in all government and government assisted primary schools. Though there was vigorous resistance from various state governments initially, the programme became universal by 2005 (Verma 2013).

The relation between school meal programmes and Educational achievements

There are numerous studies explain the importance of nutrition for physical and cognitive development. The educational achievement and the cognitive development -- how well a child perform in a school and how he socialized to the rest of the community particularly with other students -- is to a large extent determined by the Nutritional intake and health status (Adroque and Orlicki 2013). When the food and nutrition is not sufficient, the body has to make decision about how to invest the limited food stuff available between growth and survival. In this process, survival become primary to growth and the cognitive development lag behind the age of the child affecting the educational achievement (Chepkwony, Kariuki and Kosgei 2013).

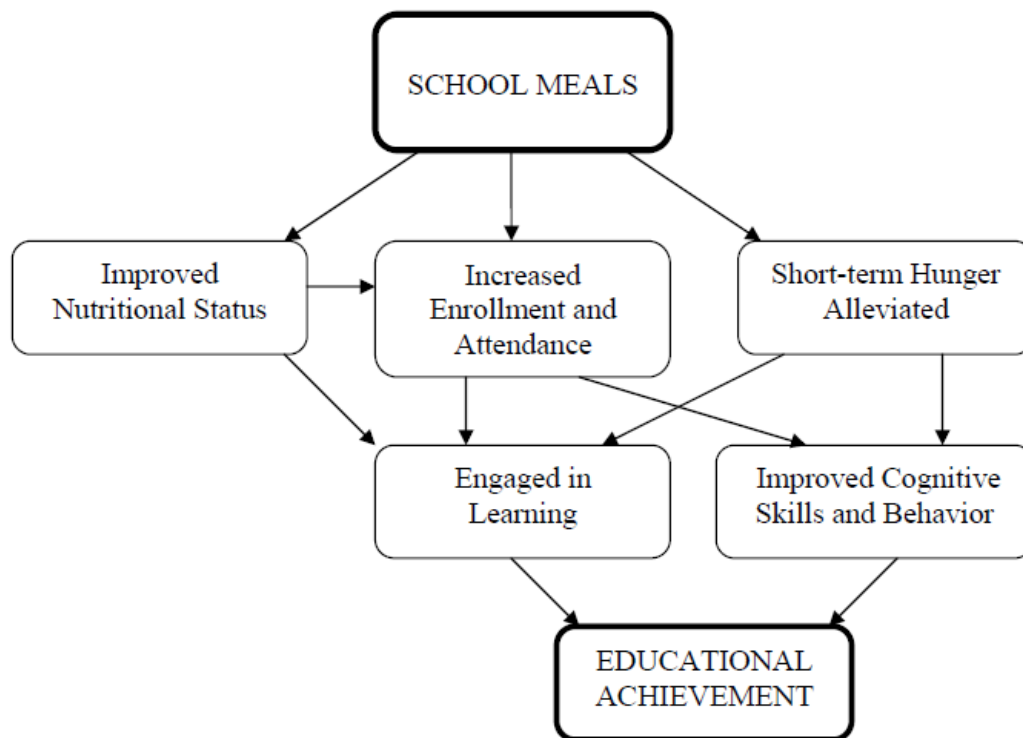
The attention span and glucose levels are interlinked. A healthy child can concentrate more in class work and can develop the cognitive part. The undernourished children due to the limited glucose intake have very short attention span. Iodine, iron and micronutrient deficiencies affect the educational achievement and cognitive development. They

make the children inattentive, restless and uninterested in learning (Chepkwony, Kariuki and Kosgei 2013).

The school feeding programme is crucial in the development of a holistic child particularly in third world countries where poverty and malnutrition are common among the children. Children come from diverse social and economic backgrounds. The school meal can supplement the nutritional deficiency to children who are vulnerable, making the learning effective and fruitful.

No single kind of food can provide all necessary nutrients, proteins, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, minerals, fiber and water required for the holistic development of a child. Good nutrition involves consumption of a variety of foods in appropriate amounts. In addition to alleviating the short term hunger, school feeding programme can address specific micronutrient deficiencies in school aged children and to meet the iron and iodine needs. With regard to the cognitive development, deficiencies of iron and iodine are the most harmful types of malnutrition.

The following diagram summarizes the relation between school meal and the educational achievement. The meal provided in the school has three direct benefits—reduces the short term hunger, increases enrollment and attendance and improves nutritional status. This in turn leads to physical and cognitive development and helps in getting better educational achievement.



Source (Grantham- Mc Gregor, Chang and Walker 1998)

The Mid- day meal scheme implemented across the state of Kerala had its origin in 1960s. The main objective of the scheme is to provide day lunch to the students during working school days. The main focus of the programme was to protect students from study-room hunger and increasing school enrolment. In addition to it, the programme provides nutritional supplement to children especially those who are economically poor. The Scheme is also an attraction to poor children to come to school regularly and encourages parents to send children to school who other wise prefer to send them for labour for food or money. Improvement of social empowerment and better socialization of the children are other objectives of the programme. The target group are children who are enrolled in the regular school from class one to class eight. As per the official estimates, 106.8 million children are covered under the scheme in the year 2013-14 (Government of India 2014).

Impact of the School Feeding Programme

An attempt is made to summarize the finding of various literature related to the assessment of the impact of the school feeding programmes .

The World Food Programme's (2013) report on the State of School Feeding 2013 has stated that at least 368 million students receive food through school around the world. This comes to nearly 50% of the school children. But this distribution varies from country to country. In low income countries where meal is most needed, only 18% of the students get free meal and 80% of the fund requirement for these countries comes as external assistance. The report also point out the need for policy formulation in low income countries where the scheme does not have any regulation or organizational set up. The school feeding programme in general is aimed to address social need and provide a social safety net to the poor in crisis and to support child development. it should be looked as a contributing factor to learning along with text book, teachers, curriculum and learning environment and must be viewed as a safety net helping to ensure every child access to education, health and nutrition.

A study on the progress of the school meal programme by Badri (2014) has shown that though most of the countries across the world are in favour of school feeding programme, there are still 66 million primary school aged children who attend the class hungry across the world, out of which 23 million are in African alone. Further, 67 million school aged children do not attend school mainly due to their financial constraints. The impact of providing a nutritious meal has improved the mental, social and physical well being of the child which also has helped to improve their self esteem. The feeding programmes implemented in many developing countries suffer from limitations such as absence of a clear cut policy, proper planning and management, lack of sufficient food resources and poor cooking environment. In developed countries where the food is provided at a subsided rate, children from single parent families, refugees and asylum families find the meal expensive. They also fail to control the quality of the food as majority of the students prefer junk foods.

World Bank (2009) also opined that at present the school feeding programme is carried out across the world in some form or the other but the programme is least adequate in the country where it is most needed. The programme act as a safety nest to the vulnerable population in mitigating immediate social shocks rather than its long term impact. The benefit associated with the feeding programme such as educational enrolment, attendance, educational achievement etc. varies with feeding modality. However, the school feeding programme should be designed to complement with other nutritional programme for better implementation and for greater effect.

A cross country analysis of available literature by Lawson (2012) concluded that the school feeding programme, be it cooked meals, prepackaged food or take home ration has helped in increasing the enrollment and daily attendance of students, increase the length of schooling and decrease the dropout rate, tardiness and absenteeism. These impacts are more pronounced on girls particularly when take home rations are part of the programme. Further literature suggests an increase in the calories intake of students and these calories given to the students in the school meals (especially the cooked meals) stick to the targeted students. Thus the overall health status of the beneficiaries have improved and have helped in reducing nutritional deficiency.

Cochrane review carried out by Greenhalgh et al (2007) on the efficacy of the school feeding programmes has found that the scheme has helped in reducing the class room hunger, increasing memory and concentration in the class. It also act as a motivation factor and provide other psychological prerequisites for learning. The study also point out its long term impact as a result of reduced absenteeism, improvement in literacy which reduced the intergenerational cycle of poverty and building better human capital of the present and future generation. The study also point out that in poor countries where the school enrolment is low, the programme may not reach the poorest people. The long term impact of the school feeding programme in comparison to the other social security programme need to be further researched.

Studies on the School feeding programs in Kenya has revealed a positive impact on the enrolment, decrease the drop-out rate and has improved learning. The '*magnetic effect*' feeding system has helped to address the historical primary school absenteeism seen among the traditional communities to a large extent. The parents from poor household feel relieved of the financial burden of providing at least one time meal a day. (Galloway 2009) The students are no longer distracted by hunger, are able to concentrate better in their studies and socialize with both teachers and peers. The studies also show that the meals have good nutritional content and is capable of meeting the minimum recommended daily allowances of calories, protein and essential micronutrients. But the system is faced with the challenge of maintaining the quality of meals and finding enough materials and resources. Further, the study also raises concern over the increasing dropout with increase in the age of students. (Langer 2011)

Study conducted in Tana Delta District, Kenya (Mwavula 2014) also confirm that the school feeding programme has helped to increase the school enrolment and attendance, reduce the dropout rate and improve the learning level of the students. The study have found that the

primary reason for enrolment in the school is free education offered in the school. The free meal come only as motivating factor supporting the free education. Though the programme has shown improvement in the nutritional intake of the students, it has not given any positive impact on the Body Mass Index of the students.

Assessment study conducted in Ghana also has shown that the school feeding programme has positive impact on the physical as well as cognitive development of the children. the physical development includes the better health and improved nutritional intake. Increase in attendance, retention and better academic performance are noted as cognitive development. However, the feeding programme suffers a number of drawback and limitation. Inadequate physical infrastructure including kitchen, kitchen wares like plates and cups, lack of dining hall and toilets are a few limiting factors. The absence of trained cooks is the major factor responsible for loss of nutritious value of the food. The programme also suffers from effective monitoring and supervisor. The programme can be made a boost to the local economy by procuring food stuff and other cooking materials from the local producers (Nyarko 2014).

The recently released audit report by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India raises a few question on the need for continuing the MDMS in its present mode as it fails to meet the primary objectives of quality education. The report questions the popular belief that the scheme is successful in increasing enrolment as the present data shows a consistent decline of enrollment in school which is covered under the scheme (a 5.5 % decline in the enrolment between 2009-10 to 2013-14) where as the enrolment has increased by 38 % in private schools which is neither covered by the scheme nor have any government support for its running. The report also point out large scale malpractice in fund utilization, inflated data on the number of beneficiaries, poor quality of food, providing less than prescribed quantity of food to students there by failing to meet the required nutritional level, insufficient infrastructural facilities for cooking and serving meals and lack of safe drinking water to students as some of the areas of concern. The MDMS should not be viewed as an end in itself but as a means to providing quality education to the children (Comptroller and Auditor General of India 2015).

A study across the country by Uma (2013) has shown that the MDMS has improved enrollment in primary school and has a positive impact on the regular attendance and decreasing the dropouts. But the impact of the scheme on the quality of education is not encouraging. The author feels that the mid-day meal has become an end in itself rather than a means to better education. The various process associated with the MDM has seriously affected teaching

activities in the school. parents from poor background encourage students to go to school just for the sake of getting meal. Since the students automatically get promoted to the next class every year, the quality of education or the learning level of the students are not accessed accurately. Thus MDMS has become a tool in increasing the quantity of education with very little mechanism to ensure quality of the teaching- learning activities.

A comparison of the impact on the enrolment in public and private schools in India by Bonds (2012) shows a positive impact on the overall enrolment estimates. The effect was more pronounced for those with the least educated parents and those from low economic status. the study also suggest that programme like Mid-day meal can increase the educational opportunity for poor children by making it affordable. Study also suggest that considering its coverage and present and future benefits the MDMS is relatively cheap compared to the other social welfare scheme. A greater transparency can bring down corruption, enabling the benefit to reach to the targeted segment of the society.

Assessing the over all impact of the Mid day meals among the Socially weaker session shows a gloomy picture from different parts of the country. thought one of the aims of MDMS is to promote friendship and feeling of brotherhood among the children belonging to different caste, colour and creed, how far the authorities takes steps to initiate this is a matter of concern. Lower caste students are often subjected to discrimination by upper caste students and teachers. In Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan MDMs are served primarily in dominants cast hamlets making Dalit children inaccessible to the food. School authorities are often unwilling to appoint people from lower castes as cooks for fear of upper caste students boycotting such meals. Lower caste students in Rajasthan are prevented from having direct access to water for drinking or for washing as they have to wait for the mercy of the higher caste students to give them water whereas upper caste students can freely help themselves with water. Study show that in states like Bihar, plates are labelled with initials of the child's castes (Throat and Lee 2005), (Sahai 2014).

In Vadodara, Gujarat, teachers agree that the mid-day meal have helped in increasing the attendance , reducing the dropout rate and also in improving the nutritional standards of the children. But the study suggest that the teachers need to be more sensitized about the need for students having hygienic practice of washing hands before meals, keeping the plates and dishes clean and proper cleaning of the dining area after meals . To attract more students to take mid day meals, the authors call upon the teachers to taste meals before serving it—as it is done in some other part of the country. They also suggest for some provision of washing dishes

clean, provision of safe drinking water and making the monitoring and evaluation simple for effective implementation of the scheme (Kantawala, et al. 2013).

