CHAPTER 3

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In any research study a review of previous studies conducted in the field is essential. It helps an investigator to know the status of a phenomenon, to find gaps in knowledge and avoid needless repetition of a study. With the help of survey of related studies the investigator gets an idea about theory and their explanation; method of data collection and analysis of data and finding of various studies already conducted in a particular field.

Mid-day Meal Scheme (National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (NP-NSPE)) in India is a Government sponsored activity which was launched in 1995. As per Annual Report 2011-12, Department of School Education and Literacy & Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India, this scheme covers 12.37 lakhs institution of primary and upper primary education. 11.07 crore children are covered under this scheme who are getting their noon meal in school as per the norms of the scheme. Under Mid-day meal scheme, a total provision of Rs. 48000 crore has been allocated by Planning Commission during 11th five year plan.

A review on various components regarding implementation, impact and performance evaluation of Mid-day Meal Scheme in schools has been presented in this chapter. The review of literature is classified into various sections that are as follow:

- Studies on effectiveness in implementation of Mid-day Meal scheme.
Studies on impact of Mid-day Meal on improving enrolment, attendance and retention of the students.

Studies on impact of Mid-day Meal on health status of the students.

Studies on perception of teachers, students and parents regarding mid-day meal scheme.

3.1.1 STUDIES ON EFFECTIVENESS IN IMPLEMENTATION OF MID-DAY MEAL SCHEME

Tripathi (2003) Secretary, Elementary Education, Government of India informed that, during 2002-2003, about 107 million children benefited from the National Programme of Nutrition Support to Primary Education, 77% of the allotted food stocks were lifted. Despite of resistance by the Teachers’ Unions, due to distraction caused by mid-day meal scheme in normal role of teaching, the programme had salutary effect on school attendance, retention and completion of primary schooling.

He highlighted that MDM should be considered as a National Programme and not merely a government programme. He emphasized the need for community involvement for the programme to become sustainable. He called for a change in the mindset of the politicians, policy makers and implementers. He pleaded for involvement of SHGs, NGOs and parents’ committees in the implementation of the programme as being done in states like Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. He expressed concern about non-implementation of the scheme in certain states. He also pleaded that the programme should be extended to EGS and alternative schooling centers.
Menon (2003) reported mixed consequences of starting mid-day meal scheme for primary school children in all Government schools across the Karnataka State. It was revealed that State has troubled start with initial report of food poisoning, but greater danger related to upper-caste opposition to Dalits cooking the food. Initially, the scheme was opposed with rapidity of “food poisoning” episodes across the state with hundreds of children suffering from the effect of food contamination with a view to dis-credit the scheme. Further, it was reported the other major emerging obstacle to the success and spread of mid-day meal programme i.e, upper caste opposition to it. Parents from dominant Vokkaliga caste would simply not allow their children to eat food cooked by Dalit women. It is further described that out of 104 students who are eligible for lunch, only 18 Dalit children eat here”. On the other side, the article revealed positive aspects of the scheme. It was found that attendance had gone up since July because of “bisi oota “(hot lunch). It was reported from parents’ side that children like to go to school due to bisi oota.

Zaidi (2005) clarified in the study the importance and problems faced in the implementation of mid-day meal scheme. Although Supreme Court had fixed January 2005 as deadline to provide cooked meal to pupils till Class V, some of the states still ignored the Court order. Bihar, Jharkhand & Assam had partially implemented the “Kichdi” scheme. The reason for non-implementation of the scheme was the states not receiving necessary funds from the Central Government. Another reason for non-implementation was some teachers feeling burdened with extra work that implementation of the scheme involves. Another problems related to were transportation cost and procurement of food grains as FCI godowns are located at far places from the villages. In spite of all these problems, the study reported the increase in enrolment and attendance of the students.
Chugh (2008) in the field study focused on the experiences of implementing the Mid-Day Meals Scheme in ten schools in five blocks of four districts of Sahibjada Ajit Singh Nagar (popularly known as Mohali), Roop Nagar (Ropar), Jalandhar and Amritsar. Detailed semi-structured interviews were conducted with government school teachers, cooks, primary school children and their parents. The findings of the research were the following:

i) In most of the schools, 80-85 percent children were attending school on the day of visit except for two schools in which only around 68-73 percent children were present on that particular day. The trend in attendance also may mean that mid-day meal is one of the significant incentives for children to attend the school more regularly. Some of the schools reported that the children were more regular after the introduction of mid-day meal.

ii) The school normally provided cooked mid-day meals on daily basis (six days per week). In all the schools, the teachers said that the provision of meals was never interrupted though there has been delay in the delivery of funding. Teaches were able to keep the meal programme going either by spending out of their pockets or borrowing from the store and vegetable vendors on loan basis.

iii) In all the schools, a cook was hired to prepare the mid-day meals. In five schools, a helper was also hired and in rest of the five schools, only the cook managed both cooking and washing of utensils. The food was served by the cooks under the supervision of the teacher responsible for mid day meal.
iv) Bags of wheat/rice were generally stored in a corner of one of the classrooms and store rooms. Three schools had containers for storing the grains but rest of them kept in the jute bags only.

v) In four schools, the meals were prepared over wood fire either in the open area or in kitchen, and in six schools the meal was prepared on the gas chullah. Although an amount of Rs 60,000 has been sanctioned for building the kitchen shed only two schools had built these sheds. The head teacher found this amount to be insufficient for building the kitchen shed.

vi) It was also observed that only four schools had dishes for all the children but in rest of the schools the children brought their own dishes.

vii) Teachers and cooks in all the schools said that wheat and rice was delivered on time but funding was often late. All the schools reported that they were always supplied with enough wheat and rice for meeting the needs of the meal program. All the head teachers of the schools felt that the programme was inadequately funded and they especially mentioned that the charges paid to the cook were meagre and may be increased.

viii) Teachers in all the sampled schools reported that the school meal scheme had increased their workload significantly. The teachers are expected to keep meticulous and detailed account of the receipt of wheat and funding, daily attendance and amount of meal prepared. They were also responsible to supply all the ingredients necessary for the preparation of meal.
A field research has been conducted by Centre for Consumer Action Research and Training (CUTS) (2007) for measuring effectiveness of Mid-day Meal Scheme in Rajasthan and found that:

i) Cooked mid-day meal has become permanent part of daily routine of rural as well as urban primary govt. schools of Chittorgarh district. The parents and students are mostly happy with the implementation of the scheme.

ii) A large part of child population below the age of 14 years is deprived of even primary education level. Though mid-day meal would prove a mile stone towards achieving the goal of Universal Education for All as targeted under Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), but looking to the slow progress in the direction, more concentrated efforts are needed with the private and public participation in the progress.

iii) The local government is constitutionally bound to be responsible for education and related activities. Ways should be found to create enthusiasm in local government to take on these responsibilities and be accountable to the citizens. In the current set up, local government is completely missing in action.

