Chapter – II

Review of Related Literature
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The review of related literature is one of the important steps in the research. To develop a better understanding about the topic and also to know what type of work has already been done in the field, the knowledge of related literature is necessary. Review not only helps to make us aware of pit-falls that have been experienced by the reviewer, but it widens the investigator’s outlook, knowledge and experience with regard to the subject.

It enables us to know what others have done and what still remains to be done in the area. It helps in delimiting research problems and defining it better. This phase of research being of paramount importance, the researcher has to take the help of books, magazines, periodicals, encyclopedias and other literature, which make him/her aware of the problem.

Best (1963) considers the survey of related literature as an important prerequisite for actual planning and the execution of any research project. He supports his view by putting forward the statement: “A familiarity with the literature in any problem area helps the students to discover what is already known, what others have attempted to find out, what methods to attack have been promising and disappointing and what problems remain to be solved”.

The review of literature promotes a greater understanding of the problem. It works as a guidespot not only with regard to the quantum of work done in the field, but also enables the investigators to perceive the gap and lacuna in the concerned field of research. Though it has not been possible on the part of the investigator to get accesses to the entire published and unpublished researches in the field of present study yet an attempt has been made to report the available studies related to the problem in hand.

For the present problem “Impact of Mid Day Meal Scheme on attendance, retention and learning outcome of students and problems faced by the teachers and
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school administrators” the literature available is classified into two broad categories:-

2.1 Studies and Reports related with mid day meal scheme and its impact on enrolment, attendance, retention and learning outcome of students.

2.2 General publications related with mid day meal scheme- magazines and newspapers.

2.1 STUDIES AND REPORTS RELATED WITH MID DAY MEAL SCHEME AND ITS IMPACT ON ENROLMENT, ATTENDANCE, RETENTION AND LEARNING OUTCOME OF STUDENTS.

For the sake of systematic reporting of literature, the investigator opted for the time sequence.

Sharma (1976) conducted a study on Increase in Enrolment in primary schools to find out the effect of various incentives given as a part of utility of enrolment drives in primary and upper primary schools of Rajasthan. It was found that incentives proved to be useful in boosting enrolment and out of them the most effective were free meals, text books and stationery, fee exemption, free uniforms and school scholarships.

Acharya (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 sections in the rural areas over a period and found that in view of the constitutional directive to provide education to all children of 6 to 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.

Krishnamurthy (1985) conducted a study on the position of enrolment of children in the age group of 6-13 years and problems involved in their enrolment to inquire into the measures taken for the effective enrolment of children and found that the measures taken for the enrolment of children include visiting the
homes of non-enrolled children, serving mid day meals, supplying uniforms and text books and cash grants to ST’s.

Saxena and Mittal (1985) conducted a study on the impact of mid day meal program on enrolment and retention at the primary stage and found the influence of mid day meal program on total enrolment, that is indicated in the form of higher (ERT) (Total Enrolment Rate) 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.

Levinger (1986) studied School Feeding Programs in Developing Countries-An Analysis of Actual and Potential impact and evaluated empirical data on the relationship among school feeding programs and school attendance, enrolment, and cognitive performances. Based on the results, Levinger recommends areas for improvement in the design and management of school feeding programs. Levinger 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 increases enrolment and attendance, when programs are designed with local context in mind and when parents understand that program. In addition the study found that attendance improves the most when school feeding programs target the poorest households. However, attendance rates did not necessarily increase when meals were provided in areas of conflict. Levinger also found that there was inconclusive evidence to link school feeding with improved cognitive performance. In conclusion, the author states that the most successful school-feeding programs involve community members in planning and management and faster local production of the meals.

Moock and Leslie (1986) conducted a study on childhood malnutrition and schooling in the Terai Region of Nepal and found that only 5% malnourished children liked to attend school. Better nourished children had a 27% likelihood of attending school.

Babu and Hallam (1989) conducted a study on socioeconomic impacts of school feeding programs in a South Indian Village and evaluated the impact of
school feeding programs in Tamil Nadu. The study analyzed the impact of the school nutrition on children’s education. The researchers looked at household income, family consumption and expenditures, information on the number of child participants, quantities of food, and energy/protein intake at school.

Babu and Hallam found that school feeding programs resulted in increased school attendance rates, reduction in poverty rates, and increased household spending on non-caloric food and non-food items.

**Chambers (1991)** evaluated the Government of Jamaica’s School Feeding Programme and World Food Program, which was begun in 1984. Through this program, 95,000 children received a snack at lunch time. Chambers assessed the impact of the school feeding program on attendance, dietary needs and source of income transfer and found that the school feeding program did not have significant effects on school attendance. However, the snacks were effectively meeting children’s dietary needs and showed effectiveness.

**Dall’Aqua (1991)** evaluated a school lunch program in Brazil entitled Economic Adjustment and Nutrition Policies. Brazil’s school lunch program is its largest nutritional program and in 1986 reached 25 million children. It was continued in the 1980s amidst a severe budget crisis, under the assumption that school feeding is an effective way to improve nutritional status of impoverished families. It targets children from the preschool age of 14 years. This study evaluated the impact of the school feeding program on nutritional levels of low income households. The study showed that nutritional levels as observed through caloric intake, did increase during the course of the program. In addition, school enrolment increased in schools that offered lunch, demonstrating a positive effect on educational outcomes as well as nutritional.

**Advancing Basic Education and Literacy (ABEL) Information Bulletin (June 1992)** discussed school feeding programs and their impact on student attendance, academic performance and cognitive development. It highlighted several case studies from developing countries, including the Dominican Republic, India, Guatemala, Jamaica, Haiti and Ghana. One key theme observed in the
research base was that children who received nutritional supplements in school had higher attendance rates and improved academic performance rates. The bulletin recommended that school feeding programs be designed together with other synergistic interventions to have more impact. It also recommended that school feeding-programs have a focus on rural poor households.

**Harbison and Hanushek (1992)** analyzed the educational performance of the poor children from rural northeast Brazil and found that malnourished children perform 20 percent worse than children who are better nourished. Malnourished children in this region have higher than average dropout rates.

**Rajan and Jaya Kumar (1992)** conducted an exploratory study in Tamil Nadu on impact of noon meal program on primary education and analyzed the school lunch program provided to school children in Tamil Nadu, India, during the early 1980s. The authors analyzed the impact of the provision of school meals on enrolment, attendance and dropout rates. The results showed that enrolment and attendance rates did improve in schools with the noon meal program. The dropout rate decreased from 40 percent to 22 percent. In addition, the noon meal program disproportionately improved the enrolment rates of children in the lowest socioeconomic groups, including Muslim and other backward classes.

**Lopez et al (1993)** conducted a study on Breakfast omission and cognitive performance of normal, wasted and stunted school children and analyzed the effect of lack of breakfast food on cognitive performance of fourth through sixth graders in Santiago, Chile. The cognitive tests assessed memory, attention and performance. The students were divided into two groups. One group was fed breakfast while the other group was tested before eating breakfast. The study did not show a significant relationship between food and cognitive performance, though the cognitive performance of stunted children was lower than that of children of normal and malnourished nutritional status. Children of malnourished status did not display significant effects of eating breakfast versus fasting.

**Pollitt et al (1993)** conducted a study on Early Supplementary Feeding and Cognition: Effects over two decades. This study indicated the effects of school
feeding programs which indicated that in Guatemala, children with better nutritional status were more likely to have higher cognitive test scores and better school performance than malnourished children.

Walter et al (1993) conducted a study entitled Effect of Bovine-Hemoglobin-Fortified cookies on Iron Status of School Children: A Nationwide Program in Chile and analyzed the impact as fortified cookies were distributed daily to children for three years. The authors found that the cookies were extremely effective at improving iron levels in undernourished children.

Ahmed and Billah (1994) in their document “Food For Education in Bangladesh: An Early Assessment” provides an assessment of the pilot phase of the Food For Education (FFE) program in Bangladesh. The FFE project was launched by the Government of Bangladesh on a pilot basis in 1993, with the goal of linking vulnerable group income supplements to school enrolment, promote school attendance and prevent dropouts.

The assessment demonstrated strong results for the FFE program. Enrolment in schools with FFE program increased by 20%. Attendance rates for boys and girls increased and were higher in FFE schools than in non FFE schools.

Glewwe and Jacoby (1994) in their study An Economic Analysis of Delayed Primary School Enrolment and Childhood Nutrition in Ghana, analyzed the relationship between school enrolment and childhood nutrition in Ghana and found that malnourished children start school late and complete fewer years of school as compared to better nourished children.

Moore (1994) conducted an evaluation of the Burkina Faso School Feeding Program and found that the presence of a school canteen was related to the increased enrolment, regular attendance, decreased dropout rates, and increased scores on national exams.

Serageldin et al (1994) provides an overview and evaluation of the Food Coupons Project in Honduras. The food coupons project administered coupons three times a year to families if their children attended school. The coupons covered nearly 20 percent of an individual’s food needs and were redeemed at
local shops or private banks. The evaluation of the project concluded that it was cost-effective and resulted on a 12 percent increase in primary school enrolment.

Ambasht and Rath (1995) in their study, The effect of household, community and school factors on the enrolment, retention and achievement of scheduled tribe children at primary level concluded that parental attitude, teachers’ attendance, economic conditions, home work and provision of mid-day meals had positive impact on the achievement of students.

Chandler et al (1995) in his study “School Breakfast Improves Verbal Fluency in Undernourished Jamaican Children”, analyzed the short-term effects of breakfast on cognitive performance of malnourished children with that of children of normal nutritional status. Cognitive performance was assessed through the administration of four tests after the breakfast meal. The assessments test verbal fluency, visual search, digit span, and speed information processing. The researchers found that after receiving breakfast, undernourished children performed significantly better on a test of verbal fluency. However, the performance of children with normal nutritional status did not change significantly after receiving breakfast. The researchers suggested that meals available in schools through feeding programs be targeted to undernourished children.

Dwyer (1995) conducted “The School Nutrition Dietary Assessment Survey” and provided an overview of United States interventions in school nutrition, spanning from the first program in the 19th century to recent programs. Dwyer also analyzed “The School Nutrition Dietary Assessment Study”. School nutrition programs have a large reaching in the United States. 10% of school age children receive two out of their three daily meals in the school. While the study successfully affected-policymaking, Dwyer recommended that other school nutrition interventions-including health education, parent involvement and health services be analyzed further.

Sarma et al (1995) conducted a study in the state of Andra Pradesh to assess the impact of mid day meal programe on the educational and nutritional status of the school going children. A total of 83 schools from three districts 45
schools with the programme and 38 schools without the programme were included in the study. Results of the study on the educational component indicated, improved attendance, increased retention rate with reduced dropout rates and a marginal improvement in the scholastic performance. The nutritional component revealed better growth performance among the regular beneficiaries of the programme.

**World Food Programme (WFP) (1995)** evaluated School Canteen Projects in West Africa for their impact on educational indicators. Based on the results, WFP recommends for future FAE programming. They found that the enrolment rates increased through the school feeding programs but, it was difficult to obtain reliable figures for enrolment rates. While overall attendance rates increased, the effect of school feeding programs on the attendance of girls was in question. Lastly, the evaluation found that achievement scores increased when the daily meal was provided at key times of day.