Study on the quality and nutritional content of the MDM served in Ahmedabad city, Gujarat shows that the meals contains calcium, fat and iron up to or even more than the required level but it contains less than required protein and iodine. The mid day meal tries to ensure only 300 calories ie about 15 % of the daily requirement of the calories. But there is no provision to ensure that the child will get rest 85 % of calories at home or from other sources. The presence of Uric acid and aflatoxins in the cooked meal which if taken for longer period of time could be carcinogenic is alarming. Uncleansed rice and dal (materials used to prepare meals) had very high percentage of infestation where as in some instances worms would be found in rice stored for cooking. In schools where NGOs or other agencies supply cooked meals, the transportation of food was not hygienic and safe where are in schools where meals are prepared, teachers were forced to sacrifice a substantial amount of contact hours with students (Deodhar, et al. 2007)

An evaluative study in Punjab shows that a satisfied parents and teachers regarding the quantity of food supplied. They agree that the MDM scheme has helped in increasing the school enrolment and in retaining students in the school. However, they suggest that the quality of food can be improved and more variety in the menu need to be incorporated. The students usually have breakfast at home and more or less the same menu is given at school also for lunch with out much variety in the menu throughout the year. This can make the meals less attractive. They study also suggest the need for providing safe drinking water and using LPG for cooking rather than the traditional firewood (Grover and Kaur 2014).

A study in the Chittorgarh District of Rajasthan shows reveals that there is considerable increase in the school enrollment and regular attendance and retention of students in the school. Parents also hold the view that through MDMS, attendance and quality of education has improved to a large extent. The parents, teachers and students are happy about the scheme. The study has also pointed out larger community (parent's) involvement and participation in the scheme for its successful implementation. But it is found that both students and teachers are little bothered about the personal hygiene of the students as about 6 % do not wash their hand at all where as 85 % just wash their hand with water alone. They also lack enough monitoring to ensure the cleanliness of the dishes or utensils and to ensure that the area where meals are prepared or served are clean and hygienic. On examining the quality of education, it is found that about 53 % of the students could write and 48 % could read correctly where as the

performance of the remaining students were not satisfactory. The study points out that due to the record keeping, procurement of material , preparation and serving of meals meetings, report preparation and submission the teachers were forced to sacrifice a considerable amount of time of teaching affecting the quality of education (Cheriyen, et al. 2007).

Studies from Bihar reveals that the scheme has failed to achieve its objectives in its broad sense. Though the scheme was capable of attracting students to school, many schools don't function after the MDM being served. the community participation aimed to make the implementation smooth has yielded a negative result. The members often poses contrary challenges to the staff members which helps only to increase the distance between community and school. The students and the parents are satisfied with the quantity of the food given but they expressed their dissatisfaction over the quality of the food. The study also has found that the beneficiaries have no voice to decide on the menu or even the school parliament have no right to make comments on the quality or the taste of the cooked meals supplied. Most of the school have very poor infrastructure facilities including utensils or cooking shed and the students or teachers have never even dreamed of having a separate dining hall. The students bring plates for their meals from home and they have not heard of towels or soaps for cleaning hands. The records are well maintained and reports are submitted on time for which teachers spend a considerable amount of their teaching time. Thus, the MDMS implemented in the state need to undergo a radical change for the attainment of its broad objectives (Mishra 2014).

The social audit carried out in Adilabad and Kurnool district of Andra Pradesh had its positive impact on the Mid Day Meal scheme. The MDMS has helpful in increasing the enrolment and in averting class room hunger. It also has become a tool in reducing social discrimination and improving social relations among the school children. However, there are still a few more negative aspect to be addressed which include lack of sufficient infrastructure, corruption at least in some schools, and insufficient and irregular allocation of funds and provisions. The students at large were unhappy over the menu as it contains only very little vegetable (due to lack of funds) and mostly monotonous type of food. Some students prefer to eat from home due to the poor quality of food and the unhygienic conditions under which it is prepared and served. A few instances of discrimination were also seen like some students refusing to eat as the meal is prepared by a lower cast women. Though by and large the scheme is implemented in a satisfactory manner, there remains areas of concern and matters of importance to be addressed to gain full-fledged gain from the scheme (Sinha 2008).

Arguing for the supply of cooked meals in the school rather than dry ration, the authors have cited many a literature to show the disadvantage of dry ration. Though the dry ration increase the enrollment it has very limited impact on the regular attendance and retention in school, the children often do not get the due share and they attend the school with empty stomach. A freshly cooked meal attract students to school regularly, increase the attendance and has a positive impact on learning. It also can ensure the intake of nutrients content. In theory it is expected that the cooked meal improves social harmony but reports from some corners hind towards caste discrimination during distribution of cooked meal and selection of cooks. The distribution of food need to be seen as a fundamental right of the child and there is a need to serve food with dignity, love, care and respect to all. The authors also suggest the need to pay special attention to the already marginalized to bring them to the main stream (Deshpande, et al. 2008).

The MDMS in the state of Kerala has been regarded as one of the best in the country with regarded to the quality of the meal, enrolment of the students and the community participation. The report has stated that the fund allotted by the government is meager and hardly enough to cover the cost of one egg. In most school, teachers contribute a substantial portion towards the cost of proving the meal. (Koshy 2016)

Assessing how far the MDMS has been successful in materializing its objective in the state of Kerala, Karunakaran and Krishnaraji (2015) has opined that the programme was successful in increasing enrolment and in decreasing dropouts. But the scheme has failed to improve the nutritional status of the students. The comparative study conducted in two primary school have found that in both schools, most students are under weight and do not have height or Body Mass Index to their age.

Chapter III

Research Methods

In the present chapter the first part is devoted for a brief discussion of the research methods including the key concepts, Data type , data source, analytical strategies and ethical consideration. In the second part a review of the research studies on the impact of school feeding programme is carried out.

Key Concepts

The key concepts used in the present study are:

Poverty

Poverty is not a self- defining concept. The concept of poverty can be understood through the meaning and definition it has. Historically poverty has been related to income and material good. The term now understood as multi dimensional in nature which cannot be defined or understood in a single term or sentence (Townsend 2006). It is usually understood in its manifestation in various forms such as lack of income and productive resources sufficient to ensure sustainable livelihood, hunger and malnutrition, ill health, limited or lack of access to education and other basic services, increased morbidity and mortality from illness, homelessness and inadequate housing, unsafe environments, social discrimination and exclusion, lack of participation in decision making and civil social and cultural right, deprivation of human capability or a mixer of all these deprivations. Thus poverty is viewed as a failure to meet many dimensions of human life such as hunger, unemployment, homelessness, illness and healthcare, powerlessness, social injustice and victimization (Bellu and Liberati 2005). poverty is also the inequality, insecurity , vulnerability and discrimination a person face in the society. It is also a violation of basic human right and fundamental freedom.

Shame

Shame in general is personal and psychological feeling. So it varies from person to person and its intensity can to a large extent influence the situation under which the shame is experienced. Tomkins has defined shame as *“the negative affect felt in response to any impediments to the ongoing experience of interest or joy”*. (Tomkins 1962,1963) Shame is considered as a self regarding feeling and it depends on other people’s values and attitudes. *It is Associated with the discrepancy between the way one fears one will be seen and the way one*

wants to appear, shame is often experienced as exposure, vulnerability, fear of what we do not want others to see in us. (Kilborne 2009). It is the feeling of smallness, worthlessness and powerlessness in a given situation. Usually the feeling arise when one consider the other person's evaluation of self ie "self in the eyes of the other" (L. B. Smith n.d.). It is the sense of 'personal inadequacy' of some kind, the sinking apprehension that one is not going to 'measure up something or to somebody'. (Wheeler 1997) Even though the feeling of shame exist among all human being there is a large cross cultural difference in its meaning, actual experience of the shame state, antecedents and ensuing action tendencies. (Li, Wang and Fischer 2003)

Social welfare

Traditionally social welfare has been considered as the summation of the individual welfare. The safety nest provided against the social shocks like poverty, unemployment, ill health etc were mostly informal in nature, provided by family members, friends or other social agents. With expansion of the role and functions of the state, the term has been redefined to include activities and works done by the state or the public authorities to support the individuals in need to live a decent life in accordance with the norms of the society. UN has defined it as.... *"a body of activities designed to enable individual, families, groups and communities to cope with the social problems of changing condition"* (United Nations 1967). It is can be seen as the *"full range of organized activities of voluntary and governmental agencies that seek to prevent, alleviate or contribute to the solutions of recognized social problems or to improve the well-being of individuals groups or communities"* (Encyclopedia of social Work 1971, p-1446). It is the provision of the minimal level of well- being and social support to its citizens to mitigate social shocks provided outside the market system. to be more specific, it is *"the regulation of the provision of benefits to people who require assistance meeting basic needs in living such as employment, income, food, healthcare and relationships"* (Karger and Stoesz 1990). In short, social welfare is anything government chooses to do or not to do that affects the quality of life of its people. (Dinitto 1991)

Data Type and Data Source

Data Type

Since the study tries to capture, the happening with in a society, it has used qualitative data. Data was collected using indept interview of the recipient of benefit and people who were engaged in the implementation of the projects at its various stages. Shame being a psychological

feeling and experienced at an individual, indepth interview is best suited to capture the true feeling of the person.

Source

The study is based on primary data collected through in-depth interview of the benefit recipients and those who are engaged in the implementation of the programmes. Since it is a comparative analysis, information were collected from those who receive benefit distributed through public sector and through private agency. To analyse the feeling of shame by the beneficiaries, 30 students (15 each from public and private school) were interviewed. The students included those who participate as well as those who abstain from the mid-day meal programme.

The feeling of shame by beneficiaries are usually associated with the selection process or at the delivery of the service. To analyze the strategies adopted by the implementing agencies to reduce the feeling of shame, those who are part of the implementation at its delivery were interviewed. Information were collected from the head of the institutions, the teacher in-charge of the feeding programme, cooks and cooking assistants. Since teachers play a major role in implementing the Mid-Day meal scheme, information were collected form those who work both at government schools and at the private school. Total 10 teachers (5 each from public and private school including the teacher in charge of the feeding programme), 2 cooks and 2 cooking assistant were interview.

Analytic strategies

In this study an attempt is made to examine how beneficiaries of social welfare schemes experience shame. In other words it tries to examine how students get along in the society and among their peers as recipients of social welfare (Mid day meal) and how other members of the society like other students, and especially those implementing the scheme (teachers) look up on the recipients of benefit. Therefore, thematic analysis was used as the analytic strategy.

Study limitations

The present study is faced with some limitations especially at the time of data collection. In Indian context, the student- teacher relationship is considered as very holy and students are expected to give high respect to their teachers. The society uphold the views expressed by teachers and consider them as infallible. Since the study analyze the interaction between students and teachers, this social attitude is automatically implanted in the mind of the students

and they seldom critically evaluate the action or decision taken by the teacher. The benefit providers always tries to make a positive impression to the rest of the world and so they are not willing to come up with what is really happening. The time constraint for the conduct of the study also is a problem as it involves collection and analysis of data from different type of settings.

Assumptions

The study is based on the assumption that poor people while receiving benefit feels shame in one form or the other.

Ethical considerations

In my research I have considered ethical issues when dealing with interviews and questionnaires. Ethical issues appear during data collection, data analysis and results reporting. While conducting interviews I have ensured that the participation is voluntary. I have explained the aim and objective of the study and have obtained consent from each one for their participation. Since the study involve school students, prior permission has been obtained from the school authorities for conducting interview of the students. I also have kept the confidentiality in data collection (using informed consent), analyzing and reporting. The writing, ideas, or theories used in this study are properly acknowledged and the proper way of citing or quoting are used where ever needed,

Chapter IV

Profile Of The Study Area

The subcontinent of India, the seventh largest in size in the world, lies in South Asia and shares its borders with China, Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh. The country has an approximate area of 3287590 square kilometers with diverse geographical setting which is broadly divided into rugged, mountainous Himalayan region in the northern part, the Indi-Gangetic Plains in the middle and the plateau regions in the central and southern portion of the country. (Adams, King and Singh 2009) The diverse geographical settings offers diverse climatic condition which varies from tropical monsoon in the south to temperate in North. The country is also blessed with three major river system—the Indus, Ganges and Brahmaputra which have large deltas over a large portion of the land (Singh and Anand 2015)

The diversity of the country dose not limit to the geographical or climatic condition alone. The ethnic origin of the people constitute Indi-Aryan (72 %), Dravidian (25 %) and mongoloid and other constitute the rest (3 %.). Hindi is the most widely spoken languages and primary tongue of 41 % of the people but English enjoys the status of subsidiary official language and used as a common language for political, economic and commercial communication. This is in addition to the 22 main languages and thousands of dilates used in the country. (Ram 2015) People practice different custom, culture, and subscribe to different religion. The caste system of the country is still very prominent where some caste are considered as elite and a number of castes are considered as inferior to others. There are certain job or occupation which can be performed by people belonging to specific caste only (Haub and Sharma 2015).

