



Home Science

Explore—Journal of Research for UG and PG Students

ISSN 2278 – 0297 (Print)

ISSN 2278 – 6414 (Online)

© Patna Women's College, Patna, India

<http://www.patnawomenscollege.in/journal>

Impact of Mid- Day Meal Programme on the Physical Health of School Going Children (6-12 Year) in Patna Town

Pooja Kumari • Megha • Megha Ranjan
• Kumari Rupam

Received : November 2013

Accepted : March 2014

Corresponding Author : Kumari Rupam

Abstract : India is a country where most people are affected by malnutrition. Food insecurity and poor nutrition remain a problem in many developing countries and have profound effect on children's health and their development. The midday meal scheme in India is a programme covering primary school children to improve nutrition and also increase educational enrollment, retention and attendance. Mid day meal scheme is a free school meal programme in India, started in the year in the primary schools in Tamil Nadu in 1962-63. In 1997-98 it was introduced in 2,408 Blocks throughout India. The central government. It involves provision of free lunch on working days in state owned schools to all students.

For the purpose of survey an interview schedule was prepared and questions were asked by the parents. After the analysis of data, it was found that mid-day programme has remarkably improved the school attendance, eating habit of children and their academic performance. Parents felt that there is improvement in children's health and nutritional status.

Keywords: MDM Scheme, Malnutrition, Enrollment, BRMBYS.

Pooja Kumari

M.A. Final year, Home Science, Session: 2012-2014,
Patna Women's College, Patna University, Patna,
Bihar, India

Megha

M.A. Final year, Home Science, Session: 2012-2014,
Patna Women's College, Patna University, Patna,
Bihar, India

Megha Ranjan

M.A. Final year, Home Science, Session: 2012-2014,
Patna Women's College, Patna University, Patna,
Bihar, India

Kumari Rupam

Assistant Professor, Department of Home Science,
Patna Women's College, Bailey Road,
Patna – 800 001, Bihar, India
E-mail :

Introduction :

India is a country where people are mostly affected by malnutrition. Food insecurity and poor nutrition remain a problem in many developing countries and can have profound effects on children's health and their development. The midday meal scheme in India is a programme covering primary school children to improve nutrition as well as increase educational enrollment, retention and attendance in schools. Mid day meal is a free school meal programme in India, started in the year in the primary schools in Tamil Nadu in 1962-63. In 1997-98 it was introduced in 2,408 Blocks throughout India. The central government.

It involves provision of free lunch on working days in state owned schools to all students. Several other states of India also have mid day meal programme. On 15 August 1995, 2408 blocks of the country were covered under this programme. On November 28, 2001 the supreme court of India gave a landmark direction to government to provide cooked meal to all children in all government assisted primary school. According to the government it is one of the biggest free school meal schemes in the world and reaches 120 million children in 1.2 million schools across India. However there has been frequent complaints of poor hygiene while cooking food.

In Bihar from 1995 to 2002, 3kg dry ration was given to each child per month under the scheme. In 2003-04 cooked meal was introduced in 2532 schools as pilot project covering 30 blocks of 10 different districts, but from January 2005 hot cooked meal was being provided to all primary schools across the state including different learning centers. In February 2008 mid-day meal was extended to upper primary level from 1-8. Now Mid day meal scheme is successfully running in 70,238 schools across the state covering more than 10 million children from class 1-8. The districts of Bihar where mid-day meal programme is running are Saran, Chhapra and Madhubani.

In the wake of Saran midday meal (MDM) Tragedy which claimed the lives of many children the revelation made by International Growth Centre (IGC) that 71% of the budget for hot cooked meals at around 200 anganwadi centers (AWCS) was lost in leakage, hints that corruption may be one of the reasons behind the tragedy. Survey was carried out in three districts of Bihar, namely Gaya, Muzaffarpur and Madhubani covering 200 AWCs under 20 blocks. **20%-40% of school children from the low income groups are undernourished** (low BMI for age) and **about 20-**

30% of urban school children from affluent sections are overnourished. Prevalence of undernourishment in adults is double of that in preschool children and cases of overnutrition was 4-6 fold higher in adults-progressive increase in both under and over nourishment during school years. It is imperative to compute BMI to identify children suffering from undernutrition as well as children who are obese with respect to their height. As a part of the MDM scheme school children who are undernourished can be given **bigger portion of food** if they are from food insecure families and have low dietary intake. If the children are **suffering from infections** they may be referred to hospital or school health system. **Overnourished children should be encouraged to be more physically active and play games.** MDMS was initially launched in the state on 1st September, 2004, with an initial coverage of about 1 lakh children. The cooked mid-day meals are being served in all the primary schools of the state from January 2005. Coverage under the scheme increased gradually and all children in classes I-V, Including those in EGS/AIE centers, were covered from April 2005 onwards. The MDMS has been introduced in UPS in all the 530 EBBs since March 2008. The state government is paying @60 paisa per child and the Central Govt. gives Rs. 1.50 child per day. From 2008-09, the scheme is covering UPS in all blocks of the State.

