

Periodic Research

Mid Day Meal Scheme as Opined by Guardians and Teachers in Age Group and Experience Perspective



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Abstract

The present study was carried out on a sample of 125 units taken from urban basic schools of district Varanasi (U.P.). The sampled units were chosen by stratified random sampling technique. By using descriptive survey method the opinion of guardians and school teacher over mid day meal scheme was analysed. In view of objectives and framed hypothesis the responses of guardians as well as school teachers were received through a self structured tool- opinionnaire, which consisted of thirty items of positive and negative nature. The opinionnaire was developed on three points in either direction. The raw scores so received were analysed along the domains of mid day meal scheme. The domainwise mean opinion differences between comparable groups were examined through two tailed tests of significance. The differences were taken to be significant only when the obtained critical ratio value exceeded with that of standard values at 0.05 and 0.01 level on respective degree of freedom. In capsule with respect to domains-attendance & enrolment and merit the significant t-values were enough to reject the sub-hypothesis. But the overall picture with smaller and insignificant t-value showed that the differences in mean opinion scores between guardians and school teacher were not real but by chance Secondly, H_02 was accepted with the inference that age group has nothing to do with guardians opinion over mid day meal scheme. Apart in teachers category low experience group was found to reveal significantly ($t=1.99$) more favourably than those of high experience group. But the overall picture shows acceptance of hypothesis H_03 on the basis of smaller t-value with the inference that high and low teaching experience exert no impact over opinion towards mid day meal scheme in schools.

Keywords: Mid Day Meal (MDM), Opinionnaire, Degree of Freedom, Two Tailed Test of Significance.

Introduction

Neither the network of industries nor the huge construction of bridges, roads, smart cities etc determine the progress of a country. Indeed the real progress of nation depends upon the quality of education of its citizens. The education commission (1964-66) also opines as the destiny of India is now being shaped in her classrooms and in the world based on technology and science it is education that determines the level of security, prosperity and welfare of the people. Nothing more good contributes to development of a country than focus on primary education of children, which in turn, acts as strong foundation on which the entire system reels. Obviously major focus on children becomes need of the day through a planned primary education. The government of India since its independence has been endeavoring to strengthen primary education through various policy documents of education concretised in 1968, 1986, 1992, 2007 and even after. In addition, the widely spread movements like education for all, right to education, inclusive education need special mention in this regard. The widely used phrase- Healthy mind in a healthy body is not less useful here. This concept seems equally true when enrolled students in primary schools belong to a dissimilar socio-economic. Status and wherein the nutritional need significantly plays a crucial role in any plan of providing education. Children with malnutrition are not supposed to climb on the ladder of education with same pace.

In view of unequal nutritional status of children in basic school and the provision of right to education, the government of India launched the national program of nutrition support on Aug 15, 1995 and endeavoured to

offer free cooked meal to students in primary school through mid day meal welfare scheme (Singh and Singh, 2017).

According to Srivastava (2014) mid day meal was launched to improve the nutritional and educational status of primary school children. The mid day meal scheme was highly propagated to bring quality in primary education on the one hand and improving the nutritional status of children on the other hand. The scheme still continues with praise and equal untoward comments. The mid day meal scheme is overviewed here in domains as-attendance & enrolment, variety & quality of meal, management & participation, merits and pitfalls etc.

There is a huge network of the MDM scheme through out the country. School employees, non-government agencies and gram pradhans are associated with the welfare scheme. Another side of the picture revealed through media is not uncommon & which comes due to alleged huge fund. Contrary to theoretical expectation children are heard to have insufficient amount of food having low nutritional value. The reports are also not uncommon owing to which schools are seen to be more employed in food arrangements than for which these are meant. All this also involves kick backs, criticism, suggestions etc. The flow of towards and untowards opinion from various walks are neither little nor uncommon. It is this opinion which after careful analysis seems to strengthen the spirit of national programme of nutritional support launched in 1995.

The favourable or unfavourable reaction towards social stimuli also comes through attitude with emotionally toned responses often involving value judgement. Opinion is sometimes differentiated from attitude, but the proposed distinctions are neither consistent nor logically defensible. More often the two terms are used interchangeably, and they will be so employed in this discussion. (Annastasi & Urbina, 2010). Thus the opinion of teachers and guardians in this respect has been taken into account. In this regard Shukla and et al. (2018) found mismanagement at the spot when guardians invited the administration against supply of undercooked as well as poisonous food which resulted to massive stomachaches and uneasiness in school students. Further students were found being asked to wash kitchen potteries; food was served without prior testing and without nutritional quality. By and large, the ground reality of MDM programme does not appear to be compatible in schools against presumptions envisaged in NPNS (1995). In this regard some pertinent studies mentioned herewith also appear to emphasize the need in view of incompatibility.