India, with a population of 1.32 billion people(United Nations 2015). is the second most populous country in the world, next to its immediate neighboring country China which has a population of 1.41 billion people. With a total geographical area of 3.287 m2 kilometers, which is about 2.4 % of the total global geographical area India is the home for 17.85% of the world's population. In other words, one out of every six person in the world is an Indian (Rajput 2016). It has a population density of 446 persons per square kilometers. With the rapid urbanization process rooted on the economic and industrial growth, 32 % of the total population lives in urban areas. The population consists of 684 million males and 641 million

females, gives a sex ratio of 943 females per 1000 males (Ram 2015). Increasing level of literacy and the decrease in the gender gap of the literate, the high dependency ratio (54.1%), manageable level of unemployment and the increasing trend in the informalization of labour force are some of the demographic changes of the country in the percent century (Manorama year Book 2016).

With the young people (people between 15 to 55 years) constituting about 60 % , of the population is a blessing to the country in terms of human capital. This potentiality of the human resource can be effectively used with adequate economic growth and employment opportunities both in public and in private sector. The children between the age of 0 to 14 which constitute 28.5% also remind the policy makers on the need to provide good basic education and health care as they are the future nation builders (Haub and Sharma 2015).

Kerala: Some Basic Features

Kerala, is small states (administrative divisions in India is known as state) and is tucked away in the south-west corner of the country. The state was formed on 1st November 1956 as per the State Reorganization Act (1956) by amalgamating the Malayalam speaking region of Travancore- Cochin and Malabar. It is geographically located between 8° 18' and 12 ° 48' north latitude and 74 ° 52' and 77 ° 22' east longitude and is situated at the southwest coast of India. The state has a total population of 33.40 million (16.02 million male and 17.37 million Female). It has just 1% of the land area of India but is home to 2.5% of its population as per 2011 census (Government of Kerala 2016).

Of the 29 states in India, Kerala is the only one which has a sex ratio in favour of females (1084 females for 1000 males as per the Census Report (2011). Due to the health seeking behavior of the people and the availability of quality health care services across the state, the people have a better life expectancy in the country. The infant mortality of 12 for every 1000 live birth and child mortality rate are the lowest in the country. The successful functioning of the decentralization in governance, the high political awareness and the active participation of the people in the democratic process, the high degree of freedom enjoyed by the people, the gender equality and the absence of caste practices make the state unique with in the Indian Subcontinent.

Compared to the rest of the country, the state also stand far ahead of the social and human development indicators. low infant mortality, high life expectancy, the high literacy rate, Human development index at par with the west, availability of highly skilled human resources with low operating cost, good public distribution and public health care system are some of the indicators which highlight the advantage stage has built. These achievement of social indicators amidst low economic development has caught the attention of the rest of the world and has been upheld as an environmental friendly model of development. But in recent years the state is now criticized for its stagnation in agricultural sector and low level of industrialization, high rate of educated unemployment, low productivity of the human resource and the fiscal crisis (Veron 2001).

The District of Wayanad

The district of Wayanad is located in the north-east part of the state of Kerala, South India. Geographically it is part of the Decan plateau and is located at its southern top at a height of 700- 2100 meters above sea level. Its chief glory is the majestic Western Ghats with superior ridges placed with dense forest like Chembra peak and Vellarmala, tangled jungles and deep valleys with uneven and rough landscapes. There is an inter-mix of lakes, natural and man made dams, rivers including the east flowing Kabini river, springs, large fields, and jungles throughout the district. The district is also blessed with lovely mist clad hill station, sprawling spice plantation and luxurious forest, bio diversity and rich cultural traditions. salubrious climate with heavy rain fall much above the national and state average. The bio diversity and the natural beauty offer good opportunity for eco-tourism to the region

The history of the land begin from pre-historic age with the Edakkal caves having evidence of human settlement during Neolithic and Mesolithic age. In ancient times the land was ruled by vedar Rajas and later by Pazhassi Raja of Kottayam Royal Dynasty. After the British rule, when the state of Kerala formed, the Northern region become parth of Kannur district and the southern region belonged to Kozhikode district. Later on 1st November 1980, by amalgamating the northern and southern region the district came into being.

Demographic features of the District

According to the census of 2011, the latest official data available shows the district has The total population of district as per the census of 2011 is 0.81 million consisting of 0.40 million males 0.41 million females. There has been a rapid decline in the population growth rate in the last decade (2001—2011) to 4.71% compared to the growth rate of 16.14% during 1991-2001. The district also has a sex ratio (1035 females per 1000 males) in favor of the females like the rest of the state. Compared to other part of Kerala, the district is not as densely populated as it accommodates only 2.45 % of the state population. The district has a density of 384 person whereas the state statistics is 860 persons per square kilometers. (Government of Kerala 2014)

The population composition of the district is very diverse in nature as the majority of it consists of settlers from within and from neighbouring states (Tamil Nadu and Karnataka). Another important feature is the presence of large adivasi population. It is home for aboriginal people like Adiyars, Paniyas, Kurumas, Ooralis, Kurichyas, Kadans, and Kattunaikkans, which consists of 20 % of the district population. The traditional way of living, low literacy rate, and reluctance to mingle with the general population has made them land less, marginalized suppressed and poor (MSME 2015)

Though the district is known for its abundances of plantation crops and spices, it remains one of the most backward districts in the state. Vast majority (96.14%) of the population live in rural areas and agriculture and allied activities become the primary source of livelihood. The social and economic indicators like literacy rate, infant mortality rate, child sex ratio, the district domestic product, the percapita income and the level of industrialization are far below the state average. The agricultural practices including cultivation, harvesting and marketing in the state of Kerala in general and in the district of Wayanad in particular are not modernized. The existence of high percentage of marginal and small scale farming along with the traditional practices of farming make agriculture economically nonviable. High dependency on rain fed farming and the frequent occurrence of natural calamities like, drought, cyclone and flood do heavy damage to the crops. Unpredictable price fluctuation which often has a declining trend during harvesting season makes the situation worst.

Educational System

In the ancient times, the education imparted in the country was more or less informal in nature which is popularly known as Gurukula System. Under this system, any one who wished to study went to the house of Guru (teacher) and would stay at the teacher's house. The teacher would teach a wide range of subjects from Sanskrit to the holy scriptures and from Mathematics to Metaphysics depending upon the need and the aptitude of the student. All learning activity was closely linked to nature and to life and to some extent memorizing some information. Along with the learning process, the student would help the teacher in all the household activities. The student stayed in with the teacher as long as he wished or till the teacher is satisfied with the learning. (Kumar 2014)

The modern education system was introduced during the British rule by Lord Thomas Macaulay in 1830. The teaching shifted from teacher's house to class rooms and the subjects were science and mathematics rather than scriptures or metaphysics. Various boards were constituted to regulate and standardize the education from 1921 onwards. (Ponmellil 2010) Education became a state subject in the constitution which gave power to the state to formulate and implement education policies. With the constitutional amendment of 1976, education was included in the concurrent subject thereby the central government has their say in the education policies at the national level but the state governments have a lot of freedom in implementing the programmes.

The Right to Education

Education became a fundamental right in India with the constitutional amendment of 2002. Later on 26th August 2009, "The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009" (RTE) was passed in the parliament which mandates that every child in the age group of 6 to 14 years of age to have free and compulsory education. Through this constitutional amendment it became the responsibility of the government to ensure that every child of the school-going age get enrolled in school and complete elementary education. The Act provides for the establishment of school in the neighbourhood of the child, equal opportunity for children with disabilities and special provisions for those with multiple disabilities (Government of India 2009).

The government has to ensure that the schools are equipped with sufficient infrastructural facilities like building, teaching material and well trained teaching staff. The act have provisions for quality education according to the norms prescribed. Now it is the duty of every parents to ensure that his or her ward is admitted in the school and complete the elementary education. The act also has provisions against discriminatory practices against children belonging to socially and economically backward classes (Government of India 2009).

The RTE Act was a land mark step by the government of India as a consequential legislation that was passed to achieve the vision envisaged under the Article 21 A, which provides for the free and compulsory education to all . The act of 2009 provides every child the right to quality and equitable education in a formal school which would be of certain acceptable standard. As a result of the RTE, the number of elementary schools in the country has increased from 1303812 in 2009-10 to 1448712 in 2013-14 and the enrolment in the primary education has increased from 195 million to 198.9 million during the same period. The Annual Survey of Education Repot (ASER) shows that the enrolment in school in the age group of 6 to 14 is 96.7 % where as the out of school girls have reduced to 5 % with an exception to U P and Bihar (ASER 2015). How ever, the 6.04 million Children who are out of school are still a matter of concern. Though there has been a considerable decrease in the drop out rate, there are still more than one million dropouts across the country (CII and KPMG 2016).

Education In Kerala

The educational scenario in Kerala is far advanced than other states of India. The state has been successful in materializing the dream of every child of the school-going age getting enrolled in school since the last decade while the rest of the country still lag far behind. The perusal of liberal education policy since its formation in 1956, the intervention and active role played by various religious and social organisations in establishing educational institution and also in creating awareness among the parents on the need for education has helped the state in this achievement. Today due to the liberal higher education policy, the students in the state have opportunities in perusing college education and course of their choice.

There are both public and private educational institutions. The public institutions are run by the state government where as the private institutions are run by either a trusts or by individuals. The educational institutions are affiliated either to the state government or to the

central government. The medium of instruction is either English or Malayalam (the mother tongue of the people in the state) at school level where as it is English at higher education level. Of total 12615 school in the state 4619 are government schools, 7145 are Government Aided school and 851 are unaided schools. In the Districat of Wayanad, where the present study is conducted, there are 293 schools out of which 172 are government schools, 109 are government aided school and 12 are private unaided school. In the year 2015-16, the number of students enrolled in the school were 3772721 and 115578 in the district of Wayanad consisting of 59319 boys and 56259 girls (Government of Kerala 2016).

Due to the edge the state enjoys over the rest of the country, most of the reform aiming to transform the existing educational system are introduced in the state. The state successfully shifted from its traditional behaviorist way of teaching to a social constructivist paradigm. The state also successfully implemented the new evaluation method which tested the ability of the child to apply the knowledge he gained in different situation against the traditional method which was mainly aimed to test the memorizing power. The state also took the leading role in implementing the IT based education and in introducing IT as part of curriculum.

Chapter V

Analysis of data

Though the process of implementation and execution of the of Mid day Meal scheme is long which undergoes many bureaucratic procedures starting from the parliament with sanctioning of necessary fund, the interaction between the beneficiaries and the meal providers are short and very limited. The direct interaction between the beneficiaries and the benefit providers begins once the meal is prepared and ready to be supplied.

School under study: The Public Sector School

The public institution under study is located within the jurisdiction of the municipality of Kalpetta, Wayanad, and it is the only school which has all the school education programme with in the same campus-- (from primary school to Higher Secondary and Vocational Higher Secondary courses) in the region. Teaching is carried out in two medium of instruction— Malayalam and English up to upper primary level. There are about 1000 students in the school – 300 in primary section, 250 in the Upper primary section, 300 in high school section, 110 in Higher Secondary and 100 in Vocational Higher secondary classes. the school participate in the governments initiative to do away with class room hunger and students up to class 8 are eligible for mid-day meals but other students of the higher classes can also participate in the programme free of cost. In addition to the noon feeding programme, the school children are also provided with a number of welfare programme including free uniform and free text books to all students upto class 8, financial assistance to tribal students and Educational Scholarship to the students from marginalized community

School Feeding Programs

There are different feeding programs that exists in public and private school. The noon feeding programme is an initiative of the government and the fund or the materials are supplied by the state and the central government. Others feeding programmes are sponsored by local self government or by different government departments for a specific group of people like Tribal or marginalized or a targeted group of students. Only the noon feeding programme covers

all students from class 1 to class 8. The Different feeding programmes are discussed in brief below.

Break Fast to Socially and Economically Backward Children.

The school breakfast programme funded and supported by the Local Self Government (Municipality in the public school and Gram Panchayath in the Private school) is mainly aimed to provide breakfast to the children from socially and economically backward category such as Scheduled caste, Scheduled Tribe and other BPL category. Till a year ago, the school was responsible for the preparation and supply of the breakfast. The inability of the school to continue with the breakfast scheme due to the enormity of the work, record keeping, time and human resource constraint and the meager fund allotted for supplying the food, the Municipality has entrusted the task of preparing and supplying breakfast to the Women Self Help Group of the locality. The group currently supply food to three school at a time. The SHG prepare the food in a common kitchen and distribute it to the children in the school campus. The food usually consists of a main dish item and a gravy side dish. The main dish consists of two to three pieces of *Iddaly*, or one or two *Dosa* or *Uppma*. In the public school, a glass of milk is also supplied. There are about 126 students in the public school and 75 students in the private school as beneficiaries. The fund allotted by the local self government is Rs.7 (an increase from Rs 5 in the previous year) per student per day (which is not even sufficient for a cup of regular tea which costs Rs 8).

Mid Day Meal Scheme.

