

**BEST PRACTICES: 1**

**MID-DAY MEAL**

**TITLE OF THE PRACTICE**

**“ONDUHOTTHU KAI THUTTHU”**



## **OBJECTIVES OF THE PRACTICE**

- It aims to support financially underprivileged and economically weaker sections of society by addressing their nutritional needs.
- The program also extends assistance to students who have lost one or both parents by providing them with essential nutritional support.
- To assist the students who travel from long distance.
- To address malnutrition and health-related challenges among students.
- To support students with physical disabilities, encouraging their regular college attendance and active participation in learning.



### **PURPOSE OF THE PRACTICE:**

Students at University College are invaluable contributors to the institution, many of whom come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, rural areas, or distant locations, particularly from the neighboring state of Kerala and North Karnataka. Due to long early morning commutes, many students struggled with hunger and fatigue, which adversely affected their ability to concentrate on their studies.

Recognizing this critical issue, the teaching and non-teaching staff came together to address the problem by personally pooling funds to launch a mid-day meal program. Introduced on September 27, 2016, the initiative initially catered to 75 students, providing hot, freshly prepared, and hygienic meals free of charge. This program not only offered much-needed support to students and their families but also significantly alleviated hunger and malnutrition among the students.

It currently supports 329 student beneficiaries, through the generous support of alumni, the Parent-Teacher Association, staff, and other donors.



## **THE MID -DAY MEAL PRACTICE**

The mid-day meal program at University College Mangalore is a student-driven initiative where students handle all responsibilities, from collecting food from the kitchen to serving it. Participants are divided into three groups—A, B, and C—representing first-year, second-year, and final-year students, respectively.

During lunch, students line up in front of their designated group to collect tokens, mark attendance, and retrieve plates from the mid-day meal room. After cleaning the plates, they form another queue in front of the room where the food is served. Teachers collect the tokens and allow students to enter the room. The food is served by students assigned serving duties. Once they receive their meals, students sit on mats to eat. After finishing, they clean their plates and return them to the designated place.

Every Thursday kheers are served to students and on special occasion, sweets are donated by teachers and generous donors.

Teachers in charge of each group closely monitor attendance, and students who fail to provide valid excuses for absences are subject to disciplinary action. The program also extends its benefits to eligible postgraduate students.

Applications for the program are open to students in need. A selection committee, led by the Principal, conducts interviews to determine eligibility. Preference is given to students who:

Face financial hardship, have lost one or both parents, reside far from the college, or  
Have health issues.

In conclusion, the mid-day meal program exemplifies a socially responsible and student-centered initiative. It not only addresses hunger but also promotes holistic education and community building.





## **EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS**

Following outcomes mentioned below demonstrate the success and far-reaching benefits of the Mid-Day Meal program, making it a vital part of educational and social development initiatives.

- ❖ The consistent increase in the number of students availing mid-day meals each year indicates the program's growing popularity and effectiveness.
- ❖ Students benefitting from mid-day meals show better concentration levels in classes, leading to improved performance in exams.
- ❖ Mid-Day Meal have resulted in significant improvements in student's overall health.
- ❖ Reduction in malnutrition and anaemia cases among students are the direct outcome of the program.
- ❖ The involvement of students in Mid-Day Meal activities, such as serving food, fosters values like responsibility, teamwork, and discipline.
- ❖ This participatory approach of students contributes to their overall character development.
- ❖ The initiatives have set a benchmark for other institutes inspiring them to adopt similar programs on their campuses.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE MANGALORE MID - DAY MEAL YEAR WISE LIST OF BENEFICIARIES				
Year	Total Application Received	Total No. of Boys	Total No. of Girls	Total Beneficiaries
2016 - 2017	478	63	74	137
2017 - 2018	252	102	109	211
2018 - 2019	229	111	99	210
2019 - 2020	272	105	117	222
2020 - 2021	No Mid - Day Meal Scheme due to Covid - 19			
2021 - 2022	310	103	121	224
2022 - 2023	355	116	127	243
2023 - 2024	303	106	117	223
2024 - 2025				
2025 - 2026				

## **PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED AND RESOURCES REQUIRED**

The mid-day meal program at our college faces significant challenges due to limited financial resources. While many students show interest in availing of the program, the institution is often forced to restrict its reach to a smaller number of beneficiaries. This not only limits the program's potential impact but also excludes many deserving students who could benefit from it.

Additionally, the insufficient resources hinder efforts to expand the program or enhance the quality of the meals to very high standards. Ensuring the program's sustainability while maintaining basic quality and hygiene requires a significant financial commitment. However, the lack of adequate funding restricts innovation and improvement in areas such as meal variety, infrastructure, and nutritional value.

To overcome these challenges, the institution seeks additional funding through government grants, alumni contributions, And generous donors. Greater community involvement and resource mobilization could help ensure that the program reaches a larger number of needy students while maintaining high quality and standards.