Review of Literature

Some very close and related studies in nutshell are herewith.

Ram (2008) observed a very little increase in enrolment of students in government primary schools of Himanchal Pradesh after introduction of cooked mid day meal. In 24% school the sitting arrangement were based on caste, and students from upper and

lower Hindu caste do not share common mid day meal jointly in schools.

Kumar (2009) found that there is a decline in average enrolment of students in government primary schools of Himanchal Pradesh.

Parida (2010) reported that MDM scheme has produced positive impact in case of attendance and dropout rate. Besides, the quality of food material supplied is found very poor....massive corruption and kick-backs are also reported in the operation of scheme. Further, the poor quality of food sometimes discourages the children to take mid day meal in schools.

In continuation the Annual Status of Education Report-ASER (2010) adds that 83.4% schools served mid day meal on a day of visit and almost same percent (81.3) were found having kitchen sheds for cooking MDM. A vastly improved availability of MDM had contributed to the increase in enrolment.

The study of Sen (2010) revealed that implementation of MDM has been a success through out the country. Though the quality of food needs to be improved the quick response of the state in amending the short comings indicates a gradual awareness.

Pathak (2012) reports that according to school students the served meal was not only less in amounts but untasty also. Besides, no social discrimination was found in sitting while MDM. Further additional load on teachers was seen to adversely affect the teaching hours.

Guriyar (2017) as a mere sample lodged complaint with director of mid day meal against corruption as well as involvement of Gram Pradhans in operation of bank account of MDM programme.

Mehreen (2017) also reports the views of students on MDM, which is brought from outside by a vehicle, with poor quality. Besides, fruits, if served are of smallest size & unfresh quality.

Patel (2017) report that in views of school head masters the MDM scheme has been successful in increasing student's attendance as well as educational achievement. Besides, the participation of gram pradhans was reported to be satisfactory and the scheme has reduced the problem of wastage and stagnation.

The study of Singh and Singh (2017) reveals no significant difference in mean opinion performance of guardians coming from urban and rural locale. The opinion of school teachers of rural locale was found significantly more favourable over MDM than those coming from urban set-up.

A careful view shows that researchers have followed a shallow angle setting aside the componential as well as the gestalt view over MDM scheme in comparative perspective and hence the present study is undertaken.

Objectives of the Study

1. To see whether there is any difference in guardians and teachers opinion over mid day meal scheme being run in government basic schools.

- To comparatively study the opinion of guardians over mid day meal scheme with respect to high and low age groups.
- To assess the impact of teaching experience over perception towards mid day meal scheme in basic schools.

Hypothesis

H₀₁

There will be no significant difference in guardians' and teachers' opinion over mid day meal scheme being run in government basic schools.

H₀₂

High and low age group of guardians will exert no significant impact over opinion towards mid day meal scheme.

H₀₃

Basic school teachers in high and low experience perspective will have no significant difference in mean opinion performance over mid day meal scheme.

Research Method & Tool

To Festinger & Katz (1953) no research results are any better than method by which they are obtained and accordingly descriptive survey method has been followed in order to test the hypothesis. As

sample is a smaller representation of a large whole (Good, 1952), the study was carried out on a sample of 125 units associated with v grade urban government basic schools of district Varanasi. By employing stratified random sampling technique teachers and guardians were chosen by personal visits. To Mouley (1970) no perfect or universally adequate sampling design has yet been devised. The method used depends on the nature of problem and available resources conveniences etc. The data were collected by administering a self prepared tool termed opinionnaire which in turn was structured on likert pattern with thirty items on positive and negative poles because moreoften the terms- opinionnaire & attitude are used interchangeably (Annastasi & Urbina, 2010). The items spread with score range 30-90. The group mean performances were assessed through two tailed tests of significance of difference between means with a view to test the hypothesis at 0.05 and 0.01 level corresponding to t-values referred by Garrett (1975) and Best & Kahn (2008).

Result and Discussion

After statistical treatment the hypotheses were tested through table values given ahead.

Table-1: Comparison of opinion statistics of guardians and teachers over MDM scheme.

