

IMPACT OF MID DAY MEAL PROGRAMME IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

Dr. (Mrs.) Navdeep Kaur*

ABSTRACT

“School is the center of education.” We all are agreeing with this statement but now the concept of education is not limited to just provide education only but also filling the empty stomach. An empty stomach makes a noise which becomes the hurdle in the teaching learning process. Hence, the government has launched the programme of mid-day-meal in the schools. The mid-day meal programme launched by the Government of India focuses for the dual purpose of achieving the 100% literacy as well elimination of mal-nutrition among the children from classes I to VIII in the Elementary Government Schools. The findings of the researches reflects that implementation of the MDM is really worth worthy act by the Government in the field of education.

Mid-day meal scheme (MDMS) for school students were first introduced in a Japanese private school in the late 1800s, in Brazil in the year 1938 and in the United States in the year 1946. Seeing the experiences of countries like Japan, Brazil, and United States, the Indian Government also motivated to implement this programme.

Mid-day-meal has had a long history. First of all it was started in the year 1925 in Madras Municipal Corporation then by mid 1980s three states had universalized m-d-m. By 1990-91 number of states implementing the m-d-m with their own resources on a large scale with a view of enhancing enrolment, attendance, retention and nutritional levels. On 15th August 1995 NP-NSPE had launched a Centrally Sponsored Scheme which was initially started in 2408 blocks in the country. In 2002 it was extended to cover not only children of classes I-V of Government, Government aided and local body schools, but also children studying in EGS and AIE centers. In

* Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar.

September 2004 and further in 2006 the scheme was revised to provide cooked meal to all the children in Government, Government aided schools and EGS/AIE centers. In 2007, the scheme had been revised to cover 1.7 crore children in upper primary classes (V-VIII). From 2008-09 i.e.w.e.f. 1st April, 2008, the programme covers all children studying in Government, Local Bodies and Government-aided primary and upper primary schools and the EGS/AIE centers including Madarsa and Maqutabs supported under SSA of all areas across the country. During the year 2009, a total of 11.77 crore children were targeted to be benefited from MDM Scheme and during 2009-10, 11.04 crore children were covered under MDM Scheme. During 2010-11 11.36 crore children were expected to be covered in 12.63 lakhs institutions. Today, MDM Scheme is serving primary and upper primary school children in the entire country. The MDM scheme is the world's largest school feeding programme reaching out to about 12 crore children in over 12.36 lakhs schools/EGS centers across the country.

OBJECTIVES OF THE MDM PROGRAMME

The main objectives were:

- To increase enrolment, retention and to tone up learning abilities among children.
- To provide nutritious meal to the school going children.
- To promote friendship and brotherhood among the children.

For effective implementation of the mid-day meal programs the management structure for implementation is described schematically below:

- State Level- State Monitoring Committees (SMC) consisting Chief Secretary and under him Secretary, Education
- District Level- Deputy Commissioner
- Block Level- Sub-Divisional Magistrate
- Village Level- VEDC/Self Help Group

EMERGENCE OF PROBLEM

India is well known for its unique system of providing education. Since independence qualitative and quantitative changes have taken place in the field of education. Various commissions and committees had been set up to suggest the measures for improvement in education system from time to time.

Many programmes have been introduced and implemented by the government to achieve the high education level or high literacy rate in the country and result shows that we have achieved our set targets up to some extent but still there is need to do a lot. The mid-day meal programme is one of the important one which can make the desired results if properly implemented. It is said that after introduction of mid-day meal programme the enrolment level and retention is increased in the government schools. If we look back since 2003 when it was first introduced in the state of Andhra Pradesh, we can judge the positive outcomes of the programme.

Many questions arose in the mind of investigator related to mid-day meal programme so the investigator is curious to find out its impact in the Amritsar district's government schools and also to find the satisfaction level which can be obtained from the persons involved directly in it through teachers, students and parents.

THE PROBLEM

IMPACT OF MID DAY MEAL PROGRAMME IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To study the perception of Headmasters on effectiveness of mid-day-meal programme
- To study the perception of parents on effectiveness of mid-day-meal programme
- To study the perception of students on effectiveness of mid-day-meal programme
- To study the impact of mid-day-meal programme on enrolment of students
- To study the impact of mid-day-meal programme on retention of students

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The present study has been conducted to answer the following research questions, which are as:

- Do Headmasters have positive perception about the mid-day-meal?
- Do parents have positive perception about the mid-day-meal?
- Do students have positive perception about the mid-day-meal?
- Would mid-day meal programme increase the enrolment of students in government schools of Jalandhar. District of Punjab?
- Would mid-day meal programme increase the retention of students in government schools of Jalandhar. District of Punjab?

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

1. The study has delimited to the 20 Government schools of Jalandhar district of Punjab.
2. Only record of Ist-Vth class has taken for analysis.

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

RESEARCH METHOD

The study was conducted through survey methods of research.

SAMPLE

Through stratified random sampling technique, a representative sample of 20 Headmasters, 50 parents, 50 students, 20 government schools out of total government schools in Jalandhar district have been selected.

RESEARCH TOOLS

For the collection of relevant data a self prepared questionnaire was developed.

STATISTICAL TREATMENT OF DATA

For assessing the perception of the Headmasters, parents and students about mid-day meal programme percentage was calculated.

After the administering of questionnaire and collection of data from different sources, it was tabulated and analyzed. Results were seen and conclusion was drawn. This study will pave a way in the quality improvement of mid-day-meal programme in government schools of Jalandhar district.