Bihar Rajya Madhyahan Bhojan Yojana Samitis (BRMBYS) were formed in order to facilitate proper implementation of the scheme. In the state of Bihar, Education Department has setup requisite structure at different levels for effective monitoring of the Midday Meal Scheme. The scheme is implemented by Vidyalaya Shiksha Samiti (VSS), a 15-member body of parents for school development and community participation, constituted under the Bihar VSS Act 2000. At least

one third of the members of the Samiti are mothers. The state govt. has delinked the procurement of foodgrains and cooking tasks from teachers and handed them to Panchayat workers and Mata Samitis/Self-Help Groups. The Objectives of MDMS is to address classroom hunger and encourage poor children, belonging to disadvantaged sections, to attend school regularly and help them concentrate on classroom activities, to improve the nutritional status of the children in classes 1-VIII in Government aided schools, National Child Labour Project Schools and Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) /Alternative & Innovative Education (AIE) including Madarasas/Maktabs supported under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and provide nutritional support to children in drought-affected areas during summer vacation.

Review of Literature :

Twelve districts of Bihar including Saran are among the country's 106 districts with poor performance in the midday meal scheme. Monitoring institutions such as A. N. Sinha Institute of Social Studies, Patna and Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi had in their last report pointed at mismanagement of funds and flouting of norms. The HR ministry has sent the report on impact on midday meal to the state but there was no reply. In India the following states have benefitted from midday meal scheme Bihar, Kerela, Haryana, Gujarat, Karnataka, Orissa, Assam, M.P., U.P. and in Bihar following districts have shown following result of midday meal; Mashrakh (Saran) 27 died ,Chhapra 27 died Anantapuramu 1 died etc.

One of the members of Bihar Commission for protection of child rights Nishindra Kinjalk has advised the state government to ensure that before offering midday meal directly to school children the prepared food must be tasted by the cooks in charge of the midday meal as well as by one of the teachers on a daily basis.

The BCPCR member found that the place where midday meal are prepared was as unhygienic as a toilet. Drain and garbage heaps were just adjacent to it.

Today 10.7 crore children are covered under the scheme. The Supreme Court order on SNP says that 5000 calories and 10 kg protein per meal should be provided to each child,EEI children get only 77 %of the stipulated calorie level and protein. It was also pointed out that there was alarmingly high malnutrition among children and mothers. Whereas 43% of children are under weight 38%of mothers are below the normal weight, said the Id insight report.

Objectives of Study :

- (i) To find out whether the mid day meal programme was effective.
- (ii) To find out whether Parents perceived that the health status of the children improved because of Mid day meal programme.
- (iii) To find out whether, Mid day meal plans are designed keeping in mind the nutritional requirement of children of 6-12 years.

Methodology :

Area or study : We took about 20 teachers and 50 parents from the locality of Patna Town. Studies were done in schools like Janakdhari school, Danapur Cantt.

Sample and sampling : Purposive random sampling technique was adopted by selecting sample from Patna town.

Tools of Data Collection : Present study is based on primary data-direct personal interview, observation and questionnaire and Secondary Data- magazine, brochure, research report, internet, journals and books.

Data Analyses : Data Analysis was carried out on basics of collected data for result confirmation.

Result and Discussion

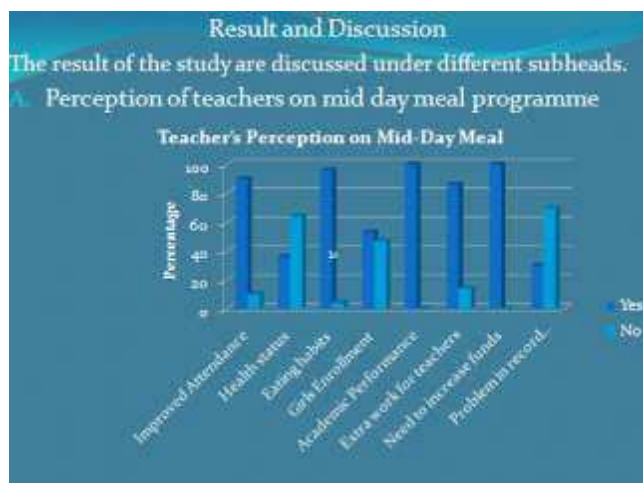
Study done in Primary school, Gulmahiya Chawk, Sabalpur, Patna Sadar :

The result of the study are discussed under different subheads.