Srinivasan (2008) highlighted the overall finding and performance of Mid-day meal in the state of Chhattisgarh in his report. The findings were as follows:

i) The school meal would be a supplement to the child’s normal intake and hence have some impact on their nutrition status and their overall health status.
ii) Children from different classes could be deliberately encouraged to sit and eat together. In a limited way, the impact on socialization among children was being realized to some extent.

iii) Various aspects of a cooked meal could be made part of the curriculum. The meal gives teachers a chance to use a daily and shared experience in classroom teaching. For example, names of vegetables/colours/size/consistency for the younger ones; the nutritive value of different foods for the elder ones.

iv) Parents could be encouraged to have more contact and hence more communication with the school.

v) Corporate houses or organizations could be encouraged to adopt schools and provide additional funds, if required.

vi) The cooked mid-day meal scheme in Chhattisgarh is having a positive impact on education through improving equity and reducing the gender gap. The meal is drawing children to school, particularly those from poor families. Enrolment has not increased greatly but one of the important contributions of MDM, as envisaged, is the reduction in drop outs.

vii) The study showed that the teachers are spending considerable amount of time in the implementation of MDM. In some schools, they implement the programme directly while in most cases they are to monitor and ensure the meal is served to the children along with adherence to guidelines. Where SHGs are implementing, teachers play a supportive role. SJBS members interviewed were of the opinion that though the
MDM was a programme that had many advantages, the school is primarily a place for learning and education should not be relegated to the background.

viii) Quality and quantity of meal served is likely to be below the standard. The research did not indicate that even this minimum goal of 300 calories and 8-12 gms of protein was being met.

ix) Quality of rice provided by FCI was not of “good quality” as specified by the Supreme Court.

x) Infrastructure to enable the scheme to function at optimum was not present in the school.

Narula (2008) found in the study that in Haryana mid-day meal scheme has proven to be a strategic intervention in education as it provides an incentive to children to come to school. It is a great boon to the poor children. The scheme is covered in 100 percent of the primary schools and hot cooked meal with fixed menu is served in all the primary schools from 2004. From 2008-09 sessions, it had been extended up to upper primary level. At the system level, many initiatives have been taken for successful implementation of the programme. For example, putting stamps on the food grain bags before supply to the schools; opening of saving account for the mid-day-meal programme at school level for ensuring timely purchase of the ingredients, supply of adequate infrastructure facilities, involvement of voluntary organization International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) in MDM, Community involvement in supervision and distribution of mid-day meal, organizing “Mothers’ Sammelan”, etc. However, arrangements for regular health
check-up and other related medical support is provided to students with great care. With regard to the general impression of the environment with particular attention to hygiene, cleanliness and discipline among the students, only hygiene and cleanliness are taken care of in the schools while preparing and serving the meal. Students were encouraged to obey discipline and hygiene. They form a queue to receive the meals or eat meals. Teachers ensure washing of hands before taking meal. No gender or caste discrimination was observed in distribution of meals. The head and other teachers always first taste the meal then serve to the students. From time to time the programme is inspected. After the meals, students love to stay in the school. Another interesting fact was that the scheme has provided employment to underprivileged classes, especially women.

Tondon (2009) reported that to meet one of the main objective of the scheme i.e., improving the nutritional status of children in government, local body and government aided schools and EGS/AIE centres, the government has revised norms for MDMS to make it more nourishing for children. The World Bank had recently reported that the scheme was not helping the nutrition cause. So, to meet the targets the government has revised its norms from December 1, 2009. The quantity of pulses under the scheme revised from 25 to 30 grams and that of vegetables from 65 to 75 grams i.e, 5 grams additional pulses and 10 grams additional vegetables. The revision by Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) will be applicable to 11.77 crore children under the scheme (8.41 crore for primary and 3.36 crore for upper primary level. Cooking cost has also been raised to 2.50 for primary and 3.75 for upper primary children. Cooking cost will be shared between the centre and northeastern states on 90:10 bases and with other states on 75:25 bases. Prices of MDMS products will be independently determined and not linked to general price index.
The government has also revised the norms for transportation cost. The entire revision for norms for MDMS will cost the centre an additional Rs.10140.33 crore and the states Rs.4280.79 crore for the balance period of 11th plan.

Ghatak (2009) critically analyzed that mid day meal scheme is working for positive attributes like promoting enrolment, attendance and improving nutrition status of the students. In spite of these positive attributes, rice allocation has declined from 18.67 lakh tonnes in 2001-02 to 17.17 lakh tonnes in 2006-07. Wheat allocation has declined from 9.96 tonnes in 2001-02 to 4.17 lakh tonnes in 2006-07. The allocation of food grains for MDMS has steadily declined from 28.63 lakh tonnes in 2001-02 to 21.34 lakh tonnes in 2006-07, which appears bleak. If the MDMS is supposed to be responsible for ensuring enrolment, attendance and retention in schools, a declining allocation for MDMS is expected to adversely affect student’s participation in primary education under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

The Report given by Economic Times (2009), Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) brought out shocking facts in mid-day meal scheme. The latest audit report by CAG incorporate audit review of 19 states in last five years, has pointed out several deficiencies in infrastructural facilities for the scheme. The report said, "Despite release of funds by government of India for kitchen cum store, the state government and implementing agencies failed to release the funds in time. This resulted in improper storage of food and cooking of meals in classrooms or open spaces in 14 states.”

The Tribune (2009) reported that as on 20th November 2009 Central Government has revised the norms for MDMS to make it more nourishing. But the Government’s decision of revising mid-day meal programme to provide dietary support to students has put local
school authorities in difficult situation. Teachers have expressed concern about storing of ration sent for preparing mid-day meal. A teacher from Burjgill village expressed that earlier, self-help group used to keep wheat and rice sent by PUNSUP for mid-day meal with them. But presently there is sanctioning of Rs.60000 for constructing kitchen shed to all schools where mid-day meal is supposed to be made. School could not complete kitchen sheds with this amount which left these sheds incomplete giving way to rodent. Poor storage facility has always been a problem and with govt. increasing the mid-day meal quantity, concern for proper storage has increased.