**World Food Programme (1995) “Operational Guidelines for WFP Assistance to Education”**. WFP Document SCP 15/INF/3 provides an overview to WFP and UNESCO’s guidelines for food assisted education projects. The paper provides an overview to food assisted education and the research base that supports such initiatives. It then recommends policy and procedural guidelines for project design. The authors found that the school feeding programs have a positive impact on attendance, enrolment and reduction of dropout rates. The programs have been most successful in the most impoverished communities. The authors recommend that school feeding programs not be administered in isolation. To enhance effectiveness, they must be provided alongwith other education, nutrition, and health interventions. Lastly, the report provides recommendations for improving commitment from governments, sustainability, community participation, monitoring and evaluation and food distribution.

**Del Rosso, Joy and Marek (1996)** conducted a study on Class Action: Improving School performance in the Developing World through Better Health and Nutrition and provided a thorough literature review of the relationship between improved nutrition and school performance. They analyzed lessons
learned from past school based nutrition and health programs and make recommendations for the design of such interventions.

Del Rosso and Marek point to an extensive research base to contend that healthier and better-nourished children have higher enrolment and attendance rates and perform better than children suffering from malnutrition. They also discuss the long term benefits to the wider community beyond the children fed. The authors outline three cost-effective nutrition and health interventions and provide lessons learned for policymakers on successful management of school-based nutrition programs.

Gopaldas and Gujral (1996) studied The Pre-Post Impact Evaluation of the improved Mid-Day-Meal Programme in Gujrat and provided the results that six thousand children received daily meals in school. The study consisted of a baseline evaluation of nutritional levels. The authors found that the prevalence of parasitic infection in the children was reduced, hemoglobin status improved and vitamin-A deficiency declined.

Janke (1996) provided an overview of the research base on school feeding programs. The author explored the impact of school feeding programs on enrolment and attendance rates and looked at the potential for affecting learning achievement. Janke concluded the document by recommending best practices, including the need to providing complementary health education and nutrition interventions, such as addressing curriculum, teaching and infrastructure needs.

Mathews (1996) conducted a research on Importance of Breakfast to Cognitive Performance and Health. This research explored the relationship between morning meals and cognitive performance. The research base showed that a morning meal is strongly related to improved learning, memory and physical health of children. The researches concluded that provision of breakfast is a successful public health intervention that improves the internal efficiency of education systems.

Jacoby (1997) analyzed a school feeding program in the Philippines to test the “Flypaper Effect”, The flypaper effect is to assertion that if a child receives
additional benefits i.e. food, those benefits remain with the child rather than being shared with other members of the household. Jacoby analyzed the data to determine whether a child’s caloric intake would indeed increase through school feeding programs. After rigorous analysis, Jacoby concluded that the benefits of school feeding programs do indeed remain with the children, and there is no significant reallocation of calories within the household.

Saghvi and Moore (1997) studied Nutritional Supplementation of School Children: Nutrition, Health and Income to Support Primary Education. The authors synthesized experiences from food assisted projects. They highlighted projects from India, Honduras, Burkina Faso, and Chile to support their conclusions. They recommend improving food assisted education programs by streamlining management and logistics and focusing on cost recovery. The authors also highlighted the need to deliver food/micronutrients at a time that has the most effect on learning and performance.

Devaney and Stuart (1998) analyzed the impact of the United States School Breakfast Program. Specially they ask whether the provision of food in the morning increases the likelihood that a student will eat breakfast.

They found that the provision of breakfast food did not increase the likelihood that students would eat breakfast. However, Devaney and Stuart did find that the School Breakfast Program had the most effect for students from low-income-households.

Grantham-McGregor and Sally (1998) evaluated the impact of breakfast on cognitive function of malnourished and better nourished children. They found that cognitive function in undernourished children improved after they received breakfast but, cognitive function did not change in better nourished children. It demonstrated the potential impact of breakfast on the educational performance of malnourished children.

Mohanty (1998) in his study Universalisation of Education, had suggested the following measures for UEE:

- Provision of mid-day meals, reading writing materials and clothing.
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- Freedom for teachers to develop school curricula.
- Provision of compensatory pre-school education specially for tribals.
- Providing incentives to teachers for universal enrolment and retention.
- Provision of prizes for villages achieving universalisation of education.

Benbow and Russotto (1999) summarized the linkages between food assisted education (FAE) and household livelihood security. They made recommendations for addressing the quality of education through FAE projects.

Benbow and Russotto make the case for community involvement in FAE programs, to increase sustainability of the interventions and systematically improve the quality of education. They recommend that the CARE target the most food-insecure regions and communities and that micro nutritional and health interventions be selected that provide the most impact to the targeted population. Girls should be given particular emphasis in the design and implementation of FAE projects. Educational outcomes also must be given as much importance as nutrition and health outcomes.

Del Rosso and Joy (1999) in their study, School Feeding Programs: Improving Effectiveness and Increasing Benefits to Education, addressed the changing landscape of school feeding programs. For school feeding programs to be successful, the author contends that to improve effectiveness, school feeding programs must be designed as part of a “package of interventions” that address children's education, health and nutritional needs. Del Rosso provided an overview of the research base approaches to health and nutrition program and summarized the benefits of such interventions. In addition, Del Rosso provides seven steps for designing school feeding programs. These recommendations include building consensus on objectives, focusing on key target populations of high risk children, identifying funding sources, developing monitoring systems, and integrating school feeding programs with other synergistic interventions.

Laxmaiah et al (1999) conducted a research study on Impact of mid day meal program on educational and nutritional status of school children in Karnataka with an objective to assess 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 school performance. Comparison was made by multistage random sampling. A total of 2,694 children (who were attending the school in the MDM (MDM:1361) and Non-MDM (Non MDM:1333) areas from 60 schools were covered in the study. In each of the selected schools, school enrolment (percent enrolled to the total number of 6-11 years children in each village or catchment area of the school), attendance (Children attended >60% working days in previous year), retention (No. of students continued on the rolls for five years) and dropout rates (No. of children discontinued during previous five years). Nutritional status of children by anthropometry (height and weight) and clinical examinations (sub sample of children). Scholastic performance based on marks obtained by the children in annual examination in the preceding year (sub sample of children) were studied. The results indicated better enrolment (p<0.05) i.e. on an average, the number of children enrolled in schools with the MDM program was higher (72%) as compared to schools in Non-MDM areas (68%) (p<0.05), better attendance i.e. The percentage of children with better attendance (>60% of working days) was higher (97.8%) in MDM schools than in Non-MDM schools (95%) (p<.0.001), higher retention i.e. the proportion of students who were on roll to the number enrolled into first standard in 1988 for the next four years was better in MDM schools (80.2%) than in Non-MDM schools (77%) (p<0.05), reduced dropout rate (p<.001), a marginally higher scholastic performance i.e. the proportion of students, who secured grade ‘A’ was marginally higher in MDM schools (13.1%) as compared to Non-MDM schools (10.3%) (p>0.05). The authors further concluded that MDM program is associated with a better educational and nutritional status of school children in Karnataka.

Behrman, J., P. Sengupta and P.Todd (2000) analyzed the impact of school feeding program PROGRESA in Mexico on achievement test scores. They found that PROGRESA program did improve enrolment and attendance rates during the first year of implementation. However, the results showed that the school feeding and incentive program had no significant positive effect on achievement test scores.
District Institute of Education and Training (DIET), Bangalore (2000) conducted a report on mid-day meal scheme. It reveals that food prepared for five schools from Monday to Friday, costed Rs.68,682 per day and Rs.13.73 lakhs per month. The overall response of students and teachers indicated positive result. It was being appreciated. It resulted in better retention and participation of students in classrooms.

Dua (2000) conducted a study on school related variables and dropout and listed the following causes of dropout and their remedies:-

Inappropriate curriculum, difficult subjects and failure in subjects, distance of school from home, non-availability of basic facilities at school, inefficient teachers, faulty teaching methods, school time table, low achievement of students in school life and home work.

Remedies for dropout suggested by the study were: Mid-day meals facility, free text books and uniforms, scholarships and pre-primary education.

Harinarayan et al (2000) in their study, “Best Practices: Review of NGOs in the Use of Food Resources”, provides a review of best practices in the use of food resources. It consisted of extensive interviews with leading NGOs who work in food security. Key themes that emerged include the need for more participatory design, monitoring, and evaluation of food security projects, better targeting of food assistance, minimizing harm to local production and markets and developing sound strategies for transition and end of implementation.

Ravillion and Wodon (2000) attempted to determine whether providing incentives in the form of subsidies to increase school enrolment displaces the need for children to work. They explored the situation in Bangladesh through its Food For Education (FFE) program. In the FFE program, families received month food rations in exchange for sending their children to school. To receive the food rations, children had to maintain 85% attendance rate.

Ravillion and Wodon found that FFE was responsible for a small proportion of the increase in school enrolment rates, but not all. They concluded that parents substitute other uses of their children’s time.
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**Behrman et al (2001)** in a study of the PROGRESA program in Mexico analyzed its impact on school enrolment and attendance. The PROGRESA program had the goal of improving enrolment and attendance rates in schools through providing incentives for parents to send their children to school. The researchers found that attendance rates increased by 19 percent, dropout rates were reduced, and children were more likely to progress between grades on time.

**Duraisamy (2001)** studied the Effectiveness of Incentives on School Enrolment and Attainment in context of Tamil Nadu, and offers an ample evidence that government policies have significant effect on child school enrolment and grade attainment. Presence of public and private schools within the village and subsidies positively affect child schooling while distance to the nearest school and fees negatively affect child school enrolment and grade attainment at the primary level. Presence of public schools within the village is more beneficial to girls while subsidies are more beneficial to boys. Providing better primary schools within the village level would reduce the gender gap in the school enrolment and grade attainment. This provides good justification for more schools and greater government subsidies at the primary level.

At the secondary level, the household characteristics such as number of children, consumption expenditure per adult and area of land holding emerge as more powerful determinants of child schooling. The presence of private school within the village improves secondary school enrolment.

**Smucker and Schlossman (2001)** submitted Evaluation Report of the Enhanced Food Security II Program, USAID Haiti Mission. This report provides an exhaustive evaluation of the Title II Program in Haiti. The researchers evaluated food security projects implemented by CARE, CRS, and World Vision. The components of the program include school feeding, material and child health, food-for-work projects, social safety net projects, and income generating activities. In terms of the school feeding component, the researchers found that the school feeding programs did not have impact on educational performance. They identified the low quality of schooling as the biggest obstacle in Haiti’s education.
system and suggested that future food for education programs address quality issues more systematically.

Ahmed, Akhttar and Del Ninno (2002) evaluated the Food For Education (FFE) program in Bangladesh, which was started in 1993. The goals of the FFE program were to increase school enrolment, increase attendance, and prevent dropouts. The authors found that the program did meet those goals, and the increase in enrolment was greater for girls than boys. In addition, they found that the program targeted the most impoverished households, though they recommend that a significant number of non poor households participate in the program. They concluded that the biggest problem with the education system in Bangladesh was the low quality of education provided.