RESULTS

The result are discussed under the following sub-heads-

a) PERCEPTION OF HEADMASTERS ABOUT MDM PROGRAMME

- 90% headmasters accepted the fact that mid day meal scheme has improved the strength of the students 10% heads denied this.
- 85% of the headmasters have accepted that mid day meal scheme has helped in increasing the enrolment of girls child whereas, 15% did not, find any change in the girls enrolment.
- 95% of headmasters agreed with the fact that mid day meal has brought changes in the students as far as the punctuality is concerned.
- 93% of headmasters do not find any difficulty in keeping the record of mid day meal

scheme whereas 7% headmasters find to it be bit hectic.

- Almost all the headmasters agreed that they do not spend the money from their pocket for the proper functioning of the scheme.
- 95% of the headmasters were of the view that they are getting complete support from the teachers for the smooth functioning of the scheme whereas, 5% denied this.
- Almost all the headmasters agreed that food is prepared by keeping in mind the health of the children, under the mid day meal scheme.
- 96% of headmasters disagreed the fact that their responsibilities have increased due to mid-day meal scheme whereas 4% accepted this.
- Almost all the headmasters where of the view provide the utensils to the children for eating food under mid-day meal scheme.
- Almost all the headmasters agreed that they personally visit the kitchen where food is prepared.

b) PERCEPTION OF CHILDREN ABOUT MDM PROGRAMME

- The reaction of children regarding the impact of MDM programme has shown positive outcome.
- Almost all the students (100%) Supported the view that they are happy with mid day meal.
- Almost all the students (100%) agreed with the view that they are happy with the quantity of food served to them.
- 90% Students supported the view that they are satisfied with the quality of the food is at satisfactory to them and enough quantity of food served to them.
- When the investigator asked regarding the discrimination on the basis of Gender, Caste, Colour (98%) Students stated that they had never been discriminated by teachers while serving food.
- 92% Students supported the view regarding the purity of the food. They said they never found any insect or impurities in the prepared food whereas, 8% said that some time they found insects/odd materials in the prepared pulses. It may be due to the reason that their school has no kitchen shed.
- 96% of Students agreed with the fact that they get variety in food items. Whereas only

4% said that they do not get any variety in the same.

- 94% students agreed that they get required quantity of food whereas 6% were unhappy with the quantity of food.
- Everyday student denied the fact that teachers do not throw the extra food out.
- 92% students accepted the fact that their demand for taking the food second time is fulfilled by the teachers whereas 8% denied this.

c) PERCEPTION OF PARENTS ABOUT MID DAY MEAL PROGRAMME

- All the parents consider mid-day meal scheme as blessings.
- 98% parents agreed that their child gets food everyday under the mid-day meal scheme.
- 96% parents accepted the fact that mid-day meal scheme has changed the eating habits of their children.
- 94% of parents agreed they have tasted the food of mid-day meal scheme.
- 96% of parents accepted the fact that mid-day meal scheme has improved the study habits of their children, only 4% of parents denied this.
- All the parents said that their children get food free of cost.
- 94% of parents are satisfied with the quantity of the food. Only 6% of parents were unhappy with the quantity of the food.
- All the parents denied the fact that their children are not allowed to bring the food home.
- Almost 100% parents accepted the fact that mid-day meal scheme has proved to be financially beneficial to them.
- 96% of parents denied that the food provided to their children is of not bad quality or expired.

CONCLUSIONS

- Majority of the children felt that the quality and quantity of mid-day-meal is good and sufficient.
- Mid-day-meal programme has improved the enrolment and retention of the students as students attend the school during afternoon session.
- It has a positive impact on the children's health and academic achievement.
- Majority of parents felt that their children are getting not only better meal but also ample opportunity for studies and that is why parents are sending even their girl child to school along with boys.

- The staff feels that there is a need to increase the number of teachers or separate staff should be appointed to look after the provision of mid-day-meal, maintaining the record files and clearing of the bills for strengthening the programme.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

In all the schools the provision of meals was never interrupted though there has been delay in the delivery of funding. Teachers make an extra effort and purchase the grocery items and also take food items on loan so that the children get food regularly. It was an encouraging finding that most of the teachers take it as one of their pleasant duties and many teachers get pleasure to feed the hungry children as they believe no learning is possible with the empty stomach. Teachers are approaching the trusts and NGOs for resource mobilization. In some of the schools, the NGOs are providing utensils, note-books and uniform to all the children of school. All the schools have displayed on board the attendance for the day. Some schools had also displayed the quantity of food cooked on that day and the expenditure incurred on it. Some schools also maintain the menu chart. 100% children told that they attend school regularly unless they had any genuine reason which means mid-day meal is an attraction for them to come to school. Whether a child proving 100% attendance in an academic year or not, but they are willing to come school every day that is worthwhile. Mid-day meal is a boon for the needy and poor children who are not sure whether they get meal if they are at home. Parents should come to supervise the quality of the food served to children. Some nodal agency or NGO may be identified to take the charge of mid-day meal and to monitor the quality of food. Volunteers or temporary teachers may be appointed till the full time teachers are appointed. Additional staff like peon may be provided to help in the smooth implementation of the mid-day meal scheme. It is better to appoint the non-teaching staff for handling and looking after the mid-day meal scheme. By doing so the teaching staff will get rid of this responsibility and they can concentrate on the academic area. But then also teachers should be given right to check the preparation, taste the food and to complain the irregularity, if any.

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