Malyadri (2010) analyzed in the study of one hundred and ten primary schools, selected in two districts i.e, Nellore and Prakasam in Andhra Pradesh, about MDMS implementation, education, health & nutrition status. He found in the study that most parents and students appeared to be satisfied with implementation of MDMS and appreciated the government’s efforts in running the scheme.90% of the interviewed parents, 85% of the students and 96% of the teachers reported that the children were indeed getting different menus on different days as mandated. Another finding of the study is that over last three years, enrollment and retention has increased in 75% of the schools but has not shown any significant improvement in 25% of the schools. One more finding of the study revealed that 88% of the respondents stated that the doctor or nurse visited their schools and 90% said that they were given supplementary vitamin/ iron pills regularly. He further suggested that there should be a proper supportive supervision system. The study also found that teachers appear to spend considerable time and energy on implementation of mid-day meal programme which affects the quality of teaching.
Verma (2010) found in the study of MDMS a picture of patchy, irregular delivery and mismanagement at ground level in six states (West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Bihar, Assam, Orissa). One of the biggest hurdles being faced is rising food prices and limited budget leading to reduction in the quantity. It is further described that official records show that a share of eligible children getting mid-day meals is quite high, with West Bengal of having 88% followed by Bihar (71%) and Jharkhand (67%) in lower primary classes. Another discrepancy noted in Bihar is enrollment in primary section i.e. 143 lakh children while the population of eligible children was only 117 lakh. Those actually getting meals in schools were about 83 lakhs. There were also other problems like facility of proper kitchen shed and utensils. In 2004, the court directed that a kitchen shed should be constructed in all schools and hot cooked meals should be served to the children. But till now in West Bengal, more than a third of schools still don’t have a proper kitchen shed. It is further found by the survey teams that meal is being cooked in open, in verandhas and even in class rooms. It is further explained that there is also the problem of utensils availability and regular food distribution.

Hira (2010) revealed in the study that 19.4% of our population falls in the group of 7-14 years of age according to our last census i.e. one fifth of our population theoretically should be within noon meal scheme but we have only 117 million inside it. She further explained that private schools are negligible in number as compared to total number of schools in the country run by Government. A huge number of governments, government aided and local body-run-schools remain outside the purview of scheme. So, due to this reason, a number of children who are enrolled in a primary or secondary school are unable to get their noon meal because of various administration or technical difficulties. Other reasons for non-
implementation are reluctance on the part of the school, extra burden and inability of local 
administration for creating infrastructure. The delay in it shows that the noose of the red 
tape does not spare even the hungry children. She further examined that there is no denying 
fact that the attendance has improved in schools where NP-NSPE is running, but there is a 
common allegation that the populist move is only running the education process as children 
are more interested in lunch menu than on paying attention in the class.

A Report by Programme Evaluation Organisation (2010), Planning Commission of 
Government of India, highlighted in the survey the performance of cooked mid-day meal in 
seventeen states. The states covered under the survey were Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, 
Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, 
Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Kerala, Punjab, Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir, Meghalaya 
and Arunachal Pradesh. Highlights of the study were the following:

i) Majority of the sample schools in all the states suffer from unavailability and poor 
functional condition of kitchen shed except for Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

ii) All the states suffer from the unavailability and poor functional condition of store 
rooms. The condition is marginally better in Tamil Nadu.

iii) All the states, except for Bihar and Rajasthan, have reported poor availability of 
tumblers. Except for Rajasthan, all the states have reported a poor availability of 
plates.

iv) In the states of Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, 
Maharashtra, Meghalaya and West Bengal less than 75 percent of the sample schools 
have access to drinking water.
v) Except for Kerala and Andhra Pradesh, there is a serious shortage of cooks for CMDM in the sample schools across the country.

vi) It has been observed that most of the states do not follow the guidelines of Government of India to deliver the food grain at the school point by PDS dealer resulting in leakage in the supply of food grain.

vii) Selected districts in Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Meghalaya have utilized all the funds allotted to them. In contrast, some of the sample districts in Haryana, Jharkhand and Himachal Pradesh have utilized less than half the funds allocated to them.

viii) The scheme has been successful in eliminating classroom hunger as a majority of sample beneficiaries have reported that the meal available at school is adequate.

ix) A large proportion of children (in sample schools) in Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu opined that the meals provided were of good quality. A large proportion of children (in sample schools) in Karnataka and Bihar opined that the food served was of average and bad quality, respectively.

x) It has been observed that CMDM was able to bring together children from different communities in almost all the states and was, thus, able to achieve the objective of social equity to a considerable extent.

xi) In most of the states, teachers spend about one to two hours daily on activities related to CMDM thereby reducing precious teaching time.
Out of the 17 sample states where the data was collected, students in 9 states reported that they were involved in washing utensils.

Pradhan (2011) reported various problems associated with Tribal Education and Poverty. He revealed that the poor economic condition accompanied by subsistence economy is great hindrance to successful education of tribal children. It is explained that since the economy is not viable and the very survival being at stake, the importance of education touches only the periphery of the food gatherers, hunters, fisherman, shifting cultivators or settled agriculturists, lack adequate food to maintain the family for the whole year. In this situation, they find it difficult to afford their children to go school; rather they see children as economic assets in the family and contribute to the family income by working along with the parents and with others. So, he concluded that the factors like poverty, apathy of the parents and children, superstitions and prejudice, lack of suitable facilities in the educational institutions and wastages and stagnation cause major hindrances in the process of education in the tribal schools. Further, he explained that there is a great gap in the information and awareness for which the tribal parents and tribal children could not know about the importance of education and government policies and benefits occurred from them.

Pattanaik & Singh (2011) has found that although Punjab is an economically developed state, in terms of literacy its position is not encouraging. In term of the Census 2001 literacy, Punjab occupied 16th position. The Educational Development Index (EDI) developed by National University of New Delhi for primary and upper primary level also ranks Punjab 14th with an index value of 0.608, while Kerala, Delhi and Tamil Nadu ranks
1st (0.708), 2nd (0.707) and 3rd (0.701) respectively. This state has also the distinction of having highest percentage of scheduled caste population i.e. 29 percent well above the national average of 21 percent. He further supplemented that scheduled castes children constitute more than 60% of the total children in first three classes i.e. Class-I to Class-III and in Class IV and Class V they are nearer to sixty percent. So, scheduled caste children constitute two third of the total number of children. He further explained that although, the upper castes and economically well up prefer to send their children to the private schools, yet the attainment of educational institute by economically weaker scheduled caste is one of the significant findings. He suggested that for strengthening inclusive education at the primary level, the quality of mid-day meal needs to be improved which will attract children of the weaker section of the society to the schools.

