

Study of Mid-Day Meal in Punjab**Shaikh Farroq Shaik Pirsb**

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Abstract:

Mid day meal now known as PM POSHAN. Mid day meal scheme in India launched for physical and intellectual development of school children. Its implement in Govt and aided school. Punjab is a most important State as well other. The mid-day Meal for the factors which are affected on education Promoting school participation of child its improve the attendance Classroom hunger the hungry and empty stomach not grasp the knowledge and children are not involved in study.

Its important for facilitating the Healthy growth of children. Its for fostering Social equality and Enhancing gender equality. Mid day meal scheme having a sufficient budget but due not permanent source staff for prepare it. All the Region and district of Punjab its implement to good. Its given a Healthy children and academic performance is well through it. Its improve the enrollment of children.

Meal pattern is also good. Its given a Carbs as well as protein to children. But the sufficient protein is not given. No separate Management for store grains. Preparing budget is also Less than requirement.

key keywords- mid-day meal, Academic, budget performance, storing, protein

1) Introduction:

Mid day meal scheme now known as pm POSHAN which implement in the India. All the states involve in the scheme. Its for Class I to Vth and VI to VIII Simultaneous primary and upper primary school. Health Status has a significant impact on the development of children and on their education prospectus.

Malnourished children or children with poor health often have more limited capacity to pay attention in the school and perform poorer as a result. Have higher than average absenteeism rates often fall behind at school. And Ultimately may be a greater risk of dropping out of school (world education Forum 2000). Its promoting School participation mid day meals have big effect on school participation not just in term of getting more children enrolled in the registers but also in terms of regular pupil attendance on a daily basis.

Its preventing Classroom hunger many children reach school on an empty stomach. Children who have a meal before they leave for school get hungry by the afternoon and are not able to concentrate especially children from families who can not give them a lunch box or are staying a long distance away from the school.

Mid day meal can help to overcome this problem by preventing classroom hunger facilitating the healthy growth of children. Midday meal can also as a regular source of 'Supplementary nutrition' for children and facilitate their healthy growth.

Its for intrinsic Educational value also. A well organized mid-day meal can also act as a regular and can be used as opportunity to impact various good habits to children (such as washing hands before and after eating) and to educate them about the importance of clean water good hygiene and other related matters.

Mid day meal in Punjab State was implement very well. Punjab is a well known as financially very good state in India, but its also required mid day meal for the government school children who are from poverty Line and living in Rural areas.

2) Rationale:

Midday meal scheme implement in Punjab the enrollment, participation, budget distribution of district and blocks. The following Table give us the essential and important information:

Sr No	Type of Institution	Primary School	Upper Primary School	Grand Total
1	Govt.			
2	Local Bodies	13285	5424	

3	Govt. Aided	77	399	
4	EGS centre / AIE Centre	2205		
Total	Institution	15567	5823	21390
Total	Enrollment	1354626	868849	2223475

Faridkot	2749	2684	97.64	2382	2354	98.82
Gurdaspur	2040	1670	81.86	1866	1641	87.94
Ropar	964	1037	107.57	881	1038	117.82
Taran Taran	3808	3983	104.59	4040	4065	100.62
Rural Punjab	16764	17135	102.21	15689	16010	102.05

Enrollment of student:

One of the major objectives of mid Day Meal Scheme is to increase enrollment, retention and to tone up the learning abilities of the beneficiaries especially of children belonging to poor and down trodden sections of the society.

Total enrollment of student in Elementary School in Rural Punjab:

District	Enrollment in the base year	Enrollment in Current year	Percentage Change
Amritsar	7870	8796	111.76
Bathinda	5853	5877	100.41
Faridkot	5131	5038	98.18
Gurudaspur	3906	3311	84.77
Ropar	1845	2075	112.47
Taran Taran	7848	8048	102.55
Rural Punjab	32435	33145	102.13

Total enrollment in selected elementary rural school in Punjab has increased marginally that is 2.13%. In current year as compared to the base year. However different scenario has been noticed in the selected district of Punjab Ropar district shows highest increase in elementary enrollment (i.e. 12.47 percent) followed by Amritsar where the increment was 11.76 percent.