A. Perception of teachers on mid day meal programme

Table No. 1

	Improved attendance	Health status	Eating habits	Girls enrollment	Academic Performance	Extra Work for teacher	Need to increase funds	Problem record maintenance
Yes	90	38	98	52	100	83	100	30
No	10	62	02	48	00	17	00	70



According to above table:

90 %of the teachers felt that the mid day meal programme had improved the attendance of the children. 62% teachers told that the mid day meal programme had not improved the health status of the children. 98% of the teachers felt that the mid day meal programme had improved the eating habits of the children. 52% of the teachers felt that the enrollment of girls had improved due to mid day meal. 100% of the teachers felt that the mid day meal programme. It had improved the academic performance of the children. 83% of the teachers

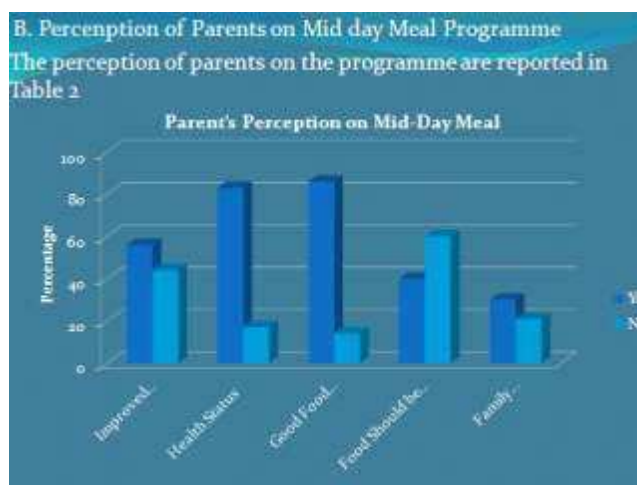
felt that their works had increased due to mid day meal.100% of the teachers felt funds should be increased.70% of the teachers felts that there was no problem in maintenance of record.

B. Perception of Parents on Mid day Meal Programme

The perception of parents on the programme are reported in

Table No. 2

	Improved attendance	Health status	Good food compared to home	Food should be provided on sundays	Family expenditure on food reduced
Yes	55	80	82	58	28
No	45	20	18	42	72



According to the above table,

55 % of the parents felt that the mid day meal programme had improved the interest of children in school. 80% parents said that the mid day meal programme had improved the health status of the children. 82% parents felt that children got better food as they said, 'good' as compared to what they get at home. 58% parents felt that food should also be provided on sundays and vacations.28% parents felt that family expenditure on food is reduced.

C. Perception of Children on Midday Meal Programme

The perception of children on the programme are reported in

Table No. 3

	Improved attendance	Tasty food	Quality of food	Complains
Yes	98	89	99	25
No	02	11	01	75

98% of the children felt that they wanted to go to school because they got food in the school, hence, attendance of the children increased. 89% of the children felt that the mid day meal programme had provided them tasty foods. 99% of the children felt that the quality of mid day meal food was excellent.

Conclusion :

After the data analysis the following conclusions were drawn :

1. The school has only one hall in which about 100 students are taught. There is a drain passing outside the hall which has to be crossed by the students and the students feel unsafe.
2. Parents complained about the teacher who is habitually late and often found in drunken condition.
3. Majority of the parents and teachers felt that both the health and nutritional status of their children has improved due to Mid-Day Meal.
4. Majority of the parents felt that their children are now regular to school due to Mid- Day Meal Program. Majority of the parents felt that Bihar government does not have its own food security department.
5. Majority of the parents felt that their children are getting better meal at school compared to their homes .

6. Majority of the parents felt that Mid-day meal should be provided during vacation and Sundays. Parents felt that financial expenditure on food has reduced due to mid day meal scheme.

Suggestion and Recommendations

1. Entitlement of children under MDM in respect of quantity & quality of food should be widely publicized.
2. Dissemination of information through audio-video, print, electronic media should be given.
3. **Regular weight monitoring should be done** once in three months which will provide useful information on progress towards prevention of stunting.
4. **43 field units of the Food and Nutrition Board**, who are providing nutrition education training to teachers of the schools, should be involved for helping teachers with development of the nutritious recipes for MDM; and monitoring BMI of the children through regular weight and height recording.
5. **Frontline MDM workers, teachers, VECs, PRIs should be oriented on nutrition, hygiene and sanitation. The meal provided to children is not simply a 'feeding process' but aims at improving the nutritional status of the children and increasing school attendance, both allowing quality development of the child.**
6. The children should be regularly weighed and height should be measured. The weight and height should also be mentioned in the academic report cards to update the parents.

7. The children should be taught about personal hygiene, environmental sanitation, washing of hands after and before meal, safe sanitation. They could be made to perform physical activities in form of participation in various games being practiced in the region.
8. Care has to be taken that quality and food safety are not compromised. Parent groups, PRIs may be involved. Regular monitoring has to be done. The samples may be sent to accredited laboratories for analysis. Appropriate measures should be taken in case of violation of norms.
9. Extension of MDM to private schools in the tribal areas should be done.

References :

- Journal of community Guidance Research* 2009.
vol.26 no.1pp.49-54
- Committee on mid day Meals (1995) *Nutrition Support to Education* . Ministry of Human Resources Development, Department of Education, with National intromaticscentre .

Available at

- <http://www.education.nice.in/cdsoyears/t/2v/7B/tax.htm>
- [www.mid day meal .com](http://www.middaymeal.com)