

# **CHAPTER-1**



## INTRODUCTION

Education is believed as a focal point to the economic development of all countries. As highly valuable, it is also considered as a chief donor to human capital, leading to higher production and prestigious living standards. Primary education is thought to be associated with particularly high returns (Psacharopoulos and Patrinos, 2004). Its significance is preserved in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which is entitled for Universal Primary Education by 2015. In fact, Primary Education is distant from universal and this MDG remains subtle. Universal Elementary Education (UEE) and the abolition of gender inequalities in education by 2015 are the two among eight Millennium Development Goals espoused at the United Nations Summit in 2000. Evaluation of the advancement made since then shows that South Asia, besides sub-Saharan Africa, is straggling behind in attaining this goal (Glewwe and Zhao, 2006). Health and Education are deemed to be the “fundamental rights” at global level. Universal Primary Education is one of the important objectives of “Millennium Development Goals” (MGDs) which ensures that boys and girls must identically complete primary education.

Education plays an essential and central role in fulfilling the fundamental requirements of a common person like food, shelter and clothing. The major idea behind education is to prepare and build up the child physically, mentally and spiritually to lead an excellent life. Education is a route through which a child is made proficient to achieve the obligatory competencies, develop skills to accept the challenges during the course of life to endure and to lead struggle for his own existence (Dipa Sinha, 2008). There are

four major factors recognized for attainment of objective of 'Education for All'. These are: Access to Education, Enrolment of children, Retention of the enrolled children and learning achievements. Mid-Day Meal Scheme is an attempt to achieve and make possible all these goals (Brinda Viswanathan, 2006).

### **1.1. Foundation of Mid Day Meal Scheme in India**

A number of schemes were launched in the primary education sector by authorities to reach the deprived section. Access to primary education was universalized through flagship program of government in the name of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), despite its successful implementation; a few children were still seen underprivileged of primary education due to their poor economic background (kainth, 2006).

In the above context, authorities among the developed countries instituted an array of policies which focussed on enhancing of school enrollment. Provision of school meal is one among those that is believed to increase the enrolment through two major channels (PROBE, 1999; Dreze and Goyal, 2003; Kremer and Vermeersch, 2004). First was to reduce the cost of education by giving implicit subsidy to parents/guardians and second by making child nutrition far better through school lunch programs which fostered learning, hence maximized the returns on education, with this School Meal Schemes became very popular in developing countries (Jayaram and simroth, 2011).

Despite a massive practical literature available on relationship between school meal program and educational outcomes (Bundy et al, 2009), there is still a dearth of large-scale assessment of its cause and effect on enrollment as per our knowledge (Adelman et al. 2007). Ironically, India has one of the largest elementary educational systems at global level. India has nearly 150 million children enrolled in 800 thousand

schools across the nation (Department of Education, Government of India, 2002-03). But even with its seemingly broad coverage, near about 40 million children still do not reach grade V (Department of Education, Government of India, 2002-03).

Dropout rates are at the peak and the percentage of students who completed primary education in 1998-99 was just 58.2% (National Family Health Survey (NFHS), 2000). Furthermore, India is among those regions where gender gap at school education level can be clearly seen (NFHS, 2000). In particular it is severe among rural areas where girls' school participation rates lag behind boys by about eight percentage points (National Family Health Survey of India, 2000).

As a similar case with maximum number of developing countries, one of the major causes for a child not enrolled in a school or dropped out of the school in India is the expenditure that is supposed to bear by the parents on education and their financial requirements of families (NFHS, 2000). Although teaching in government primary schools is trifling and completely sponsored, the overhead prices of books and uniforms might be quite high which is discouraging poor families from admitting their children to educational institutions (Public Report on Basic Education for India (PROBE), 1999).

Usually children skip schooling to take a part in earning livelihood for their families and act as a support by involving themselves in either household works like family farms, fields, business etc or directly working for a salary. Involvement in household works is a major reason found for dropping out of school in case of girls as compared to boys (NFHS, 2000). Thus, besides chaste sex affinity, poverty can further intensify gender gaps if the costs of admitting girls to school would remain continuously

high with respect to the expected profits to their education in the labor marketplace (Kingdon, 1998).