The noon feeding programmes is implemented in both the private and in the public school as per the existing government norms and guidelines. All the students from class I to class VIII are eligible for the free meal irrespective of their social and economic status. Details are discussed above.

Snacks During Study Camp

One to two months prior to the year end examinations conducted by the Board of public Examinations for Plus two and SSLC students, intensive study camp is organized for the candidates. Many students do not have enough study facilities at home or may not have someone to help to clarify the doubt. The aim of this study camp is to revise the entire syllabus of the examination and prepare the students better. The presence of teaches at the study camp provide

support for their studies. As a refreshment to the participants, tea and snacks are supplied during this study camp days usually twice a day ie around 11 am in the morning and 3.30 in the evening. The fund is usually collected from the students but in some years the local self government provide full or partial financial support. The task of preparation of the food is entrusted to some private individuals who supply it to the school. The distribution is usually carried out by the teachers or done by students under the supervision of the teachers.

The present study covers the school feeding programme in general but specific focus is on the Mid Day meal Scheme. The MDMS is universal in nature and covers across the country while other programmes are implemented at the initiative of the school or the local government and limited to certain category students or to certain region.

Need for the programme

The perception of the participants and the providers, (teachers and the cooks,) on the need for the MDMS were inquired. Aswin shaji of the seventh standard, of the public school was of the opinion that *“the food is served because the students are hungry and if the food is stopped one day, all the students will go hungry.”* Sreedevi of the 8th standard think that *“the food is given as a support to students like me who are economically backward.”* The students of the private school also had similar opinion. Nivin Paul who is now a student of VIII said that the food is essential for students especially those who are financially and economically backward. *“If the meal is not given in the school many students will be sitting in the class with out having anything to eat.”* Athul also hold the view that the food is important for the children because they come from poor families and their parents are unemployed. Dibin a seventh standard student has given a different reason for his participation in the mid day meal. *“The main reason why I take food from here is that both parents are working and since they have to leave home early in the morning, they don’t have time to prepare meal.”*

The teachers of both private school as well as the public school share more or less similar view point. Mr. Divakaran, one of the teachers of the Public school opined that *“ noon feeding is needed to prevent the class room hunger. It is not good to have hungry students in the class room. Even in the context of Kerala, the noon feeding is important because there are many students especially the tribal students who comes to school hungry.”* The School in-charge (The Head Master) also considered it is important to give food at school because many parents especially those belonging to the tribal community find it difficult to afford food. The teachers

of the private school also shares the same opinion. Mr. Shaji Jose of the private school said *“The parents are poor and the noon feeding helps the students to have a better food compared to what they have at home.”*

The cooks and the cooking assistants also hold a similar opinion that the food is need because the parents are unable to afford good food to the students. The cook of the private school added that *“Providing food at school reduces the burden of the parents especially those who are working. Now they need not bother to prepare food because good food is available at school.”*

Thus the beneficiaries, the teachers and the cooks uphold the need for providing food because either many parents cannot afford the food or the working parents do not have enough time to prepare good meal for the students. But it is noteworthy that the noon feeding is looked down as an end in itself. They have failed to identify the noon feeding as a means for better education and for improving the nutritional deficiencies of the children. Thus, the long run objective of the noon feeding are often neglected or not taken care of by the providers especially the teachers.

Perception On Who Are The Beneficiaries.

The MDMS is targeted to all the school going students from Class 1 to 8. But the beneficiaries and the service provides, both in public and in the private school consider it as a programme aimed for the benefit of those from socially and economically backward segment of the society. Athul from the public school said *“The food is important for the poor children. I have gone to the houses of some of my friends. They don’t have a good house. Their parents are unemployed. So the food is a must.”*

In the words of Athira, student of the private school, *“Those who are bringing food from home are usually rich and well to do . The food given here is for the poor.”* Dibin, Athul, Sravani and many other students of public as well as private shool share the view that those who avail free meal from the school are poor. The rich students bring food from their home. *“Most students who take food from here are poor. They don’t have money. One of my friend told me that his father is no more, he doesn’t have money to buy uniform or to he doesn’t have a good house.”* *“Usually only poor students take food from here.”* Said Dibin an 7th standard student of the private school.

Teachers also hold the view that the food is given to poor students from socially backward communities. *“ In this school, about 40 % students are from ST communities. The parents are unable to afford proper food to them ”* said Ms. Sobh of the public school. Other Teachers interviewed also shared the opinion that the food is meant for those from poor household. *There is a need for noon feeding in school ”* Says. Mr Rahman *“because more than 60 % of the students comes from families of very poor background.”*

There is a tendency to look down on those who avail the free meal as the poor. The attitude is unwanted and often shaming. Many students do not prefer to take meal from school because they believe that it is meant for those from the poor household. They do not want to be identified as poor and they prefer to stay hungry rather than participate in the noon feeding. Though the program is universal in its concept, the school authorities or the government have failed to make enough awareness among the teachers, students, parents and to the society at large that MDMS is not just a program for the poor. The programme have failed atleast to some extent in reaching its targeted group or in attaining its true objectives due to the false shame associated with it.

Selection of beneficiaries

Though the programme is universal in nature the students are free to avail the benefit or not to be a recipient of the scheme. To be a recipient of the meal, the student has to make a formal or informal application to the school authorities. The method of expressing their willingness to avail the free meal from school differ slightly from the public school to the private school.

In the public school there is no formal application the students need to submit to be part of the scheme. For the school authorities to have an idea of the number of students who require meal, once in a fortnight or once in a month the teacher in-charge of the class take note of the number of students who require meal from that class and hand over to the teacher in-charge of the feeding programme. The advantage with this system in the public school is that a students can join or leave the feeding programme at any time of the year.

In the private school, though the scheme is extended to all the students upto class VIII, the Above Poverty Line (APL) category students are exempted from the system. According to the Teacher in charge of the MDMS in the school, *“it (the programme) is limited to only BPL students and to the students belonging to socially and economically backward community.”*

The students are asked to submit an application at the beginning of the academic year and the meal is provided to those who have submitted the formal application only. *“Though the meal is limited to BPL category students, every effort is taken to include all those who apply since the discretion of either to include or exclude is left with us(the school authority).”* Thus the in the private school, the students can leave the programme at any time during the year, but not easy to join it other than at the beginning of the school year.

The selection process itself is shaming especially in private school where the teachers hold the view that the provision of the free meal is limited to those belonging to the BPL category. Further, the school authorities also believe that they have the discretionary power either to include or exclude a student from the feeding program. The authorities used the term “selection of the beneficiaries” which implies that only some selected students are eligible for the benefit . They also lack enough information that the meal is a right of every student and that every student has a right to be part of it. As per the provision, all those who are enrolled in the school has a right to free meal and they do not have to submit any written application for the same. This unwanted procedure tend to keep at least a few students away from the feeding programme and also look upon those who participate in the meal as socially or economically poor.

Fund allocation

The beneficiaries (the students) are in no way directly involved with the allocation of the fund . But the materials supplied and the amount sanctioned to each school is based on the number of participants. The main issue related to the scheme is that the fund is never released on time. The authorities or the teacher in charge of the scheme advance the amount from his pocket or from other funds available in the school. Usually the fund is sanctioned after three to six months or even at the end of the academic year. There are also occasion where the sanctioned amount is less than what they actually spent. Since the agency that finance the scheme in both public and private schools are the same and no priority is done for the payment to either, both the schools are in equally in difficult position on managing the day to day business related to the MDMS.

Insufficient fund

The teacher in charge of the public school mentioned *“we are providing meals to 800 students per day but there are only 500 eligible students. So we have to adjust the income and*

expenditure. With the limited fund we have to provide egg or fruit weekly (to all the 800 students with the fund for 500 students)and milk twice a week . All that we get is Rs 6 per student per day” the teacher in charge added. “The fund allotment is at a price level based on many years before. Now the situation has changed. Price has increased by many times. Unless the rate is revised it is almost impossible to continue.”

Mr. Abdul Rahman one of the teachers of the public school remarks *“one of our basic limitation to give quality meal is the lack of sufficient fund. We are willing to do our role happily. But sufficient fund must be given”*. Mr Sebastian also pointed out the effort taken by the teachers and school authorities to provide a good meal to students. *“ We are using fund from other sources, materials like fire wood that belongs to school or near by, and the excess material that we get from other program to give a better meal”*

The students are also aware that the fund is insufficient. *“Sobha teacher (the one who is incharge of the scheme) has spent a lot of money for this. Teacher has not told us about this but I know it from some other sources.”* And later he himself said *“once we asked for curd and she said the fund is very limited teacher has told that she has also spend a considerable money from her pocket for the meal”*

Teachers from the private school also share the view that the fund is very limited. *“though we want to give a good meal to the student the fund that is allotted is too meager. They (the government) never bother to release the fund on time. Some how we manage with what is given.”*

The limited amount and the untimely release of the fund is a challenge the school authorities face in implementing the scheme. They try their level best to provide a good meal. the private school provide a meal with in the limited fund sanctioned whereas the public school take more effort to provide a better meal by using own resources or by utilizing the excess supply or material they get from some other programmes.

Infrastructure facilities

Both the public and the private school, lack a separate dining hall or dining area. The students are served food either in the open space or in the class room. It might appears to be ok on sunny days, but on rainy days it raises problem. In the present school under study, the private school provide meals in the open space and the students stand in queue to get the food. In the

public school, in the previous year the food was served in the open space making the students stand in queue but under the initiative of the School management committee, sufficient dishes are provided and now the food is distributed in the class.

Students have a tendency to skip lunch or bring food from home because they don't like to stand in queue especially when it is raining. Sravani an eight standard girl used to take food when she was in primary school. But now she brings her lunch from home. *"Earlier the students had to stand in queue in the open space for getting the food. though now the system has changed, and most days food is served in the class room, some days we follow the old system. When it is raining, I don't like going and standing in queue for food. so I tend to skip my lunch on rainy days. Therefor I started to bring my lunch from home so that I don't need go down to stand in queue."*

Further, students look upon those who avail mid-day meal every day including the rainy day as poor. Sravani said, *" I know they are poor and food is important for them because they take the food every day from school. Even on rainy days, they stand in queue in the rain to get the food."* It is not just taking the food alone, she continues, *they are getting free uniform, umbrella, books and financial support. From all these I know they are poor."*

Speaking on the need for having a dining hall The cook of the Public school observe that *"We prepare and keep milk for SC and ST (the socially and economically backward members of the society) students. Boys come and drink the milk but girls feel shy to come and often tend to skip it. they used to come here for drinking water but they don't come here for drinking milk. But if we take the milk and keep it over the stage (a place where the food is distributed), they (girls) all come"*.

In the private school, the students still stand in rain or in sun for getting the food. *"on rainy days those who have umbrellas, they bring it. Others get wet while standing in queue."* Said Mr Jose, one of the teachers. They seems to be helpless and had no clue on what else to be done to prevent the students from getting wet. There are also other issues related to standing in queue for getting food. Most students want to be first in the line and on occasions ion when the food supply is not monitored by the teachers they argue over who came first. Pravitha an 8th standard girl like the teachers to be present when food is served. *"If teachers are there, there wont be any discipline problem. There were times when I was made cry on the issue of standing on line for food."*

Other than the dining hall, the school also suffer from lack of good kitchen, utensils and other equipment needed for cooking, storage facility of food grains, vegetables and other provisions, non-availability of safe drinking water, waste management facilities and other basic facilities related to cooking.

The cooking is currently done in a kitchen constructed for the same. The kitchen is very small in size, suffer from lack of space to keep the utensil and other equipment used for cooking. The fuel used for cooking is fire wood and there is no proper ventilation or chimney for the smoke. This make cooking a tiresome work and the health of the cooks are badly affected. The cook of the private school explained the health hazard she underwent as a result of working in the Smokey kitchen *“I was hospitalized for two week due to the excess smoke I got in my lungs from the kitchen.”* The unscientific cooking also leads to smoke entering into the food while cooking, damaging or destroying fully or partially the nutrition, protein and vitamins in the food.

Safe Drinking water is as important as having nutritious food. The food is cooked using water pumped directly from the well which is quite common practice in the state of Kerala. The schools do not have adequate means of providing safe drinking water not only during the meal time but other time also. The public school has one purifier fixed at a point. This one purifier is inadequate to provide drinking water to more than 1000 students and teachers in the campus. There is no cup or other facilities provided to drink water. The students are permitted to collect water during the interval time which is just 10 minutes in the morning and 5 minute in the evening. The private school do not have purifier or other mechanism to provide drinking water. The students have to drink water from the regular pipe which supplies water for washing of plates and hand or have to bring from home. In countries like India, where water is contaminated and polluted, the lack of safe water expose students to serious health problem and spread of many waterborne diseases.