Bishnupada Sethi (2002) conducted a study in respect of Rayagada District of Orissa. In the study he compared the enrolment and retention of students before starting mid day meal program (when no meal was given) and after when the mid day meals were given. And, he concluded that mid day meal programme has made significant contribution in primary schools for enrolment, retention in various classes, reduction in dropout, helping to get more number of ST and girls children, completing class V in the primary schools.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) (2002) provides an overview to its new strategic approach to food assisted education. The strategy is based on six best practices in food assisted education programming: (1) Facilitating community based work (2) Increasing impact through school health interventions (3) Providing complementary inputs to address education quality (4) Targeting the food insecure (5) Creating an enabling environment and (6) Ensuring effective monitoring and evaluation systems.

Drake et al (2002) conducted a comprehensive survey across various countries, on the impact of provision of school meals. This survey indicates provision of school meals has positive impacts on anthropometric status, health, and cognitive development. However, it also indicates that the improvements in cognitive abilities to a large extent depend on the quality of schooling rather than
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food provided. The same study also points to some evidence from the donor agencies suggesting that school feeding programmes though seem to have a direct impact in increasing the attendance rates particularly of the girls in the short run but once the scheme is withdrawn, dropout rates are higher either due to poor schooling quality or the decline in need to educate the children arising from a lack of employment opportunities (and thereby lowering the intrinsic demand for education). These experiences are worth keeping in mind while designing a new programme on revamping an existing one to improve its efficiency.

Mohanti (2002) reported that National Programme for Nutritional Support to Primary Education has been evaluated in states of India. The findings state that it has promoted enrolment, attendance and retention of students in schools.

Ngay (2002) analyzed CARE USA’s new policy and discussed its implications for CARE’s basic and girls’ education program work. Ngay emphasized the importance to address health, nutrition and educational programs. The emphasis on educational quality is necessary to achieve the long term goals of higher literacy and numeracy skills. Ngay also stressed the need to target the most vulnerable and disenfranchised populations in FAE programs. Lastly, the report provides suggestions for monitoring and evaluation of FAE programs.

Rogers et al (2002) analyzed the impact of Title II program on enrolment, retention, attendance and achievement scores. They found that school feeding program increased the average rate of academic progress through primary school. However, the school feeding program did not have a significant effect on enrolment. Attendance rates increased, as did the student’s nutritional intake. The study also found that the programs reached a higher percentage of rural children than urban children.

Alasingaperumal (2003) reported that after the introduction of MM Scheme in Tamil Nadu, enrolment in Class-I has risen by 10 to 15% with girls entering school going up by about 25%. Further, the nutritional status of school going children has improved considerably. Children from poor families no longer suffer “Classroom hunger”. So, they are able to pay more attention to their studies.
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at school. Another significant improvement is the fact that pupils of all social backgrounds cheerfully sit together and share the same food.

The author further reported that this scheme is cost effective in terms, the cost (per pupil, per day) for MM is about Rs.1. This really very cheap, expenditure wise (0.5% of GDP-Gross Domestic Product). The benefit in terms of HRD (Human Resources Development) is considerable. The Government of India has a huge surplus stock of food grains (60 million tones), in its godowns. Hence, providing free food grains for the MM scheme will not be a big burden for the Government of India.

The Centre for Equity Studies, New Delhi (2003) had undertaken a study to assess the quality and scope of the mid-day meal programme across the country and to determine what improvements are required to fully realize its potential. The survey, which covered the three states of Chattisgarh, Rajasthan and Karnataka, was conducted between January and April 2003. Twenty seven villages were randomly selected in each sample state. Field surveys, that involved detailed interviews with teachers, parents and cooks in the 81 villages, focused on several qualitative and quantitative issues. The main findings of the report were:

a) Mid-day meals were regularly served in all the three sample states.

b) Facilities for the programme-cooking sheds, water supply, utensils and so on vary between different states and districts and are in many cases, unsatisfactory. However, the meals are usually ready by mid-day. Some poor households described the meal as “Festival Food”. Second helpings are usually allowed and the quantities seem adequate for the young children.

c) Boosting School Enrolment: The provision of mid day meal at school is associated with 50% reduction in the number of out-of-school girls. In all sample schools, Class-I enrolment rose by 15% between July 2001 and July 2002. This surge is driven mainly by impressive jumps in female enrolment in Chattisgarh (17%) and Rajasthan (29%). Provisional enrolment data for Chattisgarh and Rajasthan supplied by the education department also
suggests major leaps in female enrolment in 2002-2003: 19% and 18% respectively. There was a major improvement on school enrolment during the 1990, which was about 2%. A bulk of the increase was likely to be a reflection of the impact of mid day meals.

d) Ending Hunger-Many children go to school on an empty stomach and find it hard to concentrate in the classroom beyond a few hours. This invariably affects their performance. Providing them with meals puts an end to the phenomenon of ‘Classroom Hunger’.

e) Aiding the process of Socialization-Mid day meals contribute to socialization in a caste and class ridden society.

f) Promotes Gender Equality-Mid Day Meals promote gender equality in two ways. Since, they contribute to an increase in female enrolment over male enrolment; they reduce the gender gap in education. The system also creates employment opportunities for women.

Despite the advantages of the mid-day meal scheme, its detractors have advanced two arguments against it. It is often said that mid-day meals pose a health hazard. The findings of the survey provide a balanced assessment. Pupils do feel unwell occasionally after consuming a school meal—about 10% of the parents say this happened to their children at least once during the preceding 12 months. 90% of the children had no problem, and in most cases, the problems faced by the other 10% were not serious.

Another oft-heard complaint was that mid-day meals disrupt classroom activities, with teachers having to spend their time cooking instead of teaching. The survey found that cooks have been appointed in all the sample schools. It did not come across any school where the teachers doubled as chefs. Still, many of the teachers interviewed did spend a fair amount of time organizing and supervising mid day meals. Mid day meals could disrupt classroom processes when the infrastructure is inadequate.

Dreze and Goyal (2003) on the basis of a primary survey of schools in some parts of India, two years after Supreme Court ruling, found a beneficial
impact of the introduction of noon meals on child nutrition and school attendance, while fostering gender and social equity.

**Mishra and Behera (2003)** conducted a comparative study of mid-day meal programme in Orissa and Tamil Nadu with the objective

a) to study the impact of nutritional support to primary education programme (The Mid-Day meal Programme) on the growth of enrolment, attendance, retention and the reduction of dropout among children in primary schools in Orissa and Tamil Nadu.

b) Factors responsible for the success or failure of the scheme in both the states.

c) The weaknesses of the programme arising out of state-specific peculiarities.

d) Whether there is any need to downsize or scrap the programme altogether.

The study revealed that between Pre-MD period (1989-90 to 1994-95) and Post-MD period (1995-96 to 1998-99), there was an improvement in average annual growth rate of enrolment, percentage point increase in attendance and retention rate and percentage point decline in dropout rate in post MDM period in Orissa compared to Tamil Nadu, where all the parametric functions of education were on the favourable side due to long existence of the programme (since 1956). In educational development realized through mid day meals programme, several socio cultural, administrative, managerial and financial factors affected the scheme’s effectiveness in both states. It is wide accepted that it would be unwise to scrap the national programme altogether as suggested by certain sector. However, downsizing the programme through appropriate organizational and operational measures is being considered. There is also a strong belief that though different preschool nutritional programmes can be merged among themselves, there is very little room for merging them with mid day meals programme. The preschool and primary school nutritional programmes are to continue as separate programmes for the benefit of the children.
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Morley and Coady (2003) reviewed the extensive literature on social safety nets, including Food Assisted Education. They highlighted case studies in Mexico, Nicaragua, Bangladesh and Brazil and highlighted lessons learned. Morley and Coady explored the cost effectiveness of such programs and concluded that food assisted education programs have advantage due to the dual nature of their work. FAE programs work concurrently to reduce poverty and improve educational outcomes.

World Food Programme (2003) in Global School Feeding Report, reported that World Food Programme (WFP) uses Food for Education to improve child welfare around the world. Over the last year, school feeding programs have become a pathway to the implementation of other health and education programs. The Global School Feeding Report indicates how the WFP adjusts and adapts to an ever changing environment. The report covers a wide variety of activities, including monitoring and evaluation mechanisms as well as sound exist strategies.

USAID’s (2003) Concept Plan for its Strategic Plan for 2004-08, outlines the newly adopted strategic plan for the office of Food For Peace (FFP). The new strategy will focus on reducing food insecurity in vulnerable regions during both emergency and non-emergency situations. Several trends are noted as causing the need for strategic reform such as the prevalence of disasters, the HIV/AIDS epidemic, the growth of the urban poor, and the decline in international food aid from developed nations.

Due to this changing environment, FFP developed a new conceptual framework with a greater focus on reducing food insecurity through reducing the vulnerability and risk with which many communities live.

National Advisory Council (NAC) (2004) proposed some essential quality norms for mid day meal programme as :

- Nutritious hot cooked meal: Nutritious cooked meal should be provided throughout the year. The menu should offer variety to sustain the interest of children and to enhance the nutritional value of the meal.
Micronutrient Supplementation: All mid day meal programmes should include a “micro nutrient supplementation” component (as well as mass deworming if needed), to address common micronutrient deficiencies among children.

Adequate Manpower: Every school should have trained staff to provide mid day meal with no interference to the normal school routine. Each school should have at least a cook and a helper. All cooks should undergo training on nutrition, hygiene, maintenance of accounts and other essential skills.

Drinking Water: Each school should have a reliable supply of clean drinking water within the premises.

Kitchen and Storage: Each School should have adequate infrastructure for mid day meals including a kitchen and a separate storage space.

Logistics Management: Reliable arrangements for timely delivery of grain and other supplies should be in place everywhere.

Supervision and Monitoring: Effective arrangements should be made for close supervision and monitoring of mid day meal programme, and prompt action in the event of lapses such as food poisoning, disruption in the food supply, social discrimination etc.

Social Equity: All cooking staff should be women and preference should be given to dalits. There should be no discrimination in the mid day meal process based on the social background of children or cooking staff.

School health programme: The mid day meal programme should be linked with an active school health programme.

Nisha (2004) investigated the Mid Day Meal Scheme in Primary Schools of Bathinda district. The study was conducted on a sample of 100 students (50 Boys + 50 Girls), 60 teachers and parents of 50 students of Government elementary schools of Bathinda District. The investigator found that
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- In Bathinda district only 31% schools are providing mid day meals to pupils.

- The funds for mid day meals are provided by Director of Public Instructions (DPI) to the Deputy Commissioner (DC) who gives these funds to District Education Officer (DEO) from whom Block Education Officer (BEO) get these funds for the Pendu Sikhya Vikas Committee (PASWAK) from whom different primary schools receive these funds.