Genderwise Enrollment in selected Elementary Schools of Punjab:

District	Boys Base Year	Boys Current Year	Boys %	Girls Base Year	Girls Current Year	Girls %
Amritsar	4082	4894	114.99	3788	4102	108.29
Bathinda	3121	3067	98.27	2732	2810	102.85

Enrollment of boys increased in compare to enrollment of girls.

3) Need of the Study:

Punjab has better agricultural resources compared with many states, but nutritional inequalities still exist among school children especially in rural areas. Evaluating the effectiveness of the mid-day meal scheme helps identify health benefits and implementation gaps.

4) Objectives of the study:

- 1) To Study the impact of mid-day meals on children's health in Punjab
- 2) To examine nutritional adequacy of meals served in schools
- 3) To assess the impact on school attendance and learning.
- 4) To identify challenges in implementation.

5) Research methodology:

This research is based on secondary data collected.

- 1) Research Journal
- 2) Public health studies
- 3) Educational studies
- 4) Nutritional studies

Research Design: Descriptive and analytical study.

6) Review of literature:

A recent study in rural Punjab assessed 336 students from classes 6th to 8th and found that 90% of children liked the school meal and 96% attended school regularly. However, malnutrition and underweight conditions were still present among many children.

Another Punjab based study in Fatehgarh Sahib found that the energy and protein requirement of school meals were generally being met, though fat content and vegetable quantity were sometimes inadequate.

A study conducted in Sangrur, Barnala and Mansa districts found positive perception among teachers, parents and students regarding the health benefit.

7) Nutritional impact in Punjab:

A) Improvement in energy and protein intake

In Punjab schools help provide mid-day meals:

- 1) Carbohydrates for energy
- 2) Protein for growth and muscle development
- 3) Basic micronutrients

Studies in Punjab found that calorie and protein targets were largely achieved in sampled schools.

B) Effect on Nutritional Status

- Around 50% underweight prevalence in some sampled group.
- Stunting and wasting observed in both boys and girls.
- Girls showed slightly higher stunting in some area.

C) Reduced Hunger

Students reported better concentration and reduced hunger during school hours.

8) Educational Impact

1. **School attendance** - Punjab studies found regular attendance level as high as 96% among children receiving mid-day meals.
2. **Reduced dropout** - The availability of school meals motivates economically weaker families to keep children in school.

3. Better Classroom participation

Children who received meals show:

- Better concentration
- Improved class participation
- More active learning behavior

9) Social Impact

The scheme promotes:

- 1) Social equality
- 2) Group eating habits
- 3) Reduced discrimination
- 4) Better peer interaction

These social outcomes support emotional development.

10) Challenges in Punjab:

a) Food quality and hygiene

- 1) Cleanliness
- 2) Vegetable quantity
- 3) Kitchen infrastructure

Punjab based quality assessment recommended stronger monitoring.

b) Supply challenges

Recent report from Ludhiana highlighted operational issues such as cooking fuel shortage in some schools.

11) Finding of the Study

The study concludes that in Punjab:

- 1) Mid-day meals improve attendance and reduce classroom hunger.
- 2) Most children accept and consume school meals regularly.
- 3) Nutritional benefits are visible especially energy and protein intake.
- 4) Malnutrition still exists in some rural areas.
- 5) Better monitoring of hygiene and menu diversity is needed.

12) Suggestions

- 1) Include more iron rich foods, milk, fruits and green vegetables.
- 2) Conduct regularly health checkup in school.
- 3) Improve hygiene standards in school kitchens.
- 4) Strengthen monitoring in rural districts.
- 5) Increase community participation in meal supervision.

13) Conclusion

The mid-day meal scheme in Punjab has positively influenced children's nutrition, attendance, and educational participation. However, continued focus on food quality, hygiene and micronutrient support is needed to improve child health outcomes further.

References:

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- 3) Gyan Management Journal Punjab District Study
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- 5) Diagnostic Analysis of Mid-day Meal Scheme in Rural Punjab