Both the school (the public and private school) do not have adequate places for washing of hand, cleaning the plates or lunch boxes after the meal. Almost all the students do not wash their plate before getting the food. The plates are either kept in an open space or not covered well enough since the last meal. So there are possibilities that it has gathers dust or infected. But the teachers and the students do not care enough to wash or sterilize the plate before food. Most students of the private school stated *“once the bell for the lunch rings, we rush out of the class room to stand in the queue”* No one has mentioned about washing their plate. Many

students don't wash their lunch box even after food. *“ since there used to be a lot of rush at the pipe, I do not wash my lunch box from school”* said Akhil of the private school. *“I just close it (the lunch box) after my lunch and wrap in a paper and take it home. At home my mother washes the box.”*

There is also no mechanism to ensure that the students wash their hand properly before taking meal. Especially in the Private School, where students rush to stand in queue for getting the food, most of them do not wash their hand. *“ we rush to get the food. once we get food, sometimes we do not wash our hands before taking food.”* said Nibil of the private school. Pavitha, a class VIII girl added, *“usually girls wash their hands but many boys take food without washing their hand”* In the public school, since students are sitting in the class for meal, the teacher can at least monitor whether students go out of the class to wash their hand or not. Unfortunately, usually, teachers are not present while distributing food or to ensure that students wash their hand or plate before taking food.

Preparation of meal

The preparation of the food by and large is decentralized through out the state--(in some parts of the country, food is prepared in a common kitchen and supplied to the different school). As per the directions from the government, it is mandatory to prepare the food in the school itself. It provide a chance to the teacher in charge or the authorities concern to supervise the cooking, decide on the menu, and to ensure sufficient quantity of food is prepared. A separate building is constructed for the preparation of the food, utensils are made available and the service of two local people are utilized for the cooking, distribution of food, cleaning and to perform other work related to the MDMS.

As the literature suggest, there are issues related to caste problem in different part of the country. But in the state of Kerala, this is not seen. But cooking in a neat and hygienic kitchen is often not done or not possible as the building are of poor quality and the utensils are very poor. Since the school (both private and public) do not have LPG connection, the cooking is carried out in the traditional way using firewood as fuel. The unscientifically constructed oven and the unscientific method of cooking leads to loss of vitamins, proteins and other nutritional value of rice and vegetables. Lack of proper drainage, the unscientific and careless waste disposal causes foul smell in the surrounding area.

To carry out the task of cooking meal for more about 1000 student at a time is physically demanding and only really healthy person can do the work such as washing the big utensils, carrying raw rice from store room to the kitchen etc. The daily wage sanctioned to the cook is very low compared to the market wage for other work including unskilled labour. (An unskilled worker get around INR 600 to 700 per day whereas the daily wages of the cook is INR 350). The underpaid cook and the cooking assistants often tend to skip their duties such as distribution of food, proper washing of utensils, cleaning of dining area. Duties such as distribution of food is done by the enthusiastic students whereas works like cleaning need to be compelled by the teacher in charge

Distribution of meal

Students used to take part in serving the food as mentioned earlier. Though this is part of the duties of the cook and the helper, they entrust it to the students and the teacher in charge/head of the institution turn a blind eye to this. Further, it is not possible to distribute rice and the side dish to all the participants of the meal with in 45 to 60 minutes of the lunch break. Usually, in most schools the students participation is done in a rotational basis but there are also students who want to participate in it everyday. This might cause some kind of ego problem among a few as some of them want to be part of the distribution every day. If a student is denied the chance of distribution, he feels embarrassed among his friends. This also can lead to serious quarrels among the students as Arjun, an 8th (Name and class of the student is changed) standard boy mentioned “..*There had been issues with other students. They want to quarrel and fight with me. They were making plans to beat me up after the school hours. The only reason I know is that they want to distribute the bananas which I was doing on most days. I told the matter to my teacher and now the issue is settled.*”

This strained social relations as mentioned above can result into enmity, formation of gangs or groups within the school campus leading to quarrel and fight, either personally or between the group. All these leads to lose of concentration on studies defeating the real goal of mid-day meal scheme.

In the public school, for the effective functioning of the food distribution and cleaning work a group system is practiced with in the class. Under this system, the students of the classes are divided into group and each group is assigned the task of brings the food from the Kitchen to the class room, taking back the balance food if any or the empty dishes and cleaning the class

room. The work is done by each group on a rotation basis. Since the group consists of both boys and girls, the boys are assigned the task of bringing the food and the girls are mostly assigned the task of returning the empty dishes and the cleaning up of the class room. At times, boys also take part in it. Though many students take part in it enthusiastically, some are reluctant to do especially the cleaning work. Shaiju, a hostler who usually do not take food from the school, said, *“some times I go for bringing the food from kitchen to the class room of my own but other times I go out of compulsion from the class leader or by others.”* *“some boys get punished for not doing the cleaning work”* says Sravani, a class 8th student.

The physically weaker students or differently abled students also feels embarrassed as they are unable to join the team for distribution. Shana said *“I never go to bring meal from the kitchen because it is heavy and I am afraid that I might drop it”*.

In the private school the food distribution system is different. For the students of the primary classes (upto class IV) the food is served in their class where as for other students the food is supplied from three or four counters meant for the same. To serve food help from students of higher classes are sought. *“ only students who are physically strong, neat and clean are selected for serving food.”* says Sravani, who is a student representative.

As the bell rings for lunch, the students queue in front of the counter designated for the respective classes. The school representatives supervise the distribution of food while selected students distribute the food.

Since the number of counters are limited, students usually rush to be in front of the counter. *“When the bell rings we all rush to the counter to be the first in the queue”* said Aswin of 7th standard. Though the student representatives try to supervise on most days there used to be some kind of commotion over who came first. The argument between the students are common and sometimes it leads to physical harassment. *“In the last week one student representative was beaten by some rough boys who came for food. So now he stopped coming for supervision”*. Jihal a 6th standard student said *“its better to have teacher while distributing the food. otherwise the students make rush... and they spill the food .”*

There is no mechanism to ensure that the food is distributed equitably and according to the needs of the beneficiaries or food is not wasted. (more details are discussed later in this chapter). Thus the distribution process is shaming in the sense that the students are made to carry the food which is often heavy than what they can carry. Standing in queue is good but

there is no mechanism to ensure that the discipline is maintained. When the teachers are absent the sense of justice and right and the feeling of equality by the weak students are over taken by the might of the physically strong ones.

Presence of Teachers during distribution of food.

Some time teachers used to be there while serving the food. Most students prefer to have their teacher to be present and serve the food to them for various reason. *“ I prefer my teacher serving food to us.”* Says Mubasheer of the public school. *“One of the reason is that the students will behave themselves if the teacher is present. There is a difference when the teacher is present.”* He continues *“... But she is not able to be always there. She is busy with many things.”* Jihal of the 6th standard also like to have teachers present while serving the food so that the discipline is maintained.

The experience of the Shana is that if the teacher not present while serving the food, *“some students misbehave and just pick food from the dishes with hand. So we request the teacher to be present while serving meal.”* Aswin Shaji, an VIII standard student prefer teachers to be present when meal is served. *“...because teachers know how to serve food in a good way and the quantity what is required for each student.”* Aswin also tells the need for the teachers to be present while serving the food. *“ When the bell rings for lunch every one rush to the queue to get the food first. If the teacher is present, we all stand as disciplined student. We take the rice by ourselves where as the side dish is served by one of the student. There used to be comparison and comments over who got more and who got less.”* Thus if the teacher is present, in addition to maintaining the discipline, the food is served properly, each one getting what his due share and care can be taken to avoid wastage of food.

Sravani also feels that students behave better when a teacher is present. Whereas Lakshi says *“teacher is not always present when meal is served...I like if the teacher is there. She serve the food to us when she is present and I like it”*. Rajesh also shared similar view and added *“Earlier teacher used to serve us food. She used to give it with love...and I miss it now”*

In the private school, when food is distributed, usually the teachers are not present when food is served. As a result, there used to be some kind of argument and sometimes fighting among the students who stand in line for food. *“teachers are always in the staff room. They don’t come to the place where food is supplied.”* Said Pravith an 8th standard student. Almost all the students interviewed opined that they prefer to have teachers present while food is served.

I prefer the teachers to be there when food is served. If teachers are not present, there is a lot of indiscipline and rush... and the food is not served properly.

Ashaya an eight standard girl says, *“when ever there is a fight, or some major issues I report it to the teacher and the teacher intervene and take control of the situation”*. Thus the intervention of the teachers while distributing the food is limited in maintain the discipline. Mathew, another student feels that *“If the teachers are present, they can tell us good things like to be disciplined, not to waste food etc. But teachers are also having food when we are taking food”*. He also feel *“ some teachers don’t like to be present when food is served. may be because they have their own work”*

Joyal a 7th standard student of the private school also prefer to have teacher while food is supplied. *“If they are present, there will be discipline. But teachers are busy in the staff room. They seldom come to the place where food is supplied.”*

Dibin said, I prefer the student leaders to be around than the teachers while food is served. Because, the student leaders are more friendly than teachers. *“The teacher usually don’t come, when they come they are very strict. So I don’t like them to be present”*.

Though some students prefer their teacher to be present while serving the food, they seldom request the teacher for the same. *“I prefer to have teachers when food is served but I have never asked them to be there... I don’t know why... it seems some of the teachers don’t even want to come to our class because some students are really naughty. They have said quite a few times they don’t want to come to our class for teaching... and I also have overheard them discussing the naughty behavior of the students in our class...may be because of it I am a bit scared of asking them. (the teachers)”* Says Aneus of public school.

Mr. Sebastian teacher of the public school feels it is good that the teacher distribute food *“If the teacher distribute the food, they also naturally get a sense of responsibility and feels like as if they are part of the programme. By supplying food, the teacher can directly monitor the quality, the quantity of the food taken, can ensure that no wastage of food is there and every one get what an equal share. Above all there is better interaction between the teacher and student”*.

Where as Mr. Jose a teacher of the private school feels that once the students learn how to distribute the food, they continue with the same system. *“We need to be there only in the first*

two week of the academic year to introduce and to monitor the distribution of food. once the students get acquainted with the system, the teacher need to intervene only if there is some issues". Mr Wilson teacher of the private compares the food distribution in another school. "In another school the teacher distribute the food that is brought to the class room by the students. I feels it is better that the teacher distribute the food because all will get equal share."

The students and the teachers prefer that the food is served or distributed by the teacher irrespective of the place where it is served. In other words, if everything is left to students with out proper monitoring, there are chances that all the students will not get their due share. This will generate shame on those who do not get what is their due share as they are usually the one who stand in the queue last. If the injustices are prolonged, it may leads to the development of inferiority complex and affect the personality development of the child.

Quality of the meal

Many students have expressed their dissatisfaction over the poor quality of the food they get. The quality can be accessed in two ways -- the type of food they get and the way it is prepared. Many students are dissatisfied that they get only vegetarian item and on most days the menu is of monotonous nature. When Shaiju a hostler was asked whether he prefer food from hostel or from school, he said, *"both are equally badI prefer to bring lunch from hostel. Here only vegetarian food is available but in hostel we get non vegetarian food like fish also."*

Teachers also share similar view and emphasized the need to improve the quality of the food. Mr Abdul Rahman , one of the teachers of the public School feels that the students must be given a better food. *"The noon feeding system must be improved. What we give now is a very poor quality food. The students must be given better quality food and the nutritious content must be sufficient."* Mr. Sebastian of the same school added, *"We are not asking to increase the quantity of food or the number of items given. What we give them must be of good quality and useful to student's health."*

Mr. Divakaran, one of the teachers of the public school feels that many students are getting a nutritious food compared to what they get in their home. He also added that the feeding programme has helped to increase the attendance. The Breakfast provided to the students are an attraction to those economically backward to attend the school. *"About 20 % of the students in this school belongs to Scheduled tribes who hail from a very poor background."*

They have a better food in the school compared to what they have in their own home. So this better food has helped to increase the attendance of the tribal students in the school. More interestingly, I have noticed that more tribal students are present in the school on days when milk is distributed.”

The students also mentioned that what is given to them earlier were often not edible. On condition of anonymity, a student said, *“There used to be worms and tiny stones in the food—in rice and in vegetables— earlier and food used to be bad. It is possible that there can be worms in the vegetable. ... we used to through away the food when we see dead worms or other dead pests in the food. We complained to the teachers. Now they have improved the quality and we are getting better food.”* Shana explains her experience of getting paper bits, plastics pieces, egg shell etc from the food the previous year. *“We put up a complaint. We also informed the same at home. The cooks were warned by the School Managing Committee. The SMC was planning to remove the cooks but they requested for one more chances. Now they have improved the food.”* The school authorities have taken necessary steps to provide a better and edible food to the students now in the public school

Getting poor quality food is not specific problem of the students of public school alone. The students of the private school are still having similar experiences. Athira of the private school said *“ at times we find dead worm or such insects in the food....we have no other option but to have such food”* Jihal, Dilna and many other studetns also remember many instances of finding dead worm, dead ants or other such things in the food. They also feel that the food they get is the left over of the previous day as Jibin said, *“Some times we used to get leftover food of the previous day.”* Jihal added, *“When we see such things in the food (hair, dead worm or ants etc), we just throw that food away...”* This result into increase in the wastage of food and also students sitting in the class hungry.