- There is much difficulty for the teachers to distribute meal, to prepare records of quantity and type of meal distributed. Their problems are also for keeping records of funds received and payments made to meal contractors. Their class work is neglected by paying attention to these extra activities.

- Views of the teachers and students about mid day meal scheme are different because where teacher think providing meal to students is an extra burden on them, students are comparatively happy about this scheme, because students get relief from some of the teaching periods because their teachers are engaged in meal managing activities, in this way studies of students are hampered to the great extent.

- There is no difference in views of boys and girls about the mid day meal scheme because all students get mid day meal and also relieved from dryness of teaching of teachers for some time.

- The parents have positive views regarding this scheme.

- The students are attracted to schools due to this scheme. The students attend the schools regularly that leads to improvement in their achievement.

Parikh and Yasmeen (2004) reported that the scheme, first introduced in the southern state of Tamil Nadu way back in 1956, has proved remarkably successful in improving school enrolment in that state. Though partially launched in 1956, the mid day meal programme was given full shape and form by the state’s actor turned Chief Minister the late M.G. Ramachandran in 1982. Under the Tamil
Nadu government’s Nutritious Meal Programme (NMP), 7.8 million children are provided a daily cooked meal in 39,036 rural and 2,082 urban centres. In addition, 19,366 ICDS (Integrated Child Development Scheme)-a Central Government Initiative-sponsored child welfare centres also provide noon meals. The state government’s budgetary provision for NMP for the year 2003-04 was a relatively sizeable Rs.659.39 crore (2.47% of its annual budgetary outlay). Against this modest cost, the benefits has been a dramatic increase in school enrolment in the state in primary schools, it has shot up 31 percent from 5.04 million in 1985-86 to 6.59 million in 2002-03. Moreover, in middle schools the dropouts have decreased from 24 to 13.85 percent during the same period.

The positive feedback from schools in the state indicates that the scheme has more than fulfilled its main objectives of combating malnutrition among children, increasing literacy, serving as an incentive for enhancing enrolment and retention of students in primary and middle schools. The authors also reported that approximately Rs.9,000 crore per year is required to implement the free mid-day meal scheme in all government and aided schools countrywide. This seems too large to be affordable, but in reality it’s a small price to pay to reap a potentially monumental socioeconomic benefit.

Amartya Sen’s Pratichi Trust (2005) conducted a study in Birbhum District, entitled, “Cooked Mid Day Meal Programme in West Bengal” and reported:

- Mid-Day Meal has made positive intervention in universalisation of primary education by increasing enrolment, attendance of the children. The increase has been more marked with respect to girls, SC and ST students.
- It is a positive intervention in eliminating class room hunger.
- Cooked mid day meal has averted severe under nourishment among many children, particularly those who are socially and economically backward.
- It has narrowed social distances.
- It has curbed teacher absenteeism.
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Anuradha, Noronha and Samson (2005) conducted a survey on Mid Day Meal Scheme in 21 MCD schools in Delhi, the survey found out that:

- School children in all the schools are getting cooked food.
- 53% of the parents said they were happy with the quality of meal.
- Impact on attendance likely to be more on girls, who come without breakfast.
- Non availability of drinking water is a problem and some children leave the school to drink water at home and do not return back.
- There is need to orient teachers about mid day meal as they are instrumental in bringing discipline, order and also inculcate good habits among children.
- 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 health status.

Farzana Afridi (2005) compared Financial and Institutional Organization of Mid Day Programmes in two states-Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh. In the context of Madhya Pradesh, the report argues that:

- The implementation of the programme is improving, but there is a lot that needs to be done, especially regarding quality of food.
- The new initiative of “Suruchi Bhojan” is more attractive and nutritious as it provides higher calories in comparison with the earlier ‘Daliya’ programme.
- Parents are more satisfied with ‘Suruchi Bhojan’ programme (80%) as compared to Daliya programme (60%). Only 20% preferred distribution of dry ration to the Suruchi Bhojan programme.
- Parent Teacher Associations needed to be strengthened.
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In the context of Karnataka, the report argues:

• Akshar Dasoha, the mid day meal programme has been more planned and better managed.

• Iron folic tablets as well as deworming tablets have been regularly provided.

• Good community participation and School Development and Managing Committees are functioning well.

• Meals are provided regularly and quality of meals is satisfactory.

Jain and Shah (2005) conducted a survey in 70 most backward villages of Madhya Pradesh, the main findings of the survey are:-

• 90% of the teachers and cooks said that the meal is provided regularly.

• 96% of the parents felt that the scheme should continue. They also felt that it has ended classroom hunger.

• 63% of the parents felt that meal has positively affected the learning abilities of school children and 74% of the teachers said that it has positively affected the students.

• Overall there was a 15% increase in enrolment. Moreover the increase was marked in the case of SC and ST children (43%). The rise in enrolment of girls was 38% out of this the increase in enrolment of SC and ST girls was 41%.

• While 60% of the parents felt that the meal was good or very good, only 10% felt that the meal was not satisfactory. However, there were inter-regional variations. In Tika Marg, 45% of the parents felt that the meal was bad.

• The report also points out there is huge improvement in the quality of meal.

Julia Blue, (2005) assessed the impact of mid day meal on tribal communities and subsistence farmers in rural Udaipur with following results:-

• Cooked Mid Day Meal had become a permanent part of the daily routine of rural primary schools in Udaipur.
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- There were efforts in introducing variety of menus.
- Meals were helping nutritional needs of poor children.
- Enrolment and attendance had increased.
  
  Mathur et al (2005) analyzed Mid Day Meal Programme in Rajasthan and found:
  
  - Introduction of menu based mid day meal has positively impacted enrolment and daily attendance of children.
  - 75% teachers said that mid-day meal has boosted enrolment.
  - 85% teachers said that mid-day meal has enhanced school attendance.
  
  - Cooked mid day meal has reduced class room hunger especially those belonging to underprivileged sections.
  
  - Cooked mid day meal has also contributed to the cause of social equity as children, cutting across caste and class lines sit together to share a common meal.
  
  - 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.
  
  - 67% of the parents interviewed, felt that the quality of mid day meal is satisfactory.
  
  - 85% parents felt that the scheme should continue.
  
  Naik (2005) submitted a report on Akshara Dasoha Scheme of Karnataka, which revealed:
  
  - Sharp rise in enrolment particularly in the rural areas.
  
  - The programme has made positive impact on teacher absenteeism in schools.
  
  - Mid day meal is served regularly.
  
  - Schools supplied de-worming tablets and vitamins and iron tablets.
  
  - No discrimination was found with respect to serving and eating food on the basis of caste etc.
  
  - 72% of the parents felt that their children had gained weight because of mid day meals.
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• 59% of the parents felt that their children suffered less from common ailments like cold and cough.
• More than 90% of the parents were satisfied with the scheme.
• 95.5% of the children felt that the food was tasty and 90% said that drinking water was available.
• 95% of the children felt that their concentration had improved.

National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) (2005) submitted a report entitled Learning Achievement of students at the end of class-V which inferred that children covered under mid day meal programme have higher achievement level than those who were not covered under it. It further, stated that MDM is a better managed programme than many other schemes.

Brinda Viswanathan, (2006) conducted a study entitled Access to Nutritious Meal Programmes by using evidence from 1999-2000 NSS data, to look at the access to meal programmes across states of India in both rural and urban sectors. The analysis was carried out across age groups of children, their economic status and across different social and occupational groups. Broad comparisons were drawn on the health status and educational attainment of children in regions where such schemes are better functioning to those where it was not. The results obtained collaborate with actual ground level realities as far as the mid-day meal programme is concerned. Only a few states in India have the scheme in place, with Tamil Nadu standing out in access rates, with better targeting in rural than in urban areas and among the vulnerable including girl children. More importantly, the benefits of the presence of meal programmes do reflect on the educational attainment signifying that for the vulnerable sections a scheme like this can serve its purpose if effectively targeted. In urban areas, though the educational attainment is better, even among those not accessing the scheme but still the gap persists between the access groups and considerably affects the performance of girl children. Thus, there is scope for considerable improvement and the policymakers need to take notice of this. The need for the mid day meal scheme has so far been emphasized mainly to improve school attendance but the
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nutritional status of the children is also impacted by the intake of nutritious meals regularly.

The authors clearly highlighted better health and educational achievements among children in states where such schemes are in existence and it is imperative that the policymakers take note of these and ensure the success of the schemes once in place.

Centre for Consumer Action Research & Training (CUTS) (2006) reported about a study entitled Mid Day Meal- A success story of Chittorgarh district of Rajasthan. That

- Mid day meal scheme had a positive impact on enrollment of children, particularly of girls, at the elementary level
- Scheme also helped to improve both the quality of education and health of students, besides helping the families to tide over the problems of hunger and malnutrition
- Students and parents were quite satisfied with the quality and quantity of the meals served.
- Quality of meal rated to be average and above average

Monitoring Report of Panjab University on SSA for Punjab State (2006) for the period 1st April 2006 to 30th September 2006 which was conducted in the districts of Patiala, Ferozepur, Mansa and Mohali revealed that

- Hot cooked food was being served in the districts almost regularly after this scheme was resumed in 2006. Only a few instances of gaps (2,7,10) days were reported by a few schools which was due to local problems at school level only and later solved.
- The schools were managing cooks either through self-help groups or through contractors.

Reetika Khera (2006) in a study entitled Mid Day Meal in Primary Schools: Achievement and Challenges, found that mid day meal scheme has large socialization and educational benefits. But, still a lot to be achieved as far as the quality of the mid day meal is concerned. In many places, it is seen that it is the
same menu that is given every day (usually roti/rice and a watery dal/sambhar) with no vegetables, eggs, fruits and so on.

V.A., Gangadharan (2006) conducted a study entitled Noon Meal Scheme in Kerala and found

- The physical facilities for MDMS are available only in 50% schools; 94% schools depend on firewood for cooking; separate building for kitchen outside class rooms are rare; adequate space is not there in 50% schools. School varandha is the main venue for serving food.
- The Government grant is far less than the total expenditure in many schools. The average annual financial deficiency in schools is around 15%.
- Schools with less number of students have higher per day students expenditure.
- The Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) have yet to show active interest in the management of the programme.
- The average MDMS enrolment rate is between 85 to 95 percent.
- There is demand that the menu should be improved.

Workshop on Mid Day Meal Scheme (April 2006) on Convention on Children’s Right to Food, provides an overview of the mid day meal scheme running in the country. It is explored that

- Due to mid day meal the enrolment has improved overall and greater impact has been seen on the enrolment of girls.
  - Tamilnadu with the longest history of universal mid day meal, has similar enrolment rates for boys and girls.
  - Proportion of ‘Out of School’ children (9.3%) in Tamilnadu much below national average (24%) below neighbouring Andhra Pradesh (23%) and Karnataka (20%).
- Opinion surveys indicate that attendance is greater and classroom performance is improved.
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- The budgetary allocations for mid day meal in most states are inadequate to provide a wholesome mid day meal to all primary school children.