Tyagi & Siddiqui (2015) studied the role and impact of Mid-day meal programme in elementary education in two districts of Bihar state. They revealed in their study that there was regularity in supply of food grain and release of funds under MDMS in selected districts. Further, it has been found that there was proper kitchen facility in all the schools. I majority of the schools, Mid-day meal was served regularly. There were very less number of schools who reported irregularity in service of cooked Mid-day Meal. The main reason revealed by the school authorities was shortage of food grain. Quantity of meal was reported sufficient for the children. They revealed that health cards are maintained by schools. They pinpointed in the study that there was only one time visit in most of the schools for health checkups. Drinking water facility was found in 90% of the schools. Environment, safety and hygiene was found satisfactory. They further revealed that the
3.1.2 STUDIES ON IMPACT OF MID-DAY MEAL ON IMPROVING ENROLMENT, ATTENDANCE AND RETENTION OF THE STUDENTS.

Aachrya (1984) in his study entitled “Compulsory Primary Education In Andhra Pradesh: A Policy Analysis”, evaluated the impact of compulsory primary education policy especially on weaker section in the rural areas over a period and found in that view of the constitutional directive to provide education to all children of 6-14 years of age. The mid-day meal program had become a boon to the poor children of the area. It helped to a considerable extent in the increase of enrolment and retention of students of weaker section in the school.

Saxsena & Mittal (1985) conducted a study on the impact of mid-day meal program on enrolment and retention at the primary stage that is indicated in the form of higher Total Enrolment Rate (ERT) for mid-day meal districts than those of non-mid-day meal districts. They also confirmed effectiveness of mid-day meal scheme at national level.

Panda (1985) pinpointed that education facilities available in the school were very effective in enhancing achievements. Therefore, it is suggested that the Government must take the initiative and ensure that the schools are equipped with all essential educational facilities. He further noticed that teacher quality has no significant effect in enhancing learning achievement expect teacher qualification on mathematics in urban and on language achievement in tribal areas and trained teacher before joining on mathematics and service achievement in rural areas. He further advocated that five schemes, mid-day meal in rural
and tribal areas, free uniform and free text books have been formed to be very effective in improving achievement and retention of pupils and can be further enhanced for better results.

Levinger (1986) evaluated the impact of school feeding program in developing countries. He evaluated data in which he had shown the relationship among school feeding program and school attendance, enrolment and cognitive performance. Based on the results, Levinger recommended areas for improvement in the design and management of school feeding program. He found that the impact on enrolment and attendance depends upon the design of school feeding program. Based on 22 case studies, the author concluded that the school feeding program increases enrolment and attendance when program are designed with local context in mind and when parent understand that program. In addition, the study found that attendance improves the most when school feeding program target the poorest households. However, attendance rate did not necessarily increase when meals were provided in areas of conflict.

Rajan & Jaya Kumar (1992) conducted an exploratory study in Tamil Nadu on the impact of noon meal on the primary education and analyzed the school lunch provided to children in Tamil Nadu in 1980s. The author analyzed the impact of school meal program on enrolment, attendance and dropout rates. The results showed that enrolment and attendance rate did not improve in schools with noon meal program. The dropout decreased from 40% to 20%.

Laxmaiah et. al. (1999) assessed the effect of the Mid-Day Meal (MDM) Program on enrolment, attendance, dropout rate and retention rate in the schools and its impact on
nutritional status as well as on school performance by comparing multistage random sampling. A total of 2,694 children (MDM: 1361; Non-MDM: 1333) from 60 schools were covered in the study. Results of the study indicated better enrolment (p<0.05) and attendance (p<0.001), higher retention rate with reduced dropout rate (p<0.001) a marginally higher scholastic performance and marginally higher growth performance of MDM children. So, MDM program is associated with a better educational and nutritional status of school children.

Special Correspondence (2002) reported “back to school” campaign in Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh through revival of mid-day meal scheme to prevent school dropout. Governor, Andhra Pradesh, exhorted non-Government association to take up the responsibility of providing mid-day meal to children in view of financial constraints faced by Government. There are 150 lakh children in the age group 5-15 years in the state, out of them 130 lakh children have been enrolled in schools. The remaining have no access to formal education as most of them are engaged in child labour to supplement the income of poor families.

Partap (2003) explained in the article that launching of free mid-day meal scheme for schoolchildren (cost the State Rs. 200 crore) in Tamil Nadu was initially scorned and attacked by everybody. But M.G. Ramachandran (MGR), Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu just went ahead and implemented it. As a child, MGR knew that what it was to go to bed hungry. So, MGR galvanized the State machinery to translate the dream into reality. It is further pointed out in the article that the programme had many spin off. Teachers said school attendance has risen dramatically. It would result Tamil Nadu’s children to be more healthier and be more educated. Further, as a result of this scheme classroom hunger has declined dramatically. Rural children almost invariably walk to school with empty stomach.
Satiating their hunger in school has improved their concentration. The study found that earlier most children slept in the afternoon due to hunger and exhaustion. Another benefit is that caste and class barriers are breaking for a whole generation of Indian children.

Ramachandran (2004) found in the study about the effects of initiative like DPED, SSA which has been taken by Government of India. It was found in the study that according to Government of India physical access to primary school has improved considerably with almost 67000 new primary schools opened in decade of 1990s. The NFHS (*National Family Health Survey*) data reveals that overall 79% of children in the age group of 6-14 were attending school in 1998-99 as against 69% in 1992-93. The dropout rate at the primary level has come down to 42% for girls and 40% for boys. However, the dropout rate at upper primary level stands at 50% for boys and 58% for girls. It is further discussed that selected Educational Statistics (Government of India) revealed that 59 million children in 6-14 age group are still out of school, out of which 35 million are girls i.e. approximately 59%. Equally disturbing is the distribution of out of school children by school group like SC/ST. Despite of these efforts, Government failed to provide quality education; children are pushed from one grade to next with little care taken to ensure they attain grade specific competencies.