As a consequences of this poor quality food supplied, many students stop availing the free meals. Juhail an 8th standard student in private school said. *“Some of my friends told me that they found hair in the food. So they also stopped taking food from here”* Some students even prefer to stay hungry than taking this unclean food. *“Some days we don’t bring food from home. But we don’t take food from here. Because we are not sure how good it is. So we prefer to sit in the class hungry ”*

The schools in the state are given mid term holidays of 10 days each twice a year— during Onam the state festival which occurs usually in the month of August or September and during Christmas. Students are supplied raw rice (5 Kg) during the festive season as an effort to avoid hunger at home when the students are not attending school. Many students have found worms, cigar bits, pebbles and other items in the rice that is supplied. Pravitha of the private school explained her experience. “ *once I got a cigarat bit from the rice. I told my teacher about it... the teacher jokingly said... just take and throw it away...* ” She is not the only one to have such experiences. Many students said that they usually use such rice as fodder for cattle or to feed the poultry birds and purchase rice from the open market for preparing meals at home.

In public school though now the quality of the food has improved and the SMC has taken steps to ensure that no unwanted elements are found in the food, the students do not fully trust what is given to them. Suhail an 8th class students prefer to distribute the food by themselves “ *because, if the food is served by others we do not know if some insets or other wastes are there.* ” Where as Raji, another student of the same school said “ *I have never seen any remains of creates or worms in the food. But some times other students used to tell that they have seen worms or such things in the food. But I don’t believe it.* ” thus in general there is a distrust among the students regarding the quality of the food and what is served to them can contain dead creatures. This distrust have increased with recent incidence reported from some part of the country where school students died and many hospitalized due to food poisoning.¹

Though the mid day meal is aimed to improving the nutritional intake of children and attract the students to school, the quality of the food provided and way it is prepared and supplied to the students infact bring a negative effect. With the intervention of the school committee the food in the public school have improved a lot. Students have not raised any complaint in the recent months. But in private school the issue still continues. This is shaming to the students and also the right of the student to have a decent food is questioned. The school authorities are often helpless because they can prepare food only with materials supplied to them. So initiatives to provide good food must begin from the government and should not put the entire burden on the school alone.

¹ On July 13, 2013 , twenty three students lost their lives after eating the mid day meal which was contaminated by pesticide at Gandaman Primary school in Chhapra, Bihar.

No alternative to what is supplied.

In the public school food consists of rice, a gravy side dish and a fried side dish. Where as in the private school the meal consists of rice and the gravy side dish. So if the student does not like the side dish, there is no alternative arrangements made. Student is either forced to bring food from home or to go hungry. *“my friend Arjun, Ameya, Sreekanth, etc don’t take meal from here because on some days egg is distributed and they are pure vegetarians. If one does not like egg, there is no alternative. I also don’t like egg. So on such days I bring food from home or I share the side dish of my friend like Arjun.”*

Dibin, the student of private school many of his friends do not take meal from school because they do not like the side dish given in the school. He said *“ they like vegetables but not the way it is prepared here. Since there is no alternative, but only one side dish in a day, they bring food from home.”*

From the response of the students, there are a number of students who are unable to avail the benefit of the noon meal programme because of what is provided in the school. There can be various reason like health problem, religious belief, dislike for the item or any other serious reason why a student cannot take particular food. When a child is either forced to have what is given which is against his health problem or religious belief, the institution fails to uphold his right. The feeding programme is adopted to do away with class room hunger but since there is only a particular type of food is given without a second choice, the scheme fails to achieve its objective.

Shortage of food

On the one side where students and speak of the excessive wastage of food, there are also students who tells of instances when they did not get food and had to sit in the class hungry.

Rahul one of the 8th standard students of the public school has observed that some times there used to be shortage of food *“especially on days when students distribute it because they give more to those whom they like. On such days, those who didn’t get, they go and complain to the teachers”*. Sravani of the public school said usually there is no shortage of food but sometimes especially when there is some special food is distributed there used to be shortage of food. *“when fruits or orange is distributed there used to be a few who don’t get it. It can be*

because some take more than one. We are afraid of going and complaining to the teacher because she is new and we don't know how she will react to us".

The teachers of the public school like Mr Sebastian, Mr Rahman remembers that there was shortage of food on the day when they tried to supply non-vegetarian food in the school. *the Teacher in charge of the MDMS in the public school recalls the incident, "Once we tried to supply non vegetarian item... the demand for food was so high that we were not able to control the students or give to all. So we stopped and give only vegetarian meal."* other than on this specific day, there was no such complaint brought to their attention on any other occasion.

Adithya, a 6th standard girl of the private school said *"There were students who didn't get food even after standing in queue because the food was not sufficient"* she think it is because *"those who come first take a large portion (no one to monitor) and those who come last have to go hungry."* *"I have seen students of higher classes takes a lot of food and waste."* Said Athul of the private school. The absence of teachers while supplying food leads not only lot of wastage of food but denial of the right of other students to have food. Speaking on condition of anonymity, a student have said that he used to take more food than his share. *"when egg is supplied, I used to take three or four"*. This highlight the need for the implementing agencies (here teachers) to effetely monitor to ensure that each one get the due share. The cook of the private school also point out the need for the presence of teachers. *"there are students who takes more than two, three to five eggs from the kitchen. They don't obey what I say and I am not able to stop them."*

Students are unaware of the health problem associated with taking four or five eggs in a day at a time. If teachers are present while serving food, they can ensure that all students get their due share and no wastage of food takes place. It also teaches the students to respect food, respect the right of others and also to behave with consideration to others. If the students are not considerate to those who come next to him in the queue, we cannot expect them to think of the rest of the world where people die due to hunger when they are adult.

Why Some students do not participate in the feeding programmer

Many students prefer lunch from their home and bring the packed lunch even though free food is available at school. *"I prefer food from home because it is neat and tasty"* said, Athul of the public school. Many students who do not take food from school also shared more or less the same reason. Some of them like the food from home because the food is better, well

prepared and more satisfying. Many students from the private school also prefer food from home. Wilson, an 8th standard student of the private school said, *“I prefer food from home because, it is prepared by my mother. The food from my home is much more tastier than what I get from here”* Even some students like Siddique, who takes food from the school, prefer the food from home because it is tasty.

The students who are hostlers also prefer to have packed lunch from hostel and most of them bring packed meal. Rajesh, an eight standard boy who stays in a hostler (an orphanage run by a private agency) brings his meals from the hostel. *“I prefer meals from hostel compared to the meals from here.”* Hari who is also a hostler prefer food from hostel because in hostel they get non-vegetarian food where as the school serves only vegetarian food. Sreedevi, a hostler run for girls prefer to have food from hostel rather than from school because *“the food from hostel is much better than what is given in the school”*

The cook of the public school had a very different view. *“The food that is given here is very good. Only because of their false pride they do not take food from here.”* Teachers are of the opinion that those who bring from home are the ones who can afford to have a better meal. They don't see anything wrong with it. *“There is nothing wrong in bringing ones own meal from home if they prefer to do so. Here most students are from poor families and they are happy with the meal. Those who are well off may be bringing a better meal than what is given here. And we never restrict any students from taking the side dish or pickle from the school.”*

Rahul now take food from the school since past one month. Earlier he was bringing food from home. But is unable to carry the weight of both book and food together to school. *“I take food from here not because I like it but because I have no alternative now”.*

Pavith, 8th standard student of the private school said *“I take meals from here but I like food from home better than what is given here. Some days I bring food from home”* He further continues *“I know some of my friends bring food from home because they don't like some of the curries (side dish) supplied here”.* Joyal Jose, a 7th standard student said, *“I like food from home because what I get at home is fresh, tasty and good.”* Later he added, *“I also know some of my friends who bring food from home. They said, they don't like this food.”* Aswin Shaji like food that is given in the school. *“I feel it is tasty. I have few friends who bring food from their home. They said, they don't like the food from school.”* Mathew, a student of the same school a participant of the school feeding programme prefer food from home *“it (food from home) is*

very tasty. My mother prepares good food. But since teachers are preparing food for students, I take food from here. They (the teachers) are taking much trouble to provide meals. So I take food from here” Dibin one of the 7th standard student said he take food from school but many of his friends prefer to have meals from home. He explained “ xxxxx...(name removed), my friend said he feels like omitting when he eat food from here. Nidhin of the 8th standard said, “ He take food that’s cooked in his home. Other friends also bring food from home mainly because they don’t like the side dishes given here. We used to bring food from home and give some of the side dishes to friends who takes food from school. ”Athira of the private school also knows many of her friends do not take food from school. “My friends say they don’t like food from here mainly because the surrounding where the food is prepared is not good”

There are also students who abstain from feeding programme because they are skeptical about the quality of the meal given in the school. Jihal 7th standard students said.” I don’t take food from here often because I have found dead ants and dead insects in the food and I prefer to bring food from home.” Jijin also bring food from home due to the unhygienic surrounding of the cooking place. “The food that is given from here or the area where it is prepared is not neat. So I bring food from home and if I don’t bring, I stay hungry in the class”.

Some students find it difficult to adjust with the system under which the food is supplied. Parvathi, of 7th standard said, “One reason why I don’t take food from here is that I need to stand in queue for a long time and there is indiscipline and rush by the students. So I decided to bring food from home.” Like Parvathi, there are other students who prefer to bring food from home only because there is no proper serving of food.

Joyal of the private school feels some religious belief associated with non participation of the meal. He said, “My muslim friends are bring food from home. The food minister (the student representative assigned with the MDMS portfolio in school parliament) is a Muslim and he is bringing food from home. I don’t know the reason. They say they cannot take the food that is given here.” Though the food that is served in the school is vegetarian, it can be because the students (and their parents) are not convinced enough that the food is halal.

Some teachers think that those who bring food from home are comparatively better off or uses better quality material for preparing meals at home “ Some students bring from home because they don’t like the rice that is used here. They have own cultivation and have better rice. So they bring food from home”

There are a number of reasons associated with why students do not take meals from school or why students prefer meals from home. In the case of economically better off students, it might appear to be ok to bring food from home. But in reality, the poor students are put to shame or embarrassment. They might be getting a feeling that they are forced to take poor quality meal because they are poor or they don't have land to cultivate better quality rice. The authorities are not in a position to ensure that they supply good quality meal especially to students who are skeptical about the neatness of the food that is supplied or the hygienic surrounding under which it is prepared. The students of the public school bring food from home or hostel because they get a better meal whereas in private school many students bring food from home not just because they are economically better off but due to other factors such as neatness of the surrounding, the religious belief and the distribution of food.

Compelled to take the food ?

During the interview with the students, it seems that some students are compelled to take food from school against their wishes. The students of the public school have not mentioned anything but a few students of the private school spoke that they are compelled either by their parents or by teachers to have meal from school rather than bring food from home. Ranjitha a student of 7th standard said, *“ I don't like to take food from here. But my mother told me to enroll my name for food and take the food from here at least now and then. Only if I am enrolled for the food, we will get the free rice supply that is given twice a year.”*

One of the teachers also said that she used to compel students to take meal. *“one mechanism to get the students enrolled for the noon meal is that we give the free rice supply only to students who are enrolled for the programme. I also used to tell them that free rice will be given only to who take meal from here regularly.”* Few students also have said that they have joined the MDMS to get the free rice supplied from school.

Attitude of teachers

There are a number of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities going on in the educational institution as part of the all round development of the students. Each teacher is put in charge of at least one programme. Though there is a teacher in-charge for each specific programme, most of the teachers take an active role in all the programmes conducted in the school. Due to the excess burden of the teachers, it may not be possible for all the teachers to be present always during the distribution of the food. Half jokingly and half seriously the Head

of the public school said, *"I will be happy if this programme is stopped. I get tired of the innumerable activities we are involved."* The Head of the private school also feels that the teaching community is now overburdened with so many activities both wanted and unwanted. *"We are asked to provide a lot of information most of which are unnecessary and unwanted. With the implementation of the Right to Information, we are flooded with questions"* In spite of all this the school authorities are satisfied with the way they implement the feeding programme. *"we provide the best we can with in the limited resources we have"* says the teacher in charge of the feeding programme. *"If all teachers cooperate the MDMS is not a burden and easy to carry out. It depend on how we organize."* Said the Head Master of the private school.

Teachers in the public school feel the need to go out of their way not only with related to the implementation of feeding programme but in all other aspect. *"the character formation, socialization and counselling are more important for the students in public school compared to the students in the private school."* says Mr. Rahman who was incharge of the MDMS in the previous years. *"The main reason is that the students here are coming mostly from the poor, socially and economically backward families"*.

"I am not personally responsible for the noon feeding programme. But as a teacher, I take part in it and do whatever possible from my end." Says Abdul Rahman one of the teachers of the public school. Ms Omana adds *"All the teachers are part of the system. and we all take an active role from our end."* Mr. Sebastine said *"The teacher can take part in the distribution of the food as part of the duty or with the attitude that the students are their own children. If we involve in it thinking that the children are their own, we will get happiness. All these depend on each individuals"*. Mr Rahman add, *"My children are studying in public school and they do not take meal from home though we prepare it in the morning. They happily take mid day meal from their school. it is not because we compel them. But they do it their own and we encourage them to do so."* indicating that when he himself get involved in the MDMS, he does it as if he is doing it for his own children.