- Infrastructure has been one of the key areas of lacking in the mid day meal programme. Kitchen sheds are mostly absent and cooking utensils are not adequate. Most children bring their own plates from home. Many poor students eat from old newspapers or polythene bags, which are unhygienic. The lack of proper cooking sheds often leads to unhygienic cooking of food in the open. Open air cooking near the school is not fire safe.

- The appointment and payment of cooks is another key area for intervention. In most of the areas cooks are underpaid and have no job-security. The payment for the cooks is often delayed by long periods causing tremendous hardship to the cooks.

- Discrimination against Dalits: Large scale practice of untouchability in the mid day meal programme is observed. The most frequent is the non appointment of Dalits as cooks. Inspite of SC directives to give preference to Dalits in appointment as cooks, states have not come up with any clear cut guidelines to ensure that Dalit women get appointed as cooks. The practice of untouchability also exists, in the form of separate sitting for Dalit and non-Dalit children while eating.

- There are significant leakages in the mid day meal programme. They include the inflation of attendance by teachers. Such inflation is targeted at receiving more ration than due; There are leakages in terms of poor quantities from the supply points as well as at the local level.

- Quality of food is affected by the lower budget allocations as well as poor quality of grain supplied by the FCI.

Centre for Consumer Action Research and Training (CUTS) Jaipur in partnership with the World Bank (2007) conducted a field research entitled Participatory Expenditure Tracking Survey for measuring effectiveness of Mid Day Meal Scheme in Rajasthan and found that.
Cooked mid day meals have become a permanent part of the daily routine of rural as well as urban primary government schools of Chittorgarh district. The parents and students are mostly happy with the implementation of the scheme. The government is continuing to increase both the funding and the quality requirements for the mid day meal scheme with a trend replacing more nutritious and appetizing menus.

Since a large part of the child population below the age of 14 years is deprived of even primary education level. Though mid day meal scheme would prove a milestone towards achieving the goal of universal education for all as targeted under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), but looking to the slow progress in this direction more concentrated efforts are needed with the private public participation in the process.

The Local Governments are constitutionally bound to be responsible for education and related activities. Ways should be found to enthuse local governments to take on these responsibilities and be accountable to citizens. In the current set-up local governments are completely missing in action.

Deodhar et al (2007) conducted a study entitled Mid Day Meal Scheme: Understanding Critical Issues with Reference to Ahmadabad city and found that the scheme is wanting on the grounds of nutrition and food safety. The weekly menu shows a variety of meals offered, however, the condiments and seasonings being very similar each day. The study also indicates that in terms of colorific and nutritive intake, proportionate amounts of protein and iodine are not being provided through the meals. Calcium requirements are more than met by the mid day meal. Proportionate requirements of fat and iron are also met by the meals. However, it must be borne in mind that mid day meal scheme is mandated to provide a minimum of 300 calories i.e. minimum of about 15% of the daily requirement of calories. There is no guarantee that meals will get their rest of the 85% of calories at home, and that their out-of school meals will have any significant amounts of nutrition. Hence, mid day meal scheme may want to provide much more than proportionate requirements of nutrition. The study also
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suggested some of the changes like provision of nutrition bars (or perhaps a local version like Chikki) and fruits like banana could be considered as one of the menus on a couple of days, public private partnership for supplying the ready to eat food, would go a long way in making this scheme a success.

K. Sidhu (2007) conducted a Study of the Attitude of Parents, Teachers and Children towards mid day meal scheme in Ropar District of Punjab. The study was conducted on 50 parents, 50 teachers and 50 students selected randomly from different schools of Ropar District. The results revealed:-

- The parents have positive attitude towards mid day meals. They are of the opinion that it is very useful and essential for the proper growth and development of the children and it must be continued.

- The teachers have positive attitude towards mid day meals. They are of the opinion that it is very useful for nutritional development of children and it must be continued.

- The children really like the food they get in school and want variety in food and want that it must be continued.

- The parents want that mid day meals should be served regularly in schools.

- Teachers and parents both agree with the usefulness of the scheme.

- Parents, teachers and children are of the view that there should be variety in the food.

- The parents of different economic status are in favour of this scheme.

- Though teachers have positive attitude towards this scheme, some of them feel few changes are required for the proper success of this scheme such as proper kitchens, and stores for cooking and storing food.

- Children are satisfied with the quantity of food served in schools.

- Parents and teachers feel that scheme is very beneficial for social interaction and in developing a feeling of brotherhood among children.
Parents, teachers and children all have positive attitude towards this scheme and want that it should be served regularly in schools and should be extended to more children.

Nick Robinson, (2007) submitted a report on the implementation of the mid day meal scheme in four districts of Madhya Pradesh and found that throughout Madhya Pradesh teachers, parents, administrators and community members all testified that mid day meal scheme increased attendance and the greatest effect in attendance seemed to be in the rural areas. He also recommended that provision of adequate staff to organize meals, Guarantee every cook a minimum salary, Creation of district level vigilance committees for receiving complaints about the mid day meal scheme, Set up of a social audit to present data about the mid day meal and the education system in the community, Improved infrastructure facilities and supplies and increasing amount of money given per student for the mid day meals, can help in making this scheme more effective.

Sunita Chug, (2007) studied Best Practices in the Implementation of Mid Day Meal Programme in Punjab (in five blocks of four districts SAS Nagar, (Mohali), Roop Nagar (Ropar), Jalandhar and Amritsar) and reported that

- The schools visited were having varying enrolments ranging from 71 to 303 in the primary sections. Number of teachers also varied from 1 to 15 except for two schools, the remaining schools did not have sufficient number of teachers.

- In most of the schools 80 to 85% children were attending school on the day of visit except for two schools in which only around 68 to 73% children were present. In one of the school around 95% children were attending schools and all the girls enrolled come to school.

- In all the schools, cooked mid day meal is provided on daily basis and the teachers said that the provision of meals was never interrupted inspite of the delay in the delivery of funds. Teachers 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.
In all the schools a cook was hired to prepare the mid day meals. The cooks manage the cooking and washing of utensils. The food was served by the cooks under the supervision of the teachers responsible for mid day meal.

Bags of wheat/rice were generally stored in a corner of one of the kitchen or store room.

The meals were cooked over wood fire either in the open area or in kitchens in most of the schools while in some of the schools, the food was found to be cooked on gas cylinder.

Although an amount of Rs. 60,000 has been sanctioned for building the kitchen sheds, only some schools had built these sheds. The head teachers found this amount to be insufficient for building the kitchen sheds.

Teachers and cooks in all the schools said that wheat and rice was delivered on time but funding was often late.

Teachers also 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 quantity of meal prepared. They were also responsible to supply all the ingredients necessary for the preparation of meal. Teachers also need to buy grocery items and vegetables. They also reported that this responsibility has impact on their teaching time as it certainly took time away from their teaching.

The cooks reported that it took them about three to four hours to prepare the school meals depending on the number of children enrolled in primary sections. They were also expected to provide their own cooking fuel if the food is cooked with fire wood. They complained of their meager salaries considering the time they spend for cooking and washing utensils.

Funding for the school meals was provided through the Block Education Officer or Cluster Co-ordinator. Schools are supposed to be paid in advance and the amount to be adjusted based on the actual attendance of students. However, in many cases they are not paid on time resulting into
taking loans from stores and the cooks also do not receive their salaries on time.

_Uttar Pradesh Voluntary Action Network (UPVAN) (2007)_ conducted a study in 80 primary schools spread across 16 development blocks of eight districts. The study reported that almost 38 percent of the interviewed guardians were convinced that the food was of a poor quality, while another 22 percent felt it was average. Only 29 percent of the respondents thought that the food was good. Interestingly when the same questions were put to the gram panchayat members, 43 percent of them labelled the food bad.

_Vikas Samvad, (2007)_ reported about the Implementation of the Mid Day Meal in 4 districts (Bhopal, Seoni, Barwani & Sheopur) of Madhya Pradesh that

- Mid day meal increased attendance in rural areas than urban areas
- Mid day meal shackled because of corruption, absence of teachers, non-availability of food and no arrangement of water in many schools
- Loss of teaching time due to mid day meal.

_Directorate of Elementary and Mass-Education Meghalaya, Shillong (2008)_ reported under National Programme of Mid Day Meal in Schools (MDMS), that mid day meal scheme has increased enrolment in schools. In 2007-08, the enrolment was 627596 in both the primary schools and EGS centres and in the year 2008-09, it has increased to 737413. There are reports from different parts of the state that more children are attracted to school with the introduction of cooked mid day meal scheme. As such attendance also has increased in schools. Dropout rate has come down considerably from 33.67% to 24.0%. Mid Day Meal programme also helps the poor families by lessening their tensions to send their children to school where they do not have to worry about the food of the children during school hours. Mid Day Meal programme also enhances the learning capacity of children as nutritious food is served everyday. The only problem that is being faced is the lack of pucca kitchen sheds.

_Dipa Sinha, (2008)_ in association with Government of Andhra Pradesh conducted a social audit of mid-day meal scheme in Andhra Pradesh. This social
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Audit was conducted in the five districts of the state. Andhra Pradesh is one of the states that immediately responded to the order of Supreme Court by introducing cooked mid day meals in all government and government-aided primary schools and even extended this scheme to children enrolled under the Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Alternative and Innovative Education (AIE) centres. About 55 lakh children in primary schools are beneficiaries of the mid day meal programme in Andhra Pradesh and Rs.240 crores were allocated by the State towards the MDMS in 2006-07. The investigator found that-

- Cooked Mid day meal was served regularly in all the schools.
- It was encouraging to find people in the community coming forward to volunteer time and energy to be part of this process. It was also heartening to see that the mid day meal scheme is one of the few programmes of the government which seems to be reaching even the remotest of villages.
- ‘Scale of Corruption’ in mid day meal scheme is relatively low, at least compared to other rural development schemes.
- This scheme contributed to keeping children from being hungry while in school and made school more attractive. There was however serious concerns related to quality and quantity of the meal in almost all the schools, where there is a lot of scope for improvement.

The major problems linked with the scheme were found to be exaggeration attendance rates, improper maintenance of accounts related to rice and other cooking costs, poor infrastructure facilities, lack of varied menu, poor quality of food etc. There were also problems related to the selection of cooking agency, delay in payment and so on.

**Rajshri Jayaraman, (2008)** conducted a study entitled Impact of school lunches on school enrolment: Evidence from an exogenous policy change in India to evaluate the impact of school lunches on class-1 enrolment in India. The estimates suggest that the provision of a warm school lunch is associated with an approximately 8% increase in class-1 enrolment, while the aggregate trends shows the increase in enrolment associated with school lunches is 25%.
The size of the effect is impressive even if we take the conservative 8% estimate at face value and compare it to the point estimates of other potential schooling inputs, then it would seem that introducing a school lunch is associated with a similar increase in enrolment as adding an additional teacher. The investigator further added that the results pertaining to aggregate class-I enrolment suggest that school lunches may be a useful policy instrument towards attaining universal primary school attainment. The distributional impact of school lunches suggests for the elimination of gender disparity in all levels of education by 2015. The estimates suggest that overall class-I enrolment increases by the same proportion for girls and boys. Developing a better understanding of the schooling choice problem would help demystify gender and caste differences in response to schooling inputs, and combining this with a richer model of the schooling production function would help us better grasp precisely which policy instruments are most effective in bridging social gaps in enrolment.

