



A Study To Assess The Level Of Knowledge Regarding Midday Meal Programme Among Teachers In Selected Government Schools Of Abohar, Punjab

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Abstract

The Midday Meal Programme (MDMP) is one of the largest school-based nutritional initiatives in the world, aiming to enhance child nutrition and educational outcomes. This study was conducted to assess the level of knowledge regarding the Midday Meal Programme among teachers working in selected government schools of Abohar, Punjab. A descriptive research design with purposive sampling was adopted, involving 100 school teachers. A structured knowledge questionnaire assessed awareness levels. Findings revealed that 40% of teachers had very good knowledge, 29% had good knowledge, and 31% had average knowledge. A significant association was found between knowledge levels and variables such as age, qualification, years of experience, and type of school ($p < 0.05$). However, no significant association was observed with gender and religion. The study emphasizes the importance of regular awareness and training initiatives for school teachers, as their role is crucial in the successful implementation of the Midday Meal Scheme.

Key words: Midday Meal Programme, Knowledge, Government Schools

Introduction

The Midday Meal Programme (MDMP) is a centrally sponsored initiative in India, aimed at improving the nutritional status of children and enhancing school enrollment and retention. As India continues to grapple with issues of child malnutrition and school dropouts, the MDMP plays a crucial role in bridging these gaps. The program provides cooked meals to students in government and government-aided schools, particularly benefiting children from economically weaker sections. Teachers are key stakeholders in this program as they supervise, manage, and ensure its implementation. Their knowledge and perception significantly affect the programme's effectiveness. This study was conducted to evaluate the level of awareness among teachers regarding MDMP in Abohar, Punjab.

Methodology

A non-experimental descriptive research design was employed. The study was conducted in selected government schools in Abohar, Punjab. The target population consisted of 100 teachers selected through purposive sampling. A structured questionnaire consisting of 38 items assessed the teachers' knowledge about MDMP. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, including ANOVA. Content validity was ensured through expert review, and the reliability of the tool was confirmed ($r = 0.891$). Ethical clearance and informed consent were obtained prior to data collection.

Findings of the Study

Section A: Demographic characteristics among teachers

The study involved 100 teachers from selected government schools in Abohar, Punjab. Their sociodemographic details indicated that the majority were in the 31–40 age group (48%), followed by 20–30 years (26%), and the smallest group was aged 51–58 (3%). There was an almost equal distribution of gender among the participants with 51% males and 49% females. In terms of religion, most teachers were Hindu (79%) while 21% were Sikh. Regarding educational qualifications, a significant proportion (71%) were postgraduates or held higher degrees, while only 15% held diplomas.

The teachers were distributed across different school levels: 32% worked in primary schools, 30% in secondary, and 38% in higher secondary institutions. Most teachers (37%) had 6–10 years of teaching experience. Monthly income varied, with 36% earning ₹10,000–₹30,000 and 31% earning ₹50,001–₹70,000. The primary source of information about the Midday Meal Programme was government resources, as cited by 53% of the participants.

In terms of knowledge assessment, 40% of teachers demonstrated **very good** knowledge regarding the Midday Meal Programme, 29% had **good** knowledge, and 31% had **average** knowledge. No participants fell into the "below average" category. This indicates that while a majority of teachers are well-informed, a considerable portion still possess only moderate understanding, underscoring the need for further awareness and training sessions.

Section B: Knowledge Levels Regarding Midday Meal Programme Among Teachers

Further analysis showed a significant association between the level of knowledge and variables such as **age**, **qualification**, **type of school**, and **years of experience** ($p < 0.05$). For example, teachers in the 31–40 age group and those with postgraduate qualifications tended to have higher knowledge scores. Similarly, those teaching in higher secondary schools and with more years of experience also showed greater awareness. However, **gender** and **religion** did not show statistically significant associations with knowledge levels.

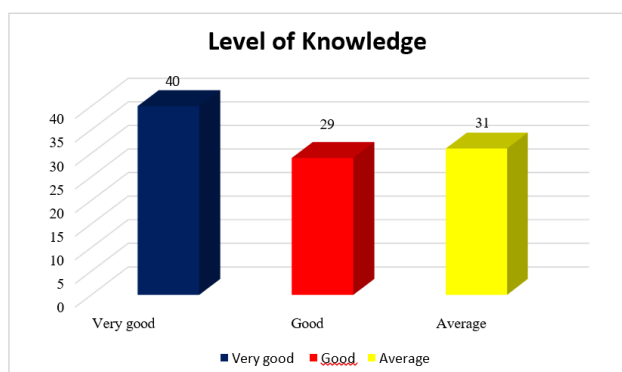


Fig.1 Frequency and percentage distribution of level of knowledge regarding midday meal programme among teachers.

Discussion

The study reveals that while a good proportion of teachers have a high level of knowledge about the Midday Meal Programme, there is still room for improvement, especially among less experienced and diploma-qualified teachers. The findings align with similar studies conducted in Karnataka and Rajasthan, which also reported moderate to high knowledge levels among teachers. Teachers play a pivotal role in monitoring the implementation of MDMP and ensuring compliance with hygiene and nutritional standards. Regular training, refresher courses, and support systems are essential to further enhance their capacity and effectiveness.

Conclusion

The Midday Meal Programme is a key initiative to improve child nutrition and school participation. This study confirms that teacher awareness is generally good but varies significantly with age, experience, and educational background. Continued efforts are necessary to bridge the knowledge gaps. Training modules and easily accessible resources should be developed to empower teachers as front-line stakeholders in this important scheme.

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