Dreze (2004) explained in the discussion that school have been created not just for imparting formal knowledge, but the wholesome upbringing of the child. He viewed that mid-day meal can play role in promoting regular school attendance, eliminating class room hunger, fostering egalitarian values, etc.. It is also a contribution to quality of education in broad sense of the term. It is further argued that it is not a denying fact that mid-day meal can disrupt classroom activity and adversely affect the quality of education. The way to go
is not to dismantle mid-day meal but to ensure that adequate arrangements should be in place. He further explained mid-day meal is among critical facilities that should be apart for quality of education. Right to education, health and nutrition are all children’s fundamental rights

Kumar, R. et. al. (2005) in the study showed that Mid-Day Meal has made positive intervention in universalization of primary education by increasing enrollment and attendance. The increase has been more marked with respect to girls and children belonging to SC/ST categories. The study also pointed out that Mid-Day Meal scheme has contributed towards reduction in teacher absenteeism and narrowing of social distances.

Naik (2005) submitted a report on Akshara Dasola Scheme of Karnataka which revealed:

i) Sharp rise in enrolment particularly in rural areas.

ii) The program had made the impact on teacher absenteeism in school.

iii) Mid-day meal is served regularly.

iv) School supplied vitamin and iron tablets.

v) No discrimination was found with respect to serving and eating food on the basis of caste.

vi) 72% of the parents felt that their children had gained weight because of mid-day meal.

vii) 59% of the parents felt that their children suffered less than common ailment like cold and cough.
viii) More than 90% of the parents were satisfied with the scheme.

ix) 95.5% of the children felt that the food was tasty and 90% said that drinking water was available.

x) 95% of the children felt that their concentration had improved.

Khera (2006) observed in the study that though India’s mid-day meal programme has travelled a long way from its “non-starter” start in 1995, and has overcome many of teething problems that arose after the Supreme Court order in 2001. This review makes it clear that there is still a long road ahead foremost among the issues is the need to tackle the quality of the meal. It is further explained that there has been a steady trend of improvement over time- in terms of infrastructure, financial assistance and food quality- gives reasons for further improvement. It is revealed through study that mid-day meal had a substantial impact on improving enrolment in schools. It is especially encouraging to note that the most significant increase in enrolment has been amongst the children from disadvantaged groups including girls, dalits and poors. Further improvements in mid-day meal scheme will strengthened the potential nutritional and socialization benefits. An increase in per child financial and calorie introduction of varied menu in many states works as of micronutrient supplementation through mid-day meal scheme.

Banerjee, A., et al. (2007) found in the study various obstacles coming in the way of actual learning of the students. The main shortcoming found in the survey (which has taken place in Jaunpur District of Uttar Pradesh) is the lack of awareness among the parents regarding various provisions, level of learning and regularity of ward in attending school. The study
suggested that parents of the children who are unable to read or do simple arithmetic operations were less aware of what their children were able to do than parents of better performing students. So, it was possible that this partly reflected the fact that children of illiterate parents tend to perform worse and illiterate parents have a hard time judging what their children have learnt. It was further described in the study that although government has started a number of schemes like cash scholarships and mid-day meal programme for attracting attention of parents and children for school participation but actual learning levels attracted least attention.

Meng & Ryan (2007) evaluated in his paper the impact of food on education in Bangladesh. The Food for Education (FFE) program was introduced to Bangladesh in 1993. This paper evaluated the effect of this program on school participation and the duration of schooling using a household survey (data collected in 2000). Using propensity score matching combined with difference-in-differences methodologies, the average effect of FFE eligibility on the schooling outcomes was estimated. It was found that the program is successful and an average of 15-27 percent higher school participation rate was reported in the children those are eligible as against their counterfactuals that were not but would have been eligible for the program. Conditional on school participation, participants also stay at school 0.7 to 1.05 years longer than their counterfactuals.

Khasnabis & Chatterjee (2007) explained various reasons for poor attendance behavior of students in formal schools. It was found in the study of eastern slums of Kolkata that retaining the students in formal school is far more difficult then enrolling them, particularly if the students are from poor economic background. In the study attendance behavior, cause of low attendance and retention problem has been analyzed. The study indicated that only
38.96% of the students were attending less than 50% of the classes held during July 2003-05. The percentage of the students attending more than 50% of the classes during that period was 24.53%. Further causes of low attendance have been explained in the study. The study indicated the factors which are statistically significant, they were the type of school, the education level of the female guardian and per capita monthly income of the family. The study showed reverse relationship between per capita income and school attendance. Less is the level of per capita income, more regularly the wards attend classes. The reason for that the more attendance here is the provision of food ration for the students. The students coming from poor families bank upon this ration. So, the study indicated that the scheme started by the Government works in positive direction for promoting school attendance.

Das, A. (2007) discussed in the article that in order to reduce the dropout rates in the elementary education, the Central as well as State Government have undertaken several measures. A few of them are mid-day meal programme, provision of uniforms to girl students and free supply of study material for all students. The fall in dropout rates could be due to, at least partly, to the measures taken by Government. In comparison to 1999-2000, the dropout rates have come down from very high level of 40.3% to 31.47% in 2003-04. The fall in the dropout rate for girls has been higher than of boys. While dropout rate of boys has declined by almost 5% (during 1999-2000 to 2003-04), the corresponding rate of declining for girls has been 13.73% for girls. It is further revealed that measures taken by Government have resulted in increasing retention rate of students; hence quality of education at elementary level could be expected to go up.
Jayachandran (2007) revealed in the discussion various reasons for dropout in rural as well as urban areas. Parents have given various reasons in the study for dropping out of school. One reason is child not interested in studies which accounts highest proportion of dropout in rural (37%) and urban (37%) areas both for male and female children. Another, one reason explained in the survey in urban area is of the need to work for wages/salaries to supplement the family income. Financial constraints are the other main reason for dropout. Financial constraints are seen to affect dropout relatively more in urban areas (16%) as compared rural areas (11.2%).

Rao (2008) revealed in the study about the status of enrolment and dropouts of Scheduled Castes students. It was described in the study that the population of Scheduled Castes increased faster than overall population of the country. The population of SC’s in India has increased from 64.4 million in 1961 to 166.6 million in 2001. The highest concentration of SC population to overall population is in the States of Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana. It was further described that literacy has increased from 10.27% in 1961 to 54.69% in 2001 for SC. The highest concentration of total literacy among SC’s is found in the State/ UT’s of Mizoram, Diu & Daman and Kerala whereas the lowest literacy rate was found in Bihar, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh. But in case of dropouts the situation seems to be still worse in case of SC girls than boys in the country in primary, elementary as well as at secondary stage.