The programs, which minimize the expenses of education, can be a successful way of improving participation at school level in developing countries. Estimation of provisional cash shifting programs in Latin America, which try to address education as a correlate of poverty, has proven successful (Morley and Coady, 2003). Progress in Mexico indicates a positive effect of these programs on increasing primary school enrollment even more effective in case of females. Assessment of in-kind school shifting programs in developing countries shows identical effects (Schultz's, 2004).

'India is residence to the world's biggest food insecure population, with more than 200 million people who are hungry,' India State Hunger Index (ISHI) said, adding that the country's poor performance is driven by its high levels of child under-nutrition and poor calorie count. It is further noted that "The child malnutrition of India" is higher than most of the countries in Sub-Saharan Africa' (World Bank, 2003). As per the global hunger index report which was released in 2009 India ranks at 65 out of 84 countries.

In India more than 200 million people suffer from hunger which is more than any other country in the world, as according to 2008 report. Report also brings attention to some specific states of India where child nutrition should be addressed urgently. As per the above statements, School Meal Program is the proper solution to the problem. The key features of scheme are defense of children from classroom hunger, enhancement in school enrollment, maintenance of regular attendance by every child, improving social inclusion, minimizing caste discrimination, dealing with malnutrition and social empowerment of women (Sengupta, 2012).

The occurrence of child labor is another main problem, which developing countries are facing, in the liberalized economic system. Various suitable policies are sought today by the dealing authorities of the concerned fields (such as economists and policy makers) to overcome these problems. In theoretical perspectives the child labor has largely been attributed to high poverty and faults in capital market (Chaudhuri, 2007).

Children in other developing countries are getting stipend, free educational material and Mid Day Meals. These policies are implemented to overcome the problem of child labor by retaining the children in schools. It is not only economic incentive which helped in increasing the enrollment. However, these programs are also significant for educational outcomes related with children who are involved in child labor, but the programs act as a source to equalize the income loss to the parents by sending their children to school. Incentives may be in different forms like free cooked meals to school children, food to the family of school children, cash stipend for students and free learning material. These schemes are estimated to minimize the incidence of child labor by decreasing the relinquished valuable child wage income and by increasing the earning potential of the students attending schools in future through human capital formation (Chaudhuri,2007).

## **1.2. Access to Education at Elementary Level in Indian Context**

We can see a clear gender variation in non government schools where more boys (20.4%) were enrolled as compared to girls (16.8%). A large difference in the enrollment of boys and girls in age group of seven to ten were seen in states like Punjab (50% boys; 43% girls) and Haryana (51% boys and 39% girls). Likewise, the 61st Round NSS observed a considerable share of students attending private schools either aided or

unaided (GoI, 2006b). Even with this large enhancement in the enrolments of private schools, the bulk of students still remain in public schools (Govinda and Bandyopadhyay, 2008).

### **1.2.1. Out of School Children in India**

It was found in 6<sup>th</sup> AIES (NCERT, 1998) that about 38.5 million children between age group 6-10 years were out-of-school in the year 1993. The number reduced to 22 million by 2002 as revealed by the 7<sup>th</sup> AIES (NCERT, 2005). Hence substantial reductions in the figure of out-of-school children of this particular age group in immediate past years remain significant. Assessing the circumstances with respect to children of age group 5-14 years, according to (61st NSS data report) that 17.4% children were not attending any school. More girls as compared to boys were found to be not enrolled in schools (14% of girls among 6-11 age groups; in contrast to 10% of boys) (GoI, 2006b).

As per the Annual Reports of MHRD there has been an unshakeable decline in the number of out-of-school children in recent years. It reduces from 44 million (28.5%) in 2001 to 7.05 million in 2007. According to another report of independent national level sample survey done by (SRI-IMRB) in year 2005 estimated nearly 13.4 million children of 6-14 age group were out of school, which constituted about 7% of the whole population of children in India of the related age groups (GoI, 2007b).