Mr. Sebastian does not hide his disappointment over the excess work he is put into which forces him to sacrifice his teaching time *"Of the many employment opportunities, I chose teaching out of my passion for the profession. But against my expectation, for the past 5 to 10 years, due to the numerous programmes implemented in the school our job are degraded to that of a clerk where we sacrifice a lot of teaching time to do clerical work related to various activities and project implemented in the school including MDMS"*. He continues, *"In the*

schools in general, due to the excess activities the priority is not for teaching. And as a result the standard of learning is coming down each year.”

Though the MDMS goes well in the private school teachers in the private school are not very keen on getting actively involved in it. Mr Antony said, *“Since teachers are not given formal responsibility, no one take any active interest in the feeding programme and we can’t expect those who are not responsible for a programme to take a keen interest in its implementation.”* Seline, teacher of the same school said, *“I know a friend of mine who is working in another school put up a lot of effort to make the feeding programme a success. But in this school comparatively less effort is made.”* Wilson on the other hand point out the excess work teachers are put into which hinder them from doing things well. *“the teachers are overburdened with unwanted work and answering unnecessary queries from the department....Some time, the teacher in charge may not turn up on time it may not be deliberate but due to the excess work they forget.”*

One of the senior teacher Mr. Salvin is of the opinion that the newly appointed teachers are not service minded. They tend to stick to their duty of teaching and are reluctant to do some extra services. *“The young teachers are not willing to get involved into the mid day programme. May be because they are not aware of the importance of such programmes. They are not interested in these types of programmes as they do not know what hunger is or the pain of the students who are hungry”.* Speaking on the issues related to the distribution of the food, he added *“The teachers do not supply food to children or get involved with the programme as if they are their own children. If the this care is taken many of the problems associated with the noon feeding programmes can be overcome.”* He also knows teachers in different schools who are committed and put a lot of effort in making all the programme including MDMS a success.

The attitude of person responsible for carrying out a project matters especially when these works are addition to ones regular duty and has to be carried out with out any additional benefit. Only people who are service minded and those who want to work for the welfare of the beneficiaries can be expected to carry out the work effectively and fruitfully. Otherwise the task will be viewed as a burden and compulsion from the higher authorities will lead to halfhearted collaboration and cooperation. There are chances that the beneficiaries will be looked upon as those who are at the service provider’s mercy and receivers of the benefit at their free will. The teachers in the public school get better involded in the programme of their

own. This help to reduce any feeling of shame of the recipients of the benefit and can be encouraging to the poor students to take part in the programme as if it is their right.

Awareness of the students regarding their right to food.

Most students are not aware that the free food is their right. When they were asked what their response will be if the food is stopped one day, Sravani said, *"I will bring packed meal from my home next day onwards."* Most of the students responded that they will bring food from their home. Sravani from the public school said *"I will ask my teacher why there is no more food."* Mubasheer said *"I will just enquire Ms/Mrxxxxx (name of the teacher removed) why there is no food ... I will never ask Mr/Msxxxxx(name of the teacher removed) because I am scared of him"* Shana says *"I will write a complaint and deposit it in the complaint box"* Shaiju of the same school said *"I will not ask for the reason because I don't want to trouble them (the teachers)."* He is sure that if there is fund, the teachers will be giving them food. Same was the response from the students who takes mid day meals from the public school. Most of the students are aware that the noon feeding is a programme funded by the government. Mubasheer said *"I know the government give money to the school"* Even the students who bring food from home are also aware that the MDMS is government funded.

Students of the private school also said they will bring food from home but no one thought of making any formal complaint. Pravish, the private school student said, *"if the food is stopped one day, I will bring food from home. I will not ask or complaint to teacher. I am not sure if any of my friends are going to complaint."* Dibin thinks that the noon feeding programme in the school is organized by the Parents Teachers Association (PTA). So he will not ask any one why there is no food if it is stopped one day and will bring food from home. Aswin Shaji, an 8th standard student also think that the food is given by the PTA. But he remember someone – may be friends—told that the money is from the government. Aswin of the 8th standard said that he is afraid of the teachers and so he will not ask them why the food is stopped. But Pavithra, an 8th standard girl said that she will ask the teachers for the reason if there is no more food. She also will ask her mother to put up a complain. But she is not sure from where the fund for food is coming. Reshma is not sure from where the fund is coming but she think that food is also provided by the government because other benefit for the students are also coming from government. Sreedevi of 8th standard in the private school is not aware

who is funding the mid day meal. but if there is no meal, she will just ask her teacher what happened but she will not make any complaint or anything but will go with out food. Siddique also said he will not complaint to the teacher but just go to his home and have his lunch.

The public school students are better aware that the MDMS is sponsored by the government and that the students are entitled for the free meal. So they are ready to put up a complaint if the food is stopped. The private school students on the other hand consider the meal is also sponsored by the school management and so getting the food is at the mercy of the management. If a beneficiaries are not aware of the funding agency, what they are eligible for and to whom they should approach in case there is any complaint, they can be easily exploited and many of the benefit they are eligible for can be denied. The private school has failed in creating such awareness among the students.

Intervention by School Management committee.

As per the guidelines issued by the government of India, the school management committee must take an active role in monitoring the MDMS at grass root level. They are required to be present while cooking the meal and also taste food before serving to the students. The members also must be present while serving the food to see that the students are given their due share and that the school authorities do not inflate the number of beneficiaries in the record. The SMC is also entitled to ensure the hygiene of the kitchen, the utensils used and the quality of the material used for cooking.

In the public school, the School Management Committee (SMC) which is also known as the Parent- Teachers Association (PTA) plays an active role and takes many positive measures for better implementation of the scheme . Most of the days one or two members of the SMC used to be present in the school to school to monitor the feeding programme. They also take an active role by helping with cutting of vegetables, preparation of meals and serving the meal. They also taste the meal to ensure that the food is tasty and of good quality. To do away with the long queue system, the committee has financed the necessary plates and dishes required to serve and distribute food to each class room. Now food is served in the class room and students need not stand in the open space or in the rain.

Mr. Divakaran, one of the teachers in the school appreciate the activities done by the members of the PTA. *“The government provision is only for one vegetable side dish. But under the initiative of the PTA, we are providing more vegetable side dishes. Parents collect*

vegetables like raw banana from the different household and supply to the school free of cost.”

Thus the SMC plays an active role in making the noon feeding programme a success and help to harvest its full benefit to the student community. The role of SMC is not limited to the cooking of meals alone. They also take steps needed to run the day to day business and co-curricular and extra curricular activities in the most effective manner through their intervention and raising the necessary fund for the infrastructural development of the school and class room.

In the private school, the School Management Committee do not play such vital role. Usually the members do not come to school on a regular basis to take part in the day to day running of the school. They also do not monitor the mid day meal programme. Only when the meetings are called for, they attend the meeting and the contribution is limited to being present at the time of decision making. The implementation is mostly left to the principal, the school manager and the teachers. During an informal talk with one of the parents, Mr xxxxx (name removed for confidentiality) said, “ *its their school and they don’t like the public to intervene in its decision making or in its day to day functioning. But in public school the PTA can intervene effectively and our voices are heard”*.

In the private school, there is also a noon feeding committee consisting of 4 teachers and 3 parents. They meet once in a month to finalize the menu. Once the menu is finalized, it is handed over to the teacher in-charge who is responsible for the noon feeding system. “ *the menu usually consist of rice and vegetable mix with gravy. We give milk once in a week and either egg or banana weekly. The committee does not take much effort to make changes in the menu*” Says the teacher in charge of the private school .

The teacher in charge of the feeding programme is aware that as per the directions given by the government, parents representatives must be present while preparing and serving the food and have to taste the food before serving it. In his words, “.... *the directions remains in the paper. Most parents are daily wage worker and cannot afford to miss a working day. So very rarely they come to school.*”

Thus in private school the intervention from the part of the society and the effort taken by the school management committee to get the people’s participation is limited. Though the idea of having a committee for the noon feeding programme is good, they must realize that having a committee alone does not improve the service. They must be capable of and must be

willing to play an active role in making positive changes in the service delivery. The members should be ready to intervene in the feeding programme so that the quality of the food is improved and maintained, thus helping to get maximum benefit out of the public money spend. The presences of parents in school and their participation for preparation of meals helps the students to overcome the feeling of shame or any other reservations they have prevent them from taking the free meal. .

No clear cut instruction over what is to be done.

The teachers including the Head of the institution do not have a clear cut idea on the aim, objectives and the implementation of the mid-day meal scheme. Almost all the instructions are addressed to the Head of the institution who then delegate the power to his subordinates. As a result, the teacher who is responsible for the system often do not understand the ultimate motive of mid-day meals or the need for effective implementation of the scheme including the need for maintaining proper nutritional balance in the food provided. Mr. Wilson of the private school said, *“The only instruction we get is to improve... improve... no one tell us how.. no one tell us what is wrong with what we are doing... no idea how to improve... no details given over what is to be done . The only word we get is to improve from the Head master and from other higher authorities...”* The teachers also do not have an idea of the protein, vitamin and caloric contents of each food item supplied. This lack of information or the absence of proper guidance make the scheme an end in itself.

Irregularities

Different studies and various audit reports have pointed out a number of irregularities associated with the implementation of the noon feeding programme. During the interview the students or teachers have not pointed out any such practices in the schools under study, they agree that many irregularities are being done in different parts of the states which include showing inflated number of participants for the programme, providing less than allocated amount of food, selling the rice or other materials to the open market, submission of false payment records or any other similar practices. Mr salvin of the private school said, *“Some teachers need not spend the whole amount for the meal... they can use the excess money for other purposes.....but in our school we spend the entire amount allotted”*.

From my observation, if providing meals to ineligible students/ non-participant is an irregularity, both public and private schools are committing the mistake. Both school have

agreed that they provide food to higher class students. Since government do not give any fund or supply food grains to feed other students, the additional students means less to the eligible students. Further, the private school teacher in charge have agreed that while opening a bag of grains, if they find that it is spoiled or not good for cooking, they use it as fodder ,meaning to say that they do not make any effort to replace the rice. This also means the students are not given what is their due share or excess amount of rice is claimed.

The school authorities do not take any steps to ensure that the food contains vitamins or nutritious contents as per the requirements or as suggested by the government. The food is not taken to lab for regular examination to ensure the quality of the food. The teachers or the cooks often do not taste the food before serving it to the students. There is no proper mechanism to ensure that all those who are enrolled for the feeding programme are taking food regularly. There can be students who are absent due to ill health for a long period or there can be cases of drop out. In countries like India, where bureaucratic red-tapism are in its highest form, the school authorities are forced to go out of their way or resort to some “irregularities” for the better implementation of the scheme. But non-compliances with the rules and regulations often leads to health problems risking even the life of the students.

Visible changes made

The noon feeding programme is a venture not only to provide nutritional supplements to the students but nurture social and cultural values among the students. The teachers of the public school feel that their efforts are brining a lot of positive change among the students. The tribal society in general are reluctant to mingle with the people of the general stream. But due to a lot of conscious effort taken by the teachers, the students are learning to mingle. The noon feeding programme offer a venue for them to better socialize. *“ the students come from different social and economic backgrounds. sharing the same meals from the same kitchen helps the students to build a feeling of oneness”* says, Mr Sebastian of the public school.

There are students who do not get basic lessons of hygiene like washing of their hands or dishes before food from their home. In the words of Ms Omana, teacher of the public school, *“Due to the constant effort we are taking, the students have become better hygienic. They are washing their hands before the food of their own. They brush teeth and take bath everyday, wash their uniform and wear neat cloths.”* Mr Abdul Rahman said, *“Earlier the students of other community were not willing to mingle with tribal students. But now they have changed a*

lot. I have seen some of the students who bring food from their home share their meals or side dishes with others including tribal students” where as Mr. Divakaran said, “The attitude of the students have changed. They do not make a distinction between students belonging to different casts.”

Though there are positive changes made in the private school, the conscious effort taken by the teachers or the school authorities are less. The Private school management run another institute near to the school which is exclusively for the tribal community. The institute carry out many income generating activity which is shared among the tribal. But a conscious effort to mingle the tribal with non-tribal students are not taken. During the interview, none of the non-tribal student have mentioned a tribal student as his or her close friend. one of the teachers of the private school said *“while taking food, the tribal students often sit in a group... they are reluctant to mingle with others.”* She continues.... *“ Even while students are playing, the tribal students often sit or play in a group of their own ”*

It seems the basic problem still persist in the school as well as with in the society. The Indian society in general still practice the caste system where the distinction is made between caste and tribe even with in the constitution itself² . The material or financial help given to them are usually distributed to the students in public. The very distinction between tribal and non-tribal itself create a false identity among the students and they grow up with a conscious that they are economically and socially backward. Reports that girls stay away from milk distributed as part of the break fast while no such incidents were reported when milk is given to all students is an indication that material or benefit given to a particular social group can generate shame to them.

