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Impact of egg supplementation in Mid-day meals on weight gain in low socio-economic group children in, Karnataka

Abstract:

Malnutrition in children in India begin from the age of six months due to delayed complementary feeding and continues in the school age. In India we witness learning limitations due to poor nutrition among school children due to food insecurity and poverty especially rural, tribal, and urban poor children. The goal of universalization of elementary education and Universal Health Care (UHC) appears elusive due to inherent socio-economic factors, poor nutrition, and repeated infections. To address this challenge in 1997 a national

Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) was introduced for primary schools (1-5 classes) across the country, which was expanded to cover class 6-10 in FY 2008-09. The national action of periodical lockdowns, closure of schools, online education etc. for addressing COVID-19 pandemic interrupted supplementary nutrition programs. NFHS 5 (2019-21) report revealed the worst nutritional status among Kalyan Karnataka districts. The provincial government decided to study the impact of adding one egg on alternate days in one most affected district of Kalyan Karnataka district-Yadgir in Government schools to MDMS. The outcomes at end of follow-up after about 100 days were: Overall more than 91% of students consumed MDM regularly and in the intervention district more than 98% consumed eggs, allaying the fears of cultural or traditional barrier. Both boys and girls of Yadgir district (compared to the control district of Gadag) had better mean weight gain in all classes except class V where there was no difference. The results of egg supplementation over 100 days were encouraging that led to implementing the initiative across the state 2023-24 onwards.

Biography

K Suresh, the advisor to this study has completed his M.D (P&SM) at the age of 38 years from Karnataka University, Dharwad and postdoctoral studies from Bangalore University in occupational Health. He was the Epidemiologist and Sr Program Officer- Health in UNICEF India Country Office, New Delhi, a premier Child Development service organization. He continues to be a consultant in Public Health and Professor of Practice in KSRDPRU, Gadag, Karnataka. He has published more than 50 papers in reputed online journals and has been serving as an editorial board member of repute