### **1.2.2. Disparities and Inequities in Education in India**

Access and equity go hand to hand and ensure Universal Elementary Education (UEE). Mostly all schemes and programs aim at bridging the social and gender gaps with respect to the enrollment, retention and educational outcomes at elementary level. As mentioned



in advance, extraordinary intercession approach have been adopted for the inclusion of girls, Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe students, working students, children with special needs, urban disadvantaged children, children from minority section, children belonging to the families of Below Poverty Line (BPL) , migrant children and children belonging to the hardest-to-reach areas, into the mainstreaming. These are certainly those children who have earlier remained very much segregated from education, this seems to be at greater risk from dropping out even after being admitted, if exceptional attention would not be paid to the issue (Govinda and Bandyopadhyay, 2008).

In recent years it was seen that there is a positive growth in education of girls of India. In the initial period of 1990s, enhancement in girl's enrollment were more as compared to boys (Govinda and Biswal, 2006). But it is also reported along with the improvement in girl enrolment during 1990s that gender disparity is still considerable, particularly when we compare access at elementary education level of boys and girls in dichotomous way from rural/urban perspective. Even a broad gap in participation rates could be seen among urban boys and rural girls in all age groups (Bandyopadhyay and Subrahmanian, 2008).

Additionally, as the Sachar Committee Report has pointed out the situation of children from the Muslim minority community seems to be even worse than that of SCs and STs (GoI, 2006a). A number of steps were taken in the recent past years that aimed at bridging the gender gaps, ending the social caste inequalities and ending the contrast of rural and urban labeling among student. In relation with above, government recently came to know that there are about more than 3,000 educationally backward blocks towards which greater attention must be paid. A number of schemes in this regard were

instituted along with the National Program for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) (GoI, 2007b). 31,450 model schools were established and 197,000 teachers from educationally backward blocks were trained and 10,419 extra rooms were built for performing bridge courses, teacher instructions and skill development for girls. Free school uniforms have also been distributed among 20 million girls in the educationally backward blocks of India (GoI, 2007b).

Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) a scheme which was launched in 2004 also involved in offering residential school facilities for female students at the elementary level, especially in those areas which are primarily under-privileged. 2,075 KGBVs have been approved in minority rich areas. 428 KGBVs were established in Muslim populated blocks and 441 in ST populated blocks according to the report of Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD).

### **1.2.3. Education of Children from Low Income Groups**

There has been a remarkable reduction in poverty levels during recent years in India even though there might be challenging positions on the form and degree of the reduction (Dev and Ravi, 2007; Himanshu, 2007). However still about 250–300 million people currently in India may be classified as poor. As per NSS (2004-05) there is a significant fall in the percentage contribution of the poor between 1999-2005 but one-fourth of total population may still be considered as poor (28.3% villages and 25.7% in cities). When looking back to 1993-1994, the poverty rate was very high at (36% for the country) as a whole. Hence even with reduction in the poverty level, India is still having large population of poor people (GoI, 2006b).

#### **1.2.4. Educational Access and Child Labor**

Relationship between “Access to Education and Child Labor” has received greater attention during the last two decades. The issue became popular due to the publication of Myron Weiner’s influential work, *The Child and the State in India* (Weiner, 1991). As pointed out by Weiner: ‘Primary education in India is not compulsory, nor is child labor illegal. The result is that less than half of India’s children between age six and fourteen – 82.2 million – are not in school’ (Weiner, 1991: 3). He also stated that ‘depending upon how one defines “work” (employment for wages, or full time work whether or not for wages) the number of child laborers in India varies from 13.6 million to 44 million or more’ (Weiner, 1991: 3). After fifteen years, the circumstances are still not acceptable, with large population of children suffering as child workers instead of attending educational institution regularly. The practice of child labor employment still continues across the country. As per Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) data conducted by UNICEF (2004: 57), there are above 12 million children working as laborers in India. Poverty is attributed as the main reason for the upholding of child labor and the related segregation of the children from educational institutions. A number of intellectuals blame the authorities for not implementing the “Child Labor Act” and for a failing to provide a Universal Access to Education for all children

According to the Census, there is a spiky turn down in the proportion of child laborers working full-time from 4.3% in 1991 to 2.3% in 2001. At the same time, the population of secondary workers increased from 2.2 million to 6.9 million, so in effect the sum total of child workers increased from 12.9 million in 1991 to 16.35 million in 2001. Maximum children were engaged in agricultural activities on a part-time basis.