Steps to improve the Mid Day Meal.

During the interview, teachers and students came up with a number of suggestions to improve the feeding programme. Most of the students were of the opinion that the quality of the food need to be improved. They also prefer non-vegetarian items to be included in the menu. Students prefer to have more than one side dish so that if a student do not like a particular item, he can still satisfy his hunger by taking the alternative item. Rahul feels that *“there is a need to change the monotonous menu and to give different type of food.”* He also feels that there

² The constitution has scheduled a number of castes and tribes as socially and economically backward and provide special protection and follow quota system in government jobs irrespective of their economic standard.

must be a “ *dining room and some one appointed for cleaning of the dining area*”. Pravith of the private school also think that some one must be appointed for serving the food This will help to reduce the wastage of food. “*Since students are assigned with the task of distributing food, they give more than what is required and a lot of food is wasted. So care must be taken to stop the wastage of food.*” Ridhu, 7th standard student of the public school feel there is a need to have more persons engaged for the distribution of food. “*if people are appointed, they can do properly and neatly and concentrate on their work alone. Teachers are entrusted with many task and they fail to distribute the food properly or at times they are absent.*” Athira of the private school also shares the same opinion, “ *Now the distribution of food is managed using the helping mentality of the students but it can be effectively done if people are appointed for the same .thus students feel that if more people are appointed to overcome the shortage of manpower the MDMS can be improved.*

Most teachers are not in favour of limiting the programme to students upto VIII standard alone. According to Mrs Sobha of the public school “*Now the scheme covers only students upto VIII standard. Though we are giving food to students up to X standard, it must be made official and fund must be made available to all the students.*”. “*They are all students*” says Mr Sebastian, one of the teachers of the public school. “ *Having food to satisfy hunger is one of the rights of every human being. So why to distinguish between a student of 8th standard and 9th standard. All school children must be made eligible for the school feeding programme*”. Teachers of the private school also feel that limiting food to students of VIII standard cannot be justified.

The teachers in general also feel that financial constraint is the main problem associated with the effective functioning of the feeding programmer. The teacher incharge of the public school said, “*There is an urgent need to revise the financial support given for the MDMS. If the allotment is Rs. 10 per students, we can manage quite well. The allotment must also be revised from time to time as the price for vegetables increases.*” They also rise the need for increasing wages paid to the cooks. “*cooks plays the most crucial role in the preparation of the mea. Unless wage rate is increased, it is difficult to get good cooks* ” said Jose, teacher of the private school.

Mr. Wilson added the need for the supply of better quality materials like rice to improve the noon feeding programme. He also point out the need for having a neat kitchen, better infrastructural facilities including a separate dining hall and facilities for washing hand and

dishes for the students before and after meals. Mr Jose feels that the food committee must include student representative who are the ultimate beneficiaries of the programme. Mr Salvin also holds the similar view, *“There must be a student representative in the committee. The real beneficiaries can tell what they want and what they don’t get etc.”*

Mr salving feels *“There is a number of issues related to the systems itself”*. He knows there are loopholes which need to be addressed for the effective implementation of the programme. *“The machinery is not effective in monitoring... they come only if there are complaints. Other than that there is no effective monitoring..... its not the problem with the MDMS alone. Anyone can make a fake voucher or bill or receipts and claim the money. It’s the basic problem with our attitude”* He believe that the society lack honesty. *“We -- parents, teachers and other members in the society are not honest. ... so unless we uphold value ... and students are taught to be honest the system will never improve. The attitude of the students, teachers, and the entire society need to be changed”*

Chapter VI

Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter after a quick look at the research aim the main findings are summarized.

Innumerable social welfare programmes are implemented in developing country like India. Since public institutions alone cannot carry out this Himalayan task, programmes like Mid Day Meal Schemes are implemented with the help of private institutions also. The aim of the present study is to make a comparative analysis of the shame experienced by the beneficiaries in the public and private institutions. The study tries to find the ways through which the beneficiaries are shamed, how the beneficiaries experience shame and the strategies adopted by the institutions to reduce the feeling of shame by the recipients.

Mid-day meal scheme is more than just a poverty alleviation programme. Though the direct beneficiaries are the children, the ultimate beneficiary is the society itself. The programme provides multiple benefit both direct and indirect. The direct benefits can be broadly classified into two : the benefit associated with (a) the physical well being of the child (b) those associated with the cognitive development of the child. On the physical well being , the programme eliminates class room hunger, provides nutritious food thereby reducing the possibility of malnutrition, stunting or wasting. On the cognitive development side, it increases the school enrollment, improves attendance in the class, improves concentration, increases the number of years attending school and reduces dropout. All these help to get a better educational outcome. The scheme also improves the health of the child, enabling one to be more active and better socialize with the peers or other members of the society.

On examining how far the scheme is shaming to the students, it is found that the beneficiaries are shamed in many ways either during the receipt of the benefit or at other stages of the implementation of the programme. There is a wrong perception among the beneficiaries and service providers that the scheme is aimed for the poor students alone. As a result they adopt some method to select the beneficiaries which gives the wrong message to the students that the meal is exclusively for the poor students and gives a psychological feeling to the students that all those who avail the meal shall be treated as poor. The selection of the beneficiaries is shaming especially in the private school where the students from poor families are asked to make a formal application to be a recipient of the benefit. The procedure of

making a formal application is unwanted as the programme by its very nature itself is universal and covers all the students. The attitude that the meal is for students from poor families and it is aimed to reduce the class room hunger is shaming and fails to achieve the true objective of enhancing the quality of education.

The distribution of meal is shaming especially in the private school as the students are asked to stand in queue in the open space even when the weather is adverse. There used to be a lot of indiscipline and arguments among the students about their position in the queue and about the quantity of the food one gets. In addition to this being shaming especially for those students who do not have an umbrella to protect themselves, they are exposed to health risk.

The poor quality of meal along with the monotonous menu is another instance of shaming to the students. There were instances where the food contains plastic or paper bits, and the public authorities supplying rotten raw rice which cannot be used for preparation of meal. This is one of the reasons why many students prefer not to take meal from school. During the study it is found that these types of issues are more prevalent in the private school than in the public school. The amount of fund allotted for the meal is very meager and the school authorities are forced to reduce the quality of the food supplied. The government also does not revise the allocation in accordance with the market price or does not have any mechanism to provide subsidized materials. There is also no mechanism to ensure that the food students get contains enough amount of calories or nutrients required for their physical well growth and development.

The absence of basic infrastructural facilities are another area of concern. Lack of good kitchen, poor storage facility for the materials, insufficient utensils for cooking and supplying of food and unscientific method of cooking gives an impression to the beneficiaries that the authorities least care about them and have very little concern over them. This breeds the psychological feeling that they are less respected or they are unwanted. This reduces the self-respect of the beneficiaries and they grow up with the feeling of worthlessness. They also become less socializing and reluctant to mingle with the rest of the students as it is seen among the students of marginalized group in the school. This is more evident in the private school where the tribal students form a group of themselves while playing or while taking meal and reluctant to mingle with the other students.

Insufficient facilities for scientific way of waste management or to maintain hygienic surrounding raises health issue and is shaming to the students as it questions their self-worth. The MDM is provided to improve the health condition of the children but there is no provision for safe drinking water. There is no mechanism to ensure that the students wash their hand and plates before and after the meal or the place in which they take meals are neat and clean. The lack of safe water to drink, insufficient washing facilities, and the poor cleanliness of the dining and washing area affect the health of the students.

The mechanism for monitoring and evaluation of the scheme is very poor. There is no proper supervision is done to ensure that the food is distributed properly or it is of good quality. There is no regular testing of the food prepared to ensure its quality and safety. Authorities visit the site only when a serious complaint arise shows little regard towards the beneficiaries.

Among these, many elements are directly under the supervision and control of the school authorities and others are beyond their control. The material supplied (here the rice), the fund allotted, provision of basic infrastructural facilities and proper monitoring of the scheme are matters which directly done by the government whereas the method of selection of the beneficiaries, preparation and distribution of meal, selection of menu, the quality of the food supplied and maintaining the hygienic atmosphere are some of the things which the institutions play a primary role. The study has found that prvision of the mid day meal scheme contains the element of shame in one way or the other and that the students are shamed more in private school than in public school.

The ways under which the students experience the feeling of shame is also examined in the study. One of the ways through which the beneficiaries experience shame is the very perception of who the beneficiaries are. The teachers, cooks and students mostly look at the beneficiaries as those who are socially and economically backward. Only a few teachers in the public school has the view that the mid day meal scheme is aimed to enhance the quality of education. Teachers in the private school view the meal as a programme targeted to reduce the class room hunger. Many of the students who do not take meal from the school also keep the view that the meal is meant for the poor segment of the society. As a result those who avail the meal is labelled as poor and this approach is shaming to them. With this approach, the universal nature of the programme is defeated and the final goal of quality enhancement in educational delivery is not attained.

The way in which a benefit is distributed can be taken as a mirror which reflect the perception of the providers and also can be perceived as the reflection of the entire society towards the beneficiaries and the benefit. In the public school the food is distributed in the class where as in the private school it is distributed in the open space. Standing in long queue to get the meal especially when it is raining or under the hot sun is shaming to the students. The preference of the students to stay hungry rather than stand in queue when it is raining shows that they feel the shame.

The poor discipline maintained in the private school while distributing food is shaming to the students especially those who are physically weak. The absence of teachers while distributing food leads to unequal distribution of food where who came first get a larger portion where as those who come last get very little or less than what is due for them. There were also times when the quantity of food was less than required and students who stand in queue had to go with out food. All these are shaming to the students and if such instances occurs frequently they slowly lose their self-respect.

When there is no alternative to the food supplied some students are forced to go hungry. Some students may not like the particular food supplied where as some cannot take it for health reasons or on religious grounds. When students have to go hungry as there is no alternative to what is supplied, it defeat the general objective of the programme. Further, it also rises question in the mind of the children who cannot take food about their self-worth. In countries like india, where religious belief are held at high esteem, the food supplied which is against ones religious belief with out any alternative to what is given make the student feel inferior or as one who does not belongs to the general stream of the society.

There is a general belief among the people that the services that are given by the government either free or paid are of poor quality. The reluctance of the parents to send students to government school, buying rice and other provision from private shops at market prices than getting it from fare price shops of the PDS at a subsidized rate and the preference of private hospital where each and every service is charged over public hospital where everything is offered free of charge confirm to this general believe. This belief make the access to public services shaming because of the general perception that only poor tries to avail the public services. This shame is transferred to participants of the mid day meal scheme. Even some

parents who compel students to get enroll themselves to the mid day meal scheme against their wishes for getting the free rice (uncooked) to be used as fodder to the cattle is a clear signal to this belief. In the present study, such instances are seen in the private school rather than in the public school.

In short, students of the mid day meal scheme experience shame in different ways especially during the receipt of the benefits. The physically weaker ones often get less than their due share will have a psychological impact on their mental development will be affected. When students have to remain hungry because what is supplied in the school cannot be taken either because of the health problem or due to religious belief make them feel as marginalized and tend to develop habit of keeping away from the general stream of the society. The students in the private school experience more shame compared to their counterparts in the public school.

The study have tried to examine the various strategies adopted by the service providers to reduce the feeling of shame by the recipients. In public students in standing in queue is not practiced anymore but food is distributed in the class room. When students are compelled to stand in the open space irrespective of the adverse climate like rain to get the food, it shames the recipients and discourages many from availing the meal. While when it is distributed in the class itself, everyone is encouraged to take the food and this reduce the chance of labelling those who avail meal as poor.

The involvement, participation and the role played by the benefit provides can be treated as a measuring rode on how they (the service providers) view the benefit and the recipients or the value and respect they assign. In the public school the teachers are more actively involved at the various stages of the preparation and supplying of the meal. In private school the role of the teachers in general is limited to that of discipline maintainers where as in the public school they better mingle with the students. The students get better personal attention and the care from the teachers. This is important not only for the students to overcome the feeling of shame or stigma associated with the meal but also for the overall growth of the child.

Community participation in the benefit delivery helps in improving the quality of the services, to ensure that the benefit reaches the needy and also to reduce any stigma associated with the schemes. Though as per the guidelines there need to be the presence of parents while the meal is prepared and served, the private school do not follow it strictly. The social and economic situations of the region can be the basic reason for it. On the other hand, in the public

school the parents take active role in preparation and distribution of food. They also supply many vegetables and other inputs required for the preparation of the meal. Thus the public school authorities ensure better community participation thereby the feeling of shame or stigma associated with the meal is reduced.

It can be safely concluded from the above that the welfare measure implemented in private sector is more shaming and stigmatizing than those delivered at the public sector. Even in public delivery the recipients are shamed through poor quality of the services or inadequate infrastructure. People, tend to look at the services as a short run measures and often neglect the long run impact it can deliver to the society as a whole. This perception can be seen as the root cause of all the elements of shaming that is present with the design and implementation of the scheme. With due awareness creation the stigma associated with social benefits can be overcome and the long run benefit of the social security can be attained which will ultimately lead to the development of the society as a whole.

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