R.V. Baru, (2008) found that the mid day meal scheme has made significant contributions to reducing classroom hunger and increasing school attendance especially of girl children. It has also advanced social equity by providing an opportunity for children from different castes and religions to eat together, and by creating employment opportunities for the poor and lower caste women in some states. This evidence makes a strong case for continuing and adequately resourcing the programme. However, there is wide variation in the implementation and nutritional quality of the mid day meal schemes across the states. He also reported that this programme has reduced the chronic hunger in children and it effects the health and educational status of the students.

Shambhu Ghatak, (2008) studied Performance of the Mid Day Meal Scheme in the country and found that rice and wheat allocations for MDMS have declined in between 2001-2002 and 2006-07. Rice allocation has declined from to 18.67 lakh tonnes in 2001-02 to 17.17 lakh tonnes in 2006-07. Wheat allocation has declined from 9.96 lakh tonnes in 2001-02 to 4.17 lakh tonnes in 2006-07. Rice offtake as a percentage of rice allocation has declined from 72% in 2001-02 to 61% in 2006-07. Wheat offtake as a percentage of wheat allocation has declined
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from 73% in 2001-02 to 68% in 2006-07. Allocation of foodgrains for the MDMS had steadily declined from 28.63 lakh tonnes in 2001-02 to 21.34 lakh tonnes in 2006-07 which appears dismal. If the MDMS is supposed to be responsible for ensuring enrolment, attendance and retention in schools, then a declining allocation for the MDMS is expected to adversely affect student’s participation in primary education under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA).

Study of the Mid Day Meal Programme in Khurda, Orissa (Nov. 2008) revealed that

- Mid day meal had positive impact on the activeness and performance of the students
- Enrolment and attendance has increased
- Socialization was better and new employment opportunities were generated in case of cooked meal for underprivileged sections.
- Dispossession of teaching time was observed in the schools.
- Lack of infrastructure i.e cooking sheds
- Irregularity of inspections by Government officials

Manju Narula, (Jan 2009) conducted a case study of Jharkhand entitled National Programme of Nutritional Support in Government Primary and Upper Primary Schools and found that

- In Jharkhand, the nutritional programme has been well received and is successful endeavour. The basic aim of the state for mid day meal is to prevent malnutrition that was widely prevalent (59%) among the growing children. (It not only gives rise to morbidity and mortality, but it also prevents a child from developing into healthy adult). In addition the scheme helps in bringing all the children in the purview education thus serving the purpose of national goal of universalization of elementary education.
- At the system level initiatives have been taken for the regular and timely supply of food grains. Food grains are provided timely and the utilization
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by the school is also done efficiently. Funds are released on time. Various structures are involved in managing the mid day meal programme like Government of India, Government of Jharkhand Food Corporation of India authorities at district, block level, teachers and community. Therefore, Managerial problems are quite natural, even though in all the schools the programme is going on without break. This is a great achievement for the Central as well as for State Government.

- The programme has been enthusiastically accepted by the community in the state. More girls have started coming to schools. Their attendance and retention has increased over the years. The availability of teachers has improved. It has worked as incentive especially in the areas with food insecurity and hunger and endemic poverty and expected to complement the other initiatives for universalization of elementary education. No discrimination was observed in serving of the food between communities and gender. The coverage is very large.

- Children’s involvement in the form of ‘Bal Sadan’ is appreciative. They learn many managerial skills during monitoring the implementation of programme.

- Involvement of the community in the name of Sanyojikas who cook as well as monitor the quality of food regularly and with interest is really significant.

State Institute of Educational Research and Training (SIERT) Udaipur, Rajasthan (Feb 2009) submitted First Quarterly Evaluation and Assessment Report (Phase-I, Aug to Nov. 2008) of Mid Day Meal Scheme in Rajasthan, on the basis of a research study which was conducted in 1920 schools of 60 Panchayat Samitis belonging to all the 32 districts of Rajasthan from each district, 60 schools where MDM is being implemented were selected. Of these 20 were upper primary schools and 20 were primary schools, 10 were secondary and 10 were senior secondary. Data was collected by the field investigators by using questionnaires and observation schedule, and it was found
The overall enrolment of students has been decreasing year wise since session 2003-04. The overall decrease in enrolment from year 2003 to 2008 was 8.3%. On an average there has been a downfall by 3000 students per class from the session 2003-04 to 2007-08.

In most districts the enrolment has decreased over the years (2003-08). The reason may be mushrooming growth of private schools and the parents attraction towards sending their children to these schools.

The retention of students from session 2003-08 was almost 85% to 87% each year.

The classwise retention (I-V) has increased by almost 7%, 8% each year from 2003-08.

The average attendance of students from Class I-V each year (2003-08) has been 76% to 79%. As we move from Class I-V the average attendance of students has increased in each session by 5%-8%.

Districtwise it was observed that in schools of Karoli, Chittor, Bhilwara and Banswara districts, average daily attendance is more than 83% while Alwar and Jhalawar have very low percentage (62% to 69%) of daily attendance.

Most of the students (90-91%) were of the opinion that they attended school and continued to be in school due to mid day meal being served in schools. This shows that mid day meal is serving its purpose although only 69% of them said that they were enrolled in school due to mid day meal. Heads, Parents, SMC members believe that mid day meal increase retention, enrolment and attendance of students.

Mid Day Meal develops social equity among children. All students sit together for eating meal in almost all schools. Though in only 13% schools, students were found to be sitting in rows to have mid day meal.

_Institute of Development Studies on SSA and Mid Day Meal (March, 2009)_ submitted First Half Yearly Monitoring Report of Rajasthan State (covering...
four districts Ajmer, Baran, Bikaner, Chittorgarh), which inferred that the mid day meal was available in all schools barring one or two, where there was a temporary delay in getting supplies or the cook. A majority of children are reported to be receiving meals. Meals are cooked by appointed cooks in Ajmer and Bikaner. In Baran, some self help groups and contractors and NGOs are supplying cooked food. There was no mismatch between school records and our observations on the question of who cooks meal 23% cooks belonged to SC and ST categories. Pucca sheds for cooking were available in majority of schools. Grain is kept safely in 93% schools. Water for cooking purposes is easily available in 85% schools. Pots of cooking are available in 98% schools. Wood is used as fuel in 88% schools. Quality of mid day meal is described as good in 65% schools. Nutritional elements are described as good in 56% schools. Washing hands before meals is practiced in 75% schools. Teachers monitor mid day meal daily in 83% schools, and parents monitor in 51% schools. Teachers report that the programme is inspected regularly in 71% schools. DPO’s visit 33% schools, mid day meal in charge 35%, BRC 78%, CRC 89%, VEC 84% and other officers 33%. Parent’s response is more or less on the same lines.

- Perceptions regarding the impact of the mid day meal scheme on children’s enrolment and attendance however are mixed. It is evident in backward area, the mid day meal has had an impact on enrolment and attendance of children.

- This report had also recommended some points for effective implementation of this scheme i.e.
  - The participation of village community in the MDMS needs to be encouraged. The consequences of poor nutrition on children also need to be discussed with the parents.
  - There should be regular monitoring of the distribution of supplements to children in schools.
  - The infrastructure facilities for the mid day meals needs to be enhanced.
  - To assess the impact of mid day meal baseline data of enrolment, attendance and nutrition should be provided to MI.
State Institute of Educational Research and Training (SIERT)
Udaipur, Rajasthan (May 14, 2009) submitted Third Quarterly Evaluation Report (Phase-III), of Mid Day Meal Scheme in Rajasthan, which reports that the classwise retention of students of I-V has increased by almost 13-15% from 2003-07, since the launch of the project in 2002. Jaisalmer district has shown a continuous rise in student enrolment from 2003 to 2008 Udaipur, Sikar and Jalore districts have also recorded a daily attendance of more than 80%. According to enrolment figure provided by DPEP for year 2006-07, a total of 1,24,77,410 students were studying in class I-V in Government, Government aided and private schools. Out of this, a total dropout of 1,18,699 students was reported for the same year. The increase in retention has been about 6% during academic session 2003-08. Mid day meal is being provided to students studying in 81,436 Government and Government aided schools, Earlier the benefit could be availed only by students of class I-V, but, in October 2007, the centre announced to enhance the programme upto class-VIII in educationally backward blocks and funded it from its own budget. The programme that was launched with a single receipe of Ghooghari/Dalia, Today has undergone a radical change with weekly menu with provision for seasonal fruits once a week along with the meal.

Conference of State Education Secretaries (August, 2009) on Mid Day Meal Scheme reported that during the year 2008-09 the enrolment versus beneficiary is like 21 states and UT’s are in between 85-100% and the national average is 78%. Social group wise status of children availing mid day meal is 20% SC students, 12% ST, 11% minority and 24% others and social group wise status of cooks preparing mid day meal is, minority (7%) and other (22%), OBC (35%), SC (16%) and ST’s (8%), 85% of the cooks are women. Regarding utilitzation of foodgrains 20 States/UT’s are between 70% to 100% while the national average is 76%.

2nd Meeting of National Steering-cum-Monitoring Committee, New Delhi (Oct. 2009) reported that Mid Day meal scheme covered a total 11.19 Crore children all over India. (8.33 core children at primary stage and 2.86 core children at upper primary stage) during 2008-09 and is expected to cover a total 11.77 crore
children (8.41 crore at primary stage and 3.36 crore children at upper primary stage) during 2009-10. At this meeting, findings of Monitoring Institutes, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India were also reported like.

- Hot cooked meal is being served almost regularly in all schools except very minor disruption.
- Enrolment and attendance increased especially of girls.
- Promoted social and gender equity among children.
- Most of the cooks engaged are from SC/STs, Women and other underprivileged sections.
- Developed good habits like washing hands, sense of hygiene and cleanliness.
- Community mobilization is visible.

Some of the issues of concern were:

- Food served was not sufficient particularly in tribal schools.
- Community participation was less and needs strengthening.
- The payment of remuneration to the cook was paid after a delay of about two to six months by the SMC in most of the schools.
- Maximum schools do not have the storage facility, kitchen facility, updation of mid day meal register, provision of utensils to the children, provision of cooking utensils.
- Health cards have not been maintained in any of the sampled schools.
- Children were not provided with any of the micronutrients including Iron, folic acid and vitamin-A dosage and deworming medicines at schools.
- Drinking water, and toilets are not available in most of the visited schools

**PROBE (2009)** submitted a report entitled Incentives that Work, which reported that:

- 84% of households reported that the children get cooked mid day meal.
- Majority of schools reported that children consume meal at school.
Review of Related Literature

- Children are enjoying a varied menu.
- Good practices like washing hands before eating, space was cleaned before & after eating are imparted in the schools
- 48% of the teachers revealed MDM disrupts teaching activities.
- Quality of food was serious concern and menu is not followed in most of the schools.
- Incentives (MDM and text books) are reaching rural children and have contributed to improving enrolment rates

Verma, et al (2009) conducted a case study of three primary schools of Lucknow. The investigators interacted with 60 households, whose children were enrolled, from three villages, 60 children, members of village and ward committees, observed meal distribution and how students eat, had random interaction with the community people and found that.