MDM Domains	Guardians (N=63)		School teachers (N=62)		t-value (df-123)
	M	σ	M	σ	
A. Attendance Enrolment	11.65	1.53	12.27+	1.97	2.00*
B. Variety & quality	15.76	1.47	15.62	1.76	0.22
C. Management & participation	20.60	2.41	20.02	3.02	1.19
D. Merit of scheme	15.31+	1.96	13.82	2.44	4.27**
E. Pitfall of scheme	12.15	2.22	12.22	2.05	0.18
F. Overall view	75.45	5.16	73.94	5.80	1.54

Note: σ= standard deviation, t= critical ratio, df= degree of freedom, */** = 0.05/0.01 level of significance

- With reference to hypothesis H₀₁ the table-1 reveals the comparative performance of guardians and school teachers over mid day meal scheme on various domains. A glimpse of table values shows that as regards the domains of attendance and enrolment the school teachers were found to opine more favourably than those of guardians. This observation with t-value (2.00) is significant at 0.05 level and thus sub-hypothesis is not acceptable with the inference that difference is a real and not by chance indicating that scheme betters attendance and enrolment of children. On the other hand with regard to domain-merit of scheme the mean opinion score of guardians was found significantly much higher than those of school teachers (t=4.27). Apart, the overall picture towards opinion was found different as the obtained t-value (t=1.54) was less than required t-value (1.98 for 0.05 level) with the inference that main hypothesis gets acceptance.

Table-2: Comparative picture of guardians' opinion in High & Low age groups.

MDM Domains	HAG Guardians' (N=31)		LAG Guardians' (N=32)		t-value (df-61)
	M	σ	M	σ	
A. Attendance Enrolment	11.90	1.64	11.39	1.38	1.33
B. Variety & quality	15.55	1.86	15.97	0.91	1.13
C. Management & participation	20.23	2.83	20.97	1.87	1.21
D. Merit	15.52	1.93	15.10	2.01	0.82
E. Pitfall	12.06	2.37	12.23	2.09	0.53
F. Overall view	75.26	5.99	75.65	4.25	0.89

Note: σ= standard deviation, t= critical ratio, df= degree of freedom, HAG/LAG = High/Low Age groups

- Hypothesis H₀₂ concerns with statistics depicted in table-2 with respect to all domains of mid day meal scheme in basic schools. The mean opinion score of guardians in high age group was found to be higher than those of low age group in domains of attendance & enrolment as well as

merits but it was not as much as to be significant and reject the hypothesis. Similarly the mean opinion score of guardians in low age group was found higher in domains of variety & quality, management & participation and pitfalls than those belonging to high age group but on the

basis of insignificant t-values the sub-hypothesis again got accepted. The overall picture also shows that higher mean difference arising in low age group with t-value 0.89 at df 61, was found to be not significant, with the inference that difference is not real.

Table-3: Comparison of mean opinion performance between High & Low experience groups.

MDM Domains	HEG Teachers (N=31)		LEG Teachers (N=31)		t-value (df=60)
	M	σ	M	σ	
A. Attendance Enrolment	12.78	2.18	12.61	2.38	0.09
B. Variety & quality	15.28	1.90	15.32	2.09	0.18
C. Management & participation	19.28	3.33	20.74+	2.29	1.99*
D. Merit of scheme	12.56	2.05	12.26	1.95	0.59
E. Pitfall of scheme	11.69	1.67	12.29	1.77	1.38
F. Overall view	71.69	6.00	73.23	4.72	1.14

Note: σ= standard deviation, t= critical ratio, df=degree of freedom, HEG/LEG = High/Low Experience groups,

- Corresponding to hypothesis H₀₃, the higher mean score of high experience group along the domains-attendance & enrolment and merit comes to be insignificant as t-value was quite less than required at df 60. This insignificant trend also prevailed on the domains of variety & quality and pitfalls. Apart from this, as regards the domain-managements & participation the higher mean performance of low experience group was found to be almost significant at 5 percent confidence level. But in overall perception, the higher mean performance of low experience group was found to be not significant as the critical value (t=1.14) could not touch the standard value for significance.

Conclusion

By and large it may be inferred from the discussion that mid day meal scheme was launched to improve the nutritional an educational status of primary school children. Owing to popularity the scheme receives favourable as well as unfavourable comments in its implementation. As regards the attendance & enrolment domain school teachers were found to significantly opine more favourably; whereas with respect to merit domain guardians opinion was seen more favourable with significance. But in overall assessment no significant difference was reported in the opinion of the guardians and teachers. Further the guardians' opinion was found to have no significant variation in higher and lower age group concern. Apart from guardians, the basic school teachers belonging to low experience group in domain of management & participation were found to reveal significantly more favourable behavior than their counterparts of high experience group. However in overall assessment, high or low teaching experience was not found to exert significant impact over perception towards mid day meal indicating the possession of more or less some opinion pattern between respective groups. A peep into domain related findings will probably not be irrelevant to alert the administrative machinery of the government with a view to really helping the children have maximum use of the mid day meal scheme in primary schools.

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