Dreze & Khera (2008) pointed out the importance of mid-day meal in their study. In the study, the reasons are explained for the need & contribution mid-day meal. One basic contribution of mid-day meals to educationalist advancement was to boost school enrolment. Going beyond that, mid-day meals might be expected to enhance pupil
attendance on a daily basis, leads to improved learning achievements. Classroom Hunger undermines the ability of pupils to concentrate and perhaps affects their learning skills. Further it was indicated that mid-day meals helps to break caste barrier and foster a sense of social equality among school children. The experience of sitting together and sharing a meal, irrespective of caste and class helps to impart a sense of social equality at this crucial stage.

Adelman (2009) revealed that Food for Education (FFE) programs, including meals served in school and take-home rations conditional on school attendance. These schemes have received renewed attention recently as a policy instrument for achieving the Millennium Development Goals of universal primary education and the reduction of hunger in developing countries. This review study presents a rationale for FFE programs and undertakes a critical assessment of the causal evidence on the impact of FFE programs on education participation and attainment, learning, cognitive development, and nutrition. Results from the most careful studies showed that in-school meals programs improve primary school attendance of enrolled students where initial attendance was low. Potential impacts on school participation by children not previously enrolled in school are not well known. There was mixed evidence that school meals can improve performance on math and literacy tests and they may improve cognitive development, depending on the type of food provided, the size of the food rations, and program duration. Several well-designed controlled trials have shown that school meals have a positive impact on nutrition outcomes, though these results have received less support from field trials in more typical settings. There are few studies of scaled-up take-home ration programs, but one study from Bangladesh shows a significant impact on school participation. In general, FFE programs
have larger impacts in areas with low school participation and on children with greater initial malnutrition. The impacts of the programs may also be higher when combined with complementary programs to improve schools or child health.

Department of School Education (2008-09) reported that the mid-day meal scheme has been able to improve the enrolment, attendance, retention and the learning level of the students in addition to improving the nutritional standards amongst the students. This is evident from the study of ASER which has been released by Mr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, Government of India on 16.1.2008. However, a separate study is being conducted by the State Government whereby the Kurukshetra University – one of the agencies empanelled by Government of India, submitted its Report. It may also be relevant to mention that in a State like Punjab where almost 38% students are studying in private recognized/un-recognized schools, providing mid-day meal in Government Schools/EGS Centres has given a boost to most disadvantageous section of the society. In Government run institutions, mid-day meal is serving its intended objective very well. The impact of the scheme can be proved conversely as it has also strongly believed that in case the mid-day meal scheme is stopped, a significant increase in attendance which has been observed in the schools will go down. Thus, justifying the continuation and implementation of the mid-day meal in the schools regularly.

Modi (2010) analyzed the importance of education for empowering women. The study explained that considering education as one of the most important means of empowering women many programmes, schemes, awards and facilities have been initiated by the Central and State Government to promote girls and women education. It was explained that the Government of India has taken resources to comprehensive literary drive for girls
related to poor and socially weaker sections of the society. The study further revealed that mid-day meal scheme- started by Central Government has motivated the girls to primary education by relieving them from household chores. Because of this programme, enrolment and retention of girls to schools has increased remarkably.

Yadav (2010) pointed out that despite Government’s many efforts the rural literacy did not take much progress. He further explained that presently several new initiatives have been taken to bring the children to school. Several programmes intended to provide rural children access to education include stipends, free uniforms, text books, mid-day meals and special attention to girl education. These initiatives have encouraged parents to send their children to schools. He further revealed that the Government on its part, recently constituted a Rural Education Cell and a Department of Educational Survey and Data Processing to analyze the current scenario in rural education, identify problems and to come up with recommendations to improve the situation.

3.1.3 STUDIES ON IMPACT OF MID-DAY MEAL ON HEALTH STATUS OF THE STUDENTS

Gopalan (2003) pointed out in the study that mid-day meal scheme in the country was obstructed due to various factors. It was neglected in the number of states due to logistic and financial problems. Lack of perceived impact on the nutritional status was the another main reason. The intervention the Supreme Court of India has renewed the interest of the authorities in mid-day meal programme. Further, it was suggested that by including the component of school health care and active involvement of the community, the programme can be made more effective.
Afridi, F. (2005) presented a paper that looked at the nutritional impact of the mid-day meal program in India. Using a 24-hour recall of food intake in a randomized evaluation in Madhya Pradesh, it was found that daily nutrient intake of program participants increases by 49% to 100% of the transfers. The program reduced daily protein deficiency of the participants by 100% and calorie deficiency by almost 30% at a very low cost of 3% per child.

In the chapter "Food and Nutrition Security", Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-07) highlighted that the mid-day-meal programme has been initiated for improving the dietary intake of primary school children and reduction in the school dropout rates. There has been substantial improvement in access to health care. National programmes for tackling anemia, iodine deficiency disorders and Vitamin-A deficiency are being implemented. As a result of all these interventions, there has been a substantial reduction in severe grades of under-nutrition in children and some improvement in the nutritional status of all the segments of population. Kwashiorkor, marasmus, pellagra, lathyism, beriberi and blindness due to severe Vitamin-A deficiency have become rare.

Singh (2008) presented the finding on the basis of data collected by the Young Lives Project in 2002 and 2007 in the State of Andhra Pradesh. The surveys covered two cohorts: the first of 2011 children born between January 2001 and June 2002 and the second of 1008 children born between January 1994 and June 1995. In the second round (2006-07), 1950 children of the younger cohort and 994 children of the older cohort could be traced and resurveyed. Two results from analysis are as follows:
i) The survey indicated that drought had a negative impact on health but that this was counteracted by the mid-day meals. Children in drought-stricken areas see a decline in nutritional intake impacting their health negatively, but the mid-day meals Scheme in these situations acts as a security net compensating for this decline in food availability.

ii) Mid-day meals are important for older children mainly on grounds of school participation and learning. For younger children it is valuable as a safety net. So, this contrast in results between the younger and older cohorts underlines a fundamental principle often neglected in policy discussions: the impact of any external factor, including programs like school meals, on children will very much vary depending on the age of the child and ignoring this may lead to an incomplete or even erroneous understanding of a program’s benefits.

Ramachandran (2008) highlighted in the study the need for introduction of mid-day meals and other food supplementation program for children. Recognizing the importance of nutrition for health and human development, the country adopted multi-sectoral, multi prolonged strategy to combat under nutrition and ill health in children. In an effort to bridge the gap between energy intake and requirement in children, food supplementation programs were initiated. Today ICDS and MDMS are perhaps world’s largest of food supplementation programs for children. All these interventions did result in some improvement in nutritional status of children but pace of improvement is slow. In last five decades, the mortality rate has come down by 50% and fertility rate by 40% but reduction in under nutrition in children is only 20%. So there is a growing concern that increase in
outlays in nutrition sector have not brought about commensurate improvements in quality and coverage under nutrition programmes and outcomes such as improvement in nutritional status.