### **1.3. Srinagar: The place of Study**

‘Jammu and Kashmir is a state in northern India which is often denoted by the acronym (J & K). It is located mainly in Himalayan mountain range and state is sharing border with Himachal Pradesh and Punjab to the south. Jammu and Kashmir has an international border with China in the north and east, and the Line of Control separates it from the Pakistani-administered territories of Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan in the west and northwest respectively’ (Wikipedia, 2017).

‘A part of the erstwhile Princely State of Kashmir and Jammu, the region is the subject of a territorial conflict among China, India and Pakistan. The western districts of the former princely state known as Azad Kashmir and the northern territories known as Gilgit-Baltistan have been under Pakistani control since 1947. The Aksai Chin region in the east, bordering Tibet, has been under Chinese control since 1962 (Wikipedia, 2017).

Jammu and Kashmir consists of three regions: Jammu, the Kashmir Valley and Ladakh. The Kashmir valley is famous for its beautiful mountainous landscape, and Jammu's numerous shrines attract tens of thousands of Hindu pilgrims every year. Ladakh, also known as "Little Tibet", is renowned for its remote mountain beauty and Buddhist culture’ (Wikipedia, 2017).

‘The capital of Jammu and Kashmir is Srinagar which is largest in population among the 22 districts. It is often called as “Venice of East”. It lies on the Jhelum River in Kashmir valley, a tributary of the Indus, Dal and Anchar lakes. The city is famous for its gardens, waterfronts and houseboats. It is also known for traditional Kashmiri handicrafts and dried fruits’ (Srinagar Administration, 2017).

As seen in other parts of the country, habitually education in the state of Jammu and Kashmir was also imparted through aboriginal Institutions. In case of Muslims these aboriginal institutions were connected with 'Masjids', where the young students were taught to read Arabic to make them able to read the Quran. Similarly, Brahmins had their aboriginal institutions, where Sanskrit was taught to boys which made them able to read the holy Hindu religious books. In addition to these two languages, Persian was also taught, along with a certain amount of arithmetic. There was no regular type of schools or 'Pathshalas' at that time (Biscoe, 1998).

'On 17th November, 1956, the Constitution of the state was adopted and enacted. Part IV Directive Principles of state Policy, clauses 20 to 23 contain following provisions pertaining to education:

Clause 20: Rights of free and compulsory education in certain cases. The state shall endeavor:-

- a) To secure to every permanent resident the right to free education up to the University standard
- b) To provide, within a period of ten years from the commencement of this constitution, compulsory education for all children until they complete age of fourteen years; and
- c) To ensure to all workers and employees adequate facilities for adult education and part-time technical, professional and vocational courses.

Clauses 21: Right of children: The State shall strive to secure: to all children and youth equal opportunities in education and employment...

Clause 22: Right of women: The state shall endeavor to secure to all women; the right to full equality in all social, educational, political and legal matters;

Clause 23: Protection of educational material and cultural interests of socially and economically backward sections. The state shall guarantee socially and educationally backward sections for special care in the promotion of their educational, material and cultural interests even protection against social injustice (Khan, 1973: 16-17).’

‘In 1970, the state government of Jammu and Kashmir established its own Education Board and University. Education in the state is divided into Primary, Middle (Upper primary), High secondary, College and University level. Jammu and Kashmir follows the 10+2 pattern for education of children. This is handled by Jammu and Kashmir State Board of School Education (abbreviated as JKBOSE). Private and public schools are recognized by the board to impart education to students. Board examinations are conducted for students in class VIII, X and XII. In addition, there are Kendriya Vidyalayas (run by the Government of India) and Indian Army schools that impart secondary school education. These schools follow the Central Board of Secondary Education pattern (Wikipedia, 2017).’