- Children of all castes having meal together without any concern of diversity
- Drinking water facilities and quality of meals were satisfactory but, menu not followed.
- Monitoring is done once in three months and no involvement of parents and ward education committee is observed.
- Lack of records food supplying school was not ready to show details of quantity of food etc.
- Food being cooked for 44 schools in one place.
- Ration issued is 1.6Kg per student for 20 days.
- 5 Cooks engaged, all from SC community.
- Lack of community participation and lack of awareness was seen.
- Parents of the school children favour the mid day meal scheme and want it to continue.
- Average 71% households surveyed believed that mid day meal has contributed in increased attendance of students.
88% of households of Rikshaw Colony, the poorest among surveyed localities agree with this.

Parents suggest food to be cooked in school itself.

Some Children earlier working as child labour, coming to school now regularly.

A few children still out of school due to poverty, working as child labour.

Average 75% students go to school regularly, in which Kila Mohamadi Nagar’s 82% students go to regular schools.

88% students get mid day meal regularly, followed by 82% in Kila Mahamadi 88% in Aurangabad, highest 94% in Rickshaw Colony.

An interesting result of the study was that average 78% students wash their hands before taking their lunch.

Average 82% people think that this scheme will remove caste and religious feelings from young minds.

Average 86% households of surveyed area believe that mid day meal scheme will increase social harmony in the society.

Average 90% people are in support of this scheme and they recommended that it should continue.

Ten school dropout children readmitted to school.

Parents committees to monitor the mid day meal and have monthly meetings also.

Teachers sensitized on the concept of mid day meal and their role in developing a healthy generation.

Mid day meal has contributed positively towards Social change.

It has vast potential of transforming children’s minds in healthy direction.

It has some difficulties in implementation, which can be sorted out with a will power to improve.

The community participation and surveillance can add to the quality of the scheme.
**Review of Related Literature**

- The scheme has contributed towards checking child labour.
- Gender sensitivity has been positively impacted by the mid day meal.

From the above studies and reports it is concluded that mid day meal scheme is the most important intervention made by the Government to achieve the objectives of Universalization of Elementary Education. This scheme is running well all over the country and it has positive impact on enrolment, attendance and scholastic performance of the students. The scheme has improved the nutritional status and health of the students by ending classroom hunger and it leads to the development of feeling of brotherhood and socialization among students by ending inequality.

### 2.2 GENERAL PUBLICATIONS RELATED WITH MID DAY MEAL SCHEME – MAGAZINES AND NEWSPAPERS

Mid Day Meal scheme is regarded as an important issue related with primary education. In the very beginning, this scheme became an important issue of discussion for every news channel, newspaper, magazine etc. The investigator tried to take every news item under consideration. The news items collected by the investigator are categorized under three sub headings: -

#### 2.2.1 General Publications

- **A report by Express News Service (Aug. 2, 1999)** pointed out merits and demerits of mid day meal scheme. Many teachers in schools of Punjab criticize that it could not attract many students but is a burden on teachers because Punjab is agricultural state with sufficient food available in every corner. The wheat distribution to students also could not serve the right purpose. It is wastage of money, time and sources as stated by a District Education Officer.
Jean Dreze (May 21, 2002) reported that the Rajasthan Government deserved credit for initiating a school meal programme within the Supreme Court deadline. Public pressure, notably from the People’s Union for Civil Liberties, has played a role in this initiative, and there is an important lesson for popular organizations elsewhere. This early experience also shows that the success of a school meal programme depends crucially on adequate planning, infrastructure and supervision. A helper is needed to cook the food since teachers (or pupils for that matter) cannot and should not be expected to do it. Safeguards are needed to ensure the quality of the food and its hygienic preparation. Adequate provisions are also required for utensils, fuel, transport and so on.

A token school – meal programme, where poor quality grain is handed over to the teachers to cook with inadequate facilities during school hours, could do more harm than good.

One might have expected State Government to welcome the school meal programme as an opportunity to win votes at relatively low cost. Indeed, the scheme is likely to be quite popular, and it is not very expensive for the State Governments, given that the Central Government is supplying the grain for free. In most States, however, there is no sign of such enthusiasm. There is something deeply defective about a democracy where people’s basic needs count for so little in electoral politics.

Reetika Khera (Nov. 13, 2002) reported about the survey conducted in 63 primary schools, covering 41 villages of Barmer district conducted in September 2002 by the Lok Adhikar Network, Barmer. Investigators visited seven Shiksha Karmi Schools, 19 Rajiv Gandhi Pathshalas and 37 Government Schools (Primary and Middle) in these villages. In the 63 sample schools, average enrolment at the primary level rose from 79 children in September 2002 to 98 a year later i.e. an increase of 23 percent. The sharp increase in the enrolment of girls (36% in just one year) is particularly impressive and encouraging. This has resulted in a reduction in the gender bias as far as enrolment is concerned. Informal discussions with teachers suggest that the daily attendance rates have also increased. This
improvement is thought to be the results of enrolment drives, and was widely attributed to the mid day meals.

Further, the survey suggests that the new mid day meal scheme in Rajasthan has been internalized quite quickly by all concerned children, teachers, parents and the administration. The beneficial aspects, such as higher school attendance, seem to be emerging quite clearly. The appointment of cooks has ensured that the preparation of the mid day meals does not interfere with classroom activity. The main task ahead is to remove caste discrimination in its working. Issues of timely delivery and rumeation also need to be addressed. Last but not least, the nutritive value of the meal needs to be sustained and improved.

A report by PPS Gill (September 28, 2002) stated that Rs. 2.53 crores had been sanctioned for Mid Day Meal Scheme in Punjab but is had actually not been made available to Deputy Commissioners.

G.K. Singh (2003) stated that mid day meal has resulted in 54% increase in attendance and added to good results of all-round development of children in the schools.

Nandini R. Iyer (Feb 9, 2004) in an article in The Tribune showed another aspect of mid day meal scheme. According to this report, 5 crore children in class five, six and eight across the country would have to wait for a new government to be elected at the Centre to grant them a mid day meal. That’s because the finance ministry hasn’t provided sufficient money in the 2004-05 interim budget for the much hyped mid day meal scheme.

Tribune News Service (March 10, 2004) published a report about low cost mid day meal. Many bread manufacturing industries have proposed to supply bread at a low rate for mid day meal in schools. Mr. Tiwari, President of the AIBM association said that the Government should take a decision to give a big jump to the literacy and food processing industries in the country.

H.K. Dua in an editorial on Mid Day Meal in The Tribune (April 24, 2004) revealed that mid day meal scheme played a vital role in checking the dropout rate in the schools. It is also an attraction to the poor to send their children
Review of Related Literature

to school. The Supreme Court has rightly taken note of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee’s statement that mid day meal scheme will be extended to class-X as a National Programme.

A news report by Agency (July 22, 2004) stated that Government of Maharashtra had decided to provide flavoured milk instead of cooked rice as mid day meal to the government schools. The dairy development minister announced that this would start first time in Nagpur. This processed and flavoured milk would be safe for consumption.

Tribune News Service (Sept. 5, 2004) stated that Haryana Government had taken measures to ensure supply of good quality foodgrains and cooked food under the mid day meal scheme. The surprise checks would be made during all teaching days and monitoring reports would have to be submitted to the Director, Primary Education.

Tribune News Service (Sept. 17, 2004) stated that Supreme Court restrained the Centre from handing over the administration of the mid day meal scheme to the States and the Union Territories. However, the implementation of the scheme continues to be in the hands of the states and UTs.

H.K. Dua in an editorial in The Tribune (Sept. 18, 2004) has given his views about the direction of Supreme Court on mid day meal scheme. He has stated that it is significant for three reasons. Firstly, it has restrained the Centre from taking step to transfer the administration of mid day meals in schools to the states. Secondly, it has fixed accountability on the states for its implementation. Thirdly, the Centre should continue to release funds to the states, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh has committed to ensure success of the scheme. Although there are many complaints about its implementation, yet the scheme will yield good results if we evolve suitable solutions and implement it in the larger interest of the students.

Tribune News Service (Sept. 27, 2004) stated that thousands of nursery students in the government primary schools in Haryana, would be extended mid day meal facility. Doing away with the Technical hitch, the Haryana Education
Review of Related Literature

Minister, Mr. Bhadhur Singh announced that now onwards nursery children would be covered under the mid day meal scheme. This would benefit over 40,000 nursery children.

**The Tribune carried a write up by Geetanjali Gayatari (Nov. 29, 2004)** reporting that the union minister of HRD Ministry Mr. Arjun Singh directed his ministry to look into the report published on fungus affected soyabeans and worm infected food grains being served as mid day meals in schools of Kaithal district. The Deputy Education Advisor HRD Ministry, alongwith officials of the Haryana Education Department and the District Administrations visited the two affected schools of Deora and Keorak and checked the samples of food grains being served to the students. Following the publication of the story (news item) the district administration had already swung into action and had replaced the entire stock of supplies to the schools with fresh stocks.

**Bhupinder Singh Brar (Oct. 22, 2005)** a correspondent of Dainik Jagran brought out a news item that the scheme had once again been implemented after a gap of about six months. It reported that the students of primary classes would get rice besides daliya. In the absence of the provisions to cook mid day meals, uncooked ration was being distributed among the children. Now, every child would get 780 grams of rice and 1820 grams of wheat per month. It was noticed in many schools of Abohar sub block that they did not provide cooked food to the children because they did not have funds to cook the food. As a result they distributed uncooked ration. The news item carried the information that Rs. 1/child/day would be given to the schools to meet with the cooking expenses. However, the teachers of the schools were found restless and under tension because they would be required to cook alongwith the duty of teaching.

**Express News Service (Jan 21, 2006)** gave information that as many as 25,000 students of 60 model and non model government schools would be covered under the mid day meal programme. The Principal of government primary school Palsora (Chandigarh) appreciated the initiative taken by the Chandigarh Administration. Earlier, the students were given eatables like Mathi, but, that was being replaced with proper nutritious meal then.
Amar Ujala (March 05, 2006) published a news item from Muktsar reporting that teachers criticized the scheme saying that the scheme should be run by separate permanent staff.

In another news item reported by Amar Ujala (April 20, 2006) from New Delhi, it was revealed that about 7 Lakh women were expected to get employment to carry out mid day meal scheme all over the country. The news item further reported that services of the mothers of students were also being utilized. It was also reported that a sum of Rs. 2000 crores was being earmarked in the budget to provide the infrastructure of kitchens and utensils to prepare food. At the time of publication of the news item, the planning commission had refused to give a grant of Rs. 2300 crores to provide mid day meal in upper primary classes.