Baru et al. (2008) discussed in the article the issue to replace cooked meals in the mid-day meal programme with processed foods like biscuits. The issue to replace cooked meal with processed food like biscuits in mid-day meal programme has been discussed in the article. This article highlighted the discussion of academician, magical professionals and nutrition & public health experts regarding the impact of providing dry ration versus cooked food. The thought to replace cooked meals with processed foods in the mid-day meal (MDM) and Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) programmes have been opposed by networks and alliances of scientists and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) across the country. The importance of nutritional support for pre-school and school-going children has been highlighted by a long and sustained campaign by networks of individuals and organizations over the last decade. A freshly cooked meal offers a better range of nutrients then packaged food which is costlier in terms of per rupee nutrient yield. In both ICDS and MDM, the evidence suggested that children often take the dry food at home and may or may not eat it later, and in contexts of poverty, this food often gets shared by the family.

EFA Global Monitoring Report (2009) revealed that Childhood malnutrition and poor health are two of the greatest barriers to EFA. Progress in both areas has lagged far behind progress in getting into schools. The upshot is that millions of children entering school have had their brains, their cognitive development and their education potential permanently damaged by hunger and ill health.
Jakhar & Siwach (2010) explained in their article that the report on the Extent of Chronic Hunger and Malnutrition in India, presented before UN Human Rights Council in Geneva found that India has the largest number of undernourished people in the world, highest level of child malnutrition, over 47% underweight children and over 46% stunted in their growth, even higher than most countries on poverty stricken sub-Saharan Africa.

Manav (2010) discussed in the article about malnutrition and anemia among children and women. It was shown that over 40% of children and 36% of adult women are classified as under nourished in the country. This article further revealed that "Annual Report" published by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India (September, 2010) delivered into the factors of malnutrition. The main reasons include poverty, inequality and specific dietary patterns.

Hazara (2010) explained in the study that over the last decade there have been enormous improvement in the education sector but issues like high dropout rates, low-level of learning achievement and low participation of girls as well as of various systematic issues like inadequate school infrastructure, high teacher absenteeism, large scale teacher vacancies, poor quality of education, poor functioning schools and inadequate equipment-still remain the matter of concern in rural literacy scenario. He further explained that as far as the progress in rural literacy is concerned, initiative like provision of mid-day meals in primary school has increased enrolment, attendance and retention, especially of girls. It helped in taking care of nutritional needs of the students. He explained that MDM not only affected positively the health of poor students but also improved learning outcomes by ending school hunger.
Talukdar (2010) expressed in the article that out of the seven North Eastern States, Assam has highest number of malnourished children. The state-wise details of the classification of Nutritional Status of children under ICDS schemes reveals that as on December 31, 2009, Assam had 659355 moderately malnourished children (Grade 1 and Grade 2) and 10869 severely malnourished children (Grade 3 and Grade 4). Although actual figure must be much higher as a huge number of children are not yet covered by the scheme. It is further explained in the study that The National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education seeks to address two or more pressing problems of majority of children in India namely hunger and education by improving nutritional status of children in Class I-V. But Planning Commission review revealed that in case of upper primary school children in Assam, not a single student was provided MDM in 2007-08 and only 3.37 lakh students were given MDM for 14 days in the whole year in 2008-09. The implementation of the scheme was picked up in 2009-10. In 2007-08 and 2008-09, primary school children were provided MDM for 131 and 121 days respectively in Assam; whereas the number of days stipulated by Programme Approval Board (PAB) was 217 and 206 respectively.

Sharma (2011) explained in her study that the problem of malnutrition is multi-dimensional, multi-sectorial and inter-generational in nature and that a single sector scheme can’t address multifaceted problem. So, a number of schemes were introduced to improve nutrition needs of children and women from time to time under different Ministries, such as (a) Ministry of Women and Child Development (b) Ministry of Human Resource Development (c) Ministry of Health and Welfare (d) Ministry of Rural Development (e) Ministry of Food. It was further explained that these schemes have had limited success to improve nutritional status due to fragmented leadership and coordination. Nutrition is
nobody’s responsibility. So, he suggested that there is a need to put in place an effective cross ministry mechanism to deliver food, care and health in combination.

Rajeshwari (2011) discussed in the article about nutritional problem, especially among children of rural populations. Under nutrition of children directly affects many aspects of their physical and cognitive growth. NFHS data showed that 46%, 42% and 19% of the children were reported stunning under-weight and wasting respectively. It was further pointed out that every year 2.5 million children die in India, accounting for one in five deaths in the world. More than half of these deaths could be prevented if children were well nourished. India’s progress in reducing child malnutrition is slow. This prevalence of child malnutrition in India deviates further from the expected level at the country’s per capita income than in any other large developing country. It was further discussed that although India has many nutrition and social safety net programs, some of which ICDS and PDS have success in several states in addressing the needs of poor households. All these programs have potential, but they don’t form a comprehensive nutrition policy and they have not addressed the nutrition problem effectively so far according to Food Policy Research Institute.

3.1.4 STUDIES ON PERCEPTION OF TEACHERS, STUDENTS & PARENTS REGARDING MDMS

Dreze, et al. (2003) conducted a survey for determining impact of mid-day meal programme in three states: Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and Karnataka (between January to April 2003). In this survey, 81 schools have been covered. The main findings of the study are summarized as:
i) In 77% of the schools, mid-day meal is served regularly.

ii) Class-I enrolment rose by 15% between July 2002 and July 2003.

iii) Mid-day meal facilitated the abolition of classroom hunger.

iv) Created social equity as pupils of all social backgrounds seem to be quite happy.

v) According to 78% of the teachers interviewed, afternoon attendance was more or less same as morning attendance.

vi) A large majority of parents and teachers have positive perception regarding the impact of mid-day meal.

vii) 91% of the parents, 84% of the teachers and 94% of the cooks have shown support for the continuation of the scheme.

Diwan found in the study that the MDM in Delhi is considered to be one of the most successful practices in India. One underlying fact in this endeavor was that mother has emerged as a strong mediator in ensuring quality of food for the children. On the whole, the complementarities between the government and NGOs have made Delhi schools a place of attraction for children who could not afford a decent meal in their homes. At the same time, variety in food served every day was guaranteed with complete satisfaction of the parents who come to school to taste and check the quality of the food served to their wards.