The total literacy rate of Srinagar as per 2011 census is 71.21 in which males contribute 78.01% while females have 63.47%. the total number of government schools in district Srinagar are 530 in which 2 are KGVB’s, 215 are primary schools, 209 are Middle (Elementary) schools, 74 are High schools and 30 are higher Secondary schools. There are a total of 49,243 students enrolled in government schools of Srinagar with 59 students in KGVB’s, 17445 in primary schools, 8835 students in Middle

(Elementary) schools, 6503 in High schools and 16402 in Higher secondary schools in Srinagar (DSEK, 2016).

#### **1.4. Need of the Study**

The thought behind implementation of the Mid Day Meal Scheme can be viewed by three essential perspectives: Educational progress, child nutrition and social equity. Every objective has different aspect, one is more determined than other to illustrate, on fundamental contribution of Mid Day Meals towards Educational progress, is to improve school enrollment going beyond that, Mid-day Meals might be expected to augment student attendance on regular basis. School meals may also enhance learning achievement, in so far as “classroom hunger” destabilizes the capability of students to concentrate and possibly even affects their learning proficiency.

In the context of United Nations Summit in 2000, India has planned to achieve the goal of Universal Elementary Education (UEE) and eliminate the gender inequalities in Education by 2015 which are the two among eight Millennium Development Goals. Evaluation reveals that South Asia, besides sub-Saharan Africa, is straggling behind in attaining this goal. Universal Primary Education is one of the important objectives of “Millennium Development Goals” (MGDs) which ensures that boys and girls must identically complete primary education.

Education plays an essential and central role in fulfilling the fundamental requirements of a common person like food, shelter and clothing. The major idea behind education is to prepare and build up the child physically, mentally and spiritually to lead an excellent life. Education is a route through which a child is made proficient to achieve

the obligatory competencies, develop skills to accept the challenges during the course of life to endure and to lead struggle for his own existence.

The elementary education of India is the base for strength of educational system as a whole from a larger perspective. Ironically, India has one of the largest Elementary educational systems at global level. India has nearly 150 million children enrolled in 800 thousand schools across the nation (Department of Education, Government of India, 2002-03). But even with its seemingly broad coverage, near about 40 million children still do not reach grade V (Department of Education, Government of India, 2002 -03).

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India more than 200 million people suffer from hunger which is more than any other country in the world, as according to 2008 report. Report also brings attention to some specific states of India where child nutrition should be addressed urgently.

### **1.5. Statement of the Problem**

**“Effect of mid-day meal scheme on access to Education at elementary level”**

### **1.6. Operation Definitions**

- a. ‘*Access to Education*’ is the ability of all people to have equal opportunity in education, regardless of their social class, gender, ethnicity background or physical and mental disabilities.
- b. “*Mid-Day Meal Scheme*” means the scheme of providing hot cooked meal at the mid day time during the working days in ‘Elementary Schools’ of India.
- c. “*Elementary Level*” means classes or grades from I to VIII.

### **1.7. Research Questions**

- I. What is the effect of Mid-Day Meal Scheme on total retention of students at Elementary level in District Srinagar?
- II. What is the effect of Mid-Day Meal Scheme on gender-wise retention of students at Elementary level in District Srinagar?
- III. What is the effect of Mid-Day Meal Scheme on social class-wise retention of students at Elementary level in District Srinagar?
- IV. What is the effect of Mid-Day Meal Scheme on Educational outcome of schools at Elementary level in District Srinagar?

### **1.8. Delimitation of the study**

- I. Present study is delimited to District Srinagar of Jammu and Kashmir state.
- II. Present study is delimited to the government run Elementary schools of District Srinagar.
- III. Present study is delimited to the 80 schools at Elementary Level of District Srinagar.
- IV. Present study is delimited to those schools at Elementary Level having Co-Education.