The systematic procedures laid for effective planning and management of the programme on the part of Department of Education is worth appreciation. The contribution of Stri Shakti, one of the leading dedicated NGO have made it possible for a vast coverage of
Delhi schools for feeding its children. The success is clearly visible when it was reported that the programme is feeding children in almost 100 percent schools and without any complaint from the beneficiaries or schools.

Nisha (2004) investigated implementation of the mid-day meal scheme in primary schools of Bathinda district. The study was conducted on a sample of 100 students (50 Boys and 50 Girls), 60 teachers and 50 parents of government elementary schools of Bathinda district. The investigator found that:

i) Only 31% schools were providing mid-day meal to pupils.

ii) The funds for mid-day meal are provided by Director of Public Instruction (DPI) to Deputy Commissioner (DC) which are further transferred to District Education Officer (DEO) from whom Block Education Officer (BEO) collect these funds, further transferred to Pendu Shikhya Vikas Committee (PASWAK) from whom different primary school receive these funds.

iii) There was much difficulty for the teachers to distribute meals to prepare records of quantity and type of meal distributed. Their problems were also for keeping records of funds received and payment made to the meal contractors. Their class work was neglected by paying attention to these extra activities.

iv) Views of the teachers and students about mid-day meal scheme were different. The teachers' thought providing meal to students was an extra burden on them but the students were comparatively happy about this scheme because students got relief from some of the teaching periods as their teachers are engaged in meal managing activities. In this way study of students was hampered to great extent.
v) The parents had positive views regarding this scheme.

vi) The student attracted to school due to this scheme. The students attend the school regularly that leads to improvement in their achievement.

Mathur (2005) in the study found that:

i) Introduction of menu based mid-day meal has positively impacted enrollment and daily attendance of children.

   a) 75% teachers said that mid-day meal has boosted enrollment

   b) 85% teachers said that mid-day meal has enhanced school attendance

ii) Cooked mid-day meal has reduced classroom hunger specially those belonging to underprivileged sections.

iii) Cooked mid-day meal have contributed to the cause of social equity as children, cutting across caste and class lines sit together to share a common meal.

iv) Mid-day meal have contributed to the cause of gender equity by providing employment opportunity to women and also by liberating of poor working mothers as they can leave early for work.

v) 67% of the parents interviewd felt that the quality of mid-day meal is satisfactory.

vi) 85% of the parents felt that the scheme should continue.

In the survey of 12 MCD (Municipal Corporation of Delhi) schools undertaken by De, Anuradha et. al. (2005) found that:
i) School children in all the school were getting cooked food.

ii) 53% of the parents said that they were happy with the quality of meal.

iii) Impact on attendance likely to be more on girls who come without breakfast.

iv) There is an urgent need to disseminate information about mid-day meal among parents, especially its nutritional value and the ill effects of poor nutrition and on health status.

A brief report of the Seminar on the topic “Feeding the Child” presented by Swami Shivananda Memorial Trust (2008) has presented the following findings:

i) Mid-Day Meals and Supplementary Nutrition are fulfilling its obligations under the various international treaties relating to Child Rights and universalization of primary education.

ii) There is a need for close coordination between the various programmes through institutional and legal mechanisms.

i) There should be an integrated and holistic approach towards child feeding programmes employment of women and early elementary and primary education.

ii) That there should be strict adherence in letter and spirit for the implementation of the orders of the Hon’ble Supreme Court. The orders of the court should be incorporated into appropriate statutes.
iii) Cooking of food must be recognized as micro enterprises of women and local communities. They should be given the administrative, training and financial support given to such enterprises.

Goyal & Vasanta (2014) checked the awareness of parents regarding NP-NSPE in Agra district of Uttar Pradesh State. They revealed in the study that there was lack of basic knowledge amongst the parents regarding the scheme. They reported that parents had no awareness regarding weekly menu, quantity and quality of MDM. It was further revealed in the study that the parents were not aware of regularity in service of MDM in the schools. It has been found that parents had no idea about the involvement of upper authorities in supervision of MDMS. They reported that there was no involvement of the parents in MDM activities like checking taste of cooked meal. There was no consciousness among the parents for their children' academic achievements. They even had no knowledge regarding impact of MDM on enhancing educational achievement of their children.

3.2 RESEARCH GAP

This study on Mid-day Meal Scheme in Punjab is of same kind to the studies done by scholars earlier. But this study has a different aspect from the other as many of the studies are related to one field. In many studies the scholars has done research on the implementation level of Mid-day Meal scheme in various States of India. Some researcher has given emphasis on the impact of Mid-day Meal scheme in promoting enrollment, attendance and retention of the students. Some scholars have determined the relationship
between Mid-day meal Scheme and Health Status. A very few of them checked the perception/opinion of the teachers’, students’ and parents’ regarding Mid-day meal.

Taking into consideration the above studies related to various aspects of Mid-day Meal scheme, the present research is an attempt to cover all components under one study. The main objective for undertaking the current topic for research study is due to the following research gap:

- In review of literature it was found that there is very negligible research has been done in Punjab in this particular area.

- The main motive of the scheme is to promote enrollment, attendance and retention of the students. The present study has been done in the three low literacy districts of Punjab so it would be very beneficial to confirm whether Mid-day Meal is really working towards fulfilling the main objective of the scheme.

- Punjab State is having high concentration of schedule caste population, as the government has started this scheme especially for economically and socially backward sections of the society so through the study an effort has been done to test the impact of scheme for promoting education among these people.

- As Punjab is one of the economically sound states of India, so it would be very interesting to find out the results related to the scheme which is mainly focusing marginalized sections of the society.
Current study “Implementation and Performance Evaluation of Mid Day Meal Scheme in Punjab - A Case Study of Sangrur, Barnala & Mansa Districts” is an attempt to fulfill the research gap. The current study will:

- Study implementation level of Mid-day Meal scheme
- Study the impact of the scheme in improving enrollment, attendance and retention.
- Study the impact of the scheme on health status of the students.
- Study the perception of teachers’, students’ and parents towards the scheme.

The findings of the research will be of use for the Government, policy makers, administrators, local bodies, teachers and parents. First of all teachers will come to know about the common problems faced by them and they collectively can resolve them. Second it would be an eye opener for the administration and for the government to know about the hurdles faced by the teachers in implementing the scheme. On the basis of findings they can take corrective measures for appropriate implementation of the scheme.