Rozana Ajit (April 21, 2006) reported that the students would be given fruits and eggs also in the mid day meal. People in general agreed that distribution of eggs and fruits was much easier than cooking. The news item said that the Punjab Government had already issued a notification in this regard.

Dainik Jagran (April 24, 2006) also reported from New Delhi that the students would be provided fruits and eggs also in mid day meals. The news item reported that the states had started showing more and more of interest in the mid day meal scheme and had made a promise with the Central Government to increase their resources to increase the budget for the scheme.

Amar Ujala (August 23, 2006) reported from Jagraon that the surprise visit by the SDM of certain schools revealed that the facility of mid day meal was in complete quandary. Besides, at many places some schools were found either with single teacher or with a lock at the main gate.

Amar Ujala (Sept. 7, 2006) reported that mid day meal scheme was going to be given to private companies, which would, it is feared, bring in corrupt practices also related with privatization.

Tribune News Service (Oct. 24, 2006) reported that in an attempt to monitor and evaluate the mid day meal scheme, the Ministry of Human Resource
Development had asked schools to display information regarding the quantity, quality and utilization of food served to students.

They would also have to furnish the number of children given mid day meals, daily menu, and the roaster of community members involved in the programme. The ministry had asked state government to fix monthly targets for the inspection of mid day meals.

Sunita Dhawan from The Tribune (Oct. 28, 2006) reported that the district administration had been directed to involve self help groups for preparing mid day meal for school children, which would relieve the teachers of the burden of cooking. In the first phase 50 villages were identified where the members of self help groups would prepare food in government schools. The pilot project of taking the help of self help groups was launched by the Haryana Government in the Sirsa district. Under this scheme the services of the Sarpanch's would also be taken.

Tribune News Service (Nov. 7, 2006) brought a news item from Yamuna Nagar reporting that no mid day meal had been served in most of the schools of the district because grossary for the same had not been supplied. The mid day meal had not been cooked in most of the 625 schools during the past 15 days. The two contractors who had being engaged to supply material fell out with each other and, as a result, the mid day meal scheme came to a halt for a couple of weeks.

Balwinder Kaur in a news item in Dainik Jagran (March. 9, 2007) reported from Chandigarh that the company making Horlicks had sent a proposal to the government to provide Horlicks at reduced rates as mid day meals. But, many officers criticized the idea saying that the liquid would not give a sense of fullness to the students in the absence of solid food. However it could be served along with mid day meals.

Jyotsna Jalali in a news item in The Hindustan Times (March 11, 2007) reported from Chandigarh that the students would be provided cooked food, instead of one prepared on the campus of the school.

Subash Chander published a news item in Amar Ujala from Muktsar (March 22, 2007) reporting the government had prepared annual work plan and
budget for the mid day meal scheme. According to this work plan, the schools would get raw material and the funds to cook them according to the number of working days of schools. From April 2007 to March 2008 the schools would be given raw material and funds for 245 days under this plan. The department would not give the same for 120 days on account of holidays. It was hoped that it would reduce the cost of carrying out the mid day meal scheme.

Chitleen K. Sethi (March 25, 2007) in The Tribune, reported from Chandigarh that the Chandigarh administration had fared much better in implementing the scheme ever since it was envisaged in 1995. Since the city is small and manageable the administration is following the centralized cooking method. For almost 40,000 students studying in government primary schools, mid-day meal is cooked at three centralized locations chosen by the administration and distributed in schools. The schools as a result do not have to bother about the storage of grains and cooking of food. In some other schools where “children from better households” are studying, cooked food is not served. These students are given mathis during the mid-day meal hour. The mathis are also prepared centrally in some of the city’s own food and hotel management institutes.

The administration is spending almost Rs.6 crore a year on the implementation of the scheme. The Government of India pays Rs.1.25 crore for the scheme. The administration is giving rice to the centralized cooking centres @Rs.4.5 per child per day. At the centres where chapatti meal is prepared, the administration does not give wheat and spends Rs.8 per child per day. UT Director Public Instructions, Schools, Ashwani Kumar reported to the reporter that “The administration has now decided that the schools where we are supplying mathis should also be given cooked food”.

Tribune News Service (April 06, 2007) published a report from Jammu reporting that the government was planning to extend mid day meal scheme to the upper primary level to cover around 14.43 lakh children upto VIII standard. The scheme would attract maximum enrolment of students, particularly from the poor and under privileged sections of society. The Education Minister claimed that the
scheme had not only helped in arresting the dropout rate in schools, but also helped in controlling malnutrition.

A Correspondent from The Hindustan Times (Dec. 16, 2007) reported from Jalandhar that the government would not tolerate any type of laxity in the implementation of mid day meal scheme in the schools. Taking a serious note of the fact that the students of government elementary school Adarsh Nagar, Jalandhar had not been distributed mid day meal since December 1, the Director General School Education Kirshan Kumar ordered an inquiry to fix responsibility. Replying to the Director General, the teachers told him that the requisit money had not been released to them to get the food cooked. In the inquiry it was found that the DEO elementary of Jalandhar had not mentioned any problems being faced in the proper implementation of the scheme in a meeting held with Krishan Kumar at Chandigarh. The Director General regretted that the officer had not made him aware of the ground realities.

Chauhan from Rozana Ajit (Dec. 24, 2007) reported that Punjab Government had decided that mid day meal scheme would be extended upto 8th Class from the next academic year. The scheme would be started first of all in the Tarantarn, Bathinda, Ferozepur, Mansa, Muktsar, Patiala and Sangrur districts.

Dr. T.R. Sharma contributed an article in Rozana Ajit (Dec.24, 2007) asking for the proposal to supply biscuits in place of food was logical and justified keeping in view the low quality of raw material being supplied to the schools, and, as a result, falling of students ill. Different political parties were of the opinion that packed biscuits should be supplied to the children. The detail written on the packet would ensure that the biscuits were fresh and their date of usage had not expired. Besides, it would mention the ingredients of the biscuits also. Distribution of biscuits would be much easier and their accounts would be maintained in a much simpler manner. There would be no burden of cooking on the teachers. The people who were interviewed by Dr. T.R. Sharma agreed that distribution of biscuits was a better choice because the biscuits did not carry worms in them. Even minister Renuka Chaudhary agreed to the proposal. Madam Mayawati also wrote a letter to the Prime Minister on Oct. 24, 2007 recommending that packed food should be
given to children. Human Resource Development Minister Dr. Arjun Singh’s own daughter Meena Singh recommended the introduction of packed food. The writer had found that in many states students were not being given quality food. Officers and teachers were indulging in corrupt practices. Studies of the students were suffering. Many times students fell ill because they had been supplied infested, worm ridden and stale food. It was found that the teachers were in favour of giving food to the children in schools, but the system should be easy to implement. It should be fast and the distribution system should be above board. The maintenance of accounts should also not be burdensome and time consuming. It was regretted that the scheme could not be made flawless and foolproof even after the expiry of more than ten years during which the government had been trying to make it a great success.

Dr. Sharma also pointed out the positive side of the scheme saying that the enrolment of the students had increased and there was a fall in the dropout rates, the health of the students had also improved, who had gained in weight and height and their interest in studies had increased. Girls had also felt attracted to come to school. Small children had been relieved of the burden of doing child labour because they were found interested in going to school and stay there.

Taneja from Rozana Ajit (Jan. 23, 2008) reported that the schools were being compelled to lift low quality of wheat which had almost decomposed, gave foul smell and was not fit for human consumption.

Brar from Rozana Ajit (Jan. 29, 2008) reported that the scheme had been started in middle schools also in some districts. But, the teachers had been found criticizing the scheme saying that the problem of infrastructure, storage, loss of studies, burden of teachers, had not been addressed to. There were no efforts on the part of the government to remove the problems being faced by the teachers.

Ashwani Kathpal from Rozana Ajit (March 15, 2008) reported from Jalalabad that to make mid day meal a great success, the government was deputing officers to make surprise checking of the mid day meals. During one such inspection, the students of government primary school Chak Manewala reported to
the Tehsildar that they had not been given any food for the last four days. When the Tehsildar asked the teachers, they replied that they had not received the grants till then.

**Chetan Chauhan an HT Correspondent (April. 8, 2008)** threw light on the debate going on the question of supplying cooked or fortified (packed) food to the children. Many officers had been found of the view that the meals should be cooked on the campus since it could ensure the quality of the food. But, this idea had been opposed by some saying that the teachers remained highly burdened and under tension. To check the loss of studies of the students and to keep the teachers in the classes, it was found better to supply fortified food in the schools.

**Aditi Tandon from Tribune News Service (May 18, 2008)** published a news item reporting that the National Co-operative Dairy Federation of India had impressed upon the Human Resource Development Ministry to serve milk to the students as mid day meal on the ground that it was an ideal and wholesome food with required minerals and vitamins, which were the need for the growth of the child. The organization proposed to serve 200 ml per child per day. The ministry officials expressed concern regarding the storage and freshness of milk. The ministry was not found favouring the replacement of food with milk in the mid day meal scheme. But, at the same time, the ministry said that the budget of the mid day meal would be increased.

**Aditi Tandon from Tribune News Service (June.16, 2008)** reported that mid day meal scheme was costing the Food Corporation of India (FCI) very dear. The FCI had suffered losses of crores of rupees by feeding 35 states and UT’s with food stocks. The FCI was constrained to prevent some states from lifting food grains until the pending bills were cleared. The FCI claimed that the HRD ministry was to clear arrears of Rs.346.71 crores. This was the exact amount of the arrears pending until May 30, 2008. The FCI had submitted 210 bills to the HRD ministry, which had cleared only 21 at the time of publication of the news. The agricultural ministry also took a very serious note of the situation and asked the HRD ministry to make its own arrangements for lifting food grains…….
Out of all the states, only Rajasthan had settled all accounts with the FCI and had paid all the bills. The biggest defaulter state was Maharashtra, which was required to pay Rs.6376 lakh.

**Tapinder Singh from Rozana Ajit (Aug.23, 2008)** brought out a news item from Ferozepur declaring that cooking and distribution of mid day meal in Punjab was going to be handed over to a private company ‘Istrishakati’, which would give relief to the teachers, who, otherwise remained busy with the mid day meal scheme for most of the time. In the start the scheme was going to be introduced in three Districts naming Ferozepur, Tarntaran and Nawanshahar.

**Parmod Bharati from Tribune News Service (September 14, 2008)** reported from Nawashahar that with a view to addressing the long pending grievance of the teachers in connection with the hardships being faced by them in preparation of the mid-day meal in schools as well as to ensure uniformity in maintaining quality and nutrition level of the meal, the Director General of School Education (DGSE)-cum-State Project Director, Sarav Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Punjab, Krishan Kumar, had come out with an innovative scheme of supplying packed food for the mid-day meal to schoolchildren through centralised kitchen sets. To begin with, the scheme would be launched in three districts of Tarntaran, Nawanshahar and Ferozepur. Krishan Kumar, told The Tribune that the scheme would benefit more than 3.50 lakh students up to the upper primary level. Two NGOs, ‘Istrishakti Sangathan’ and ‘Indicare’, had been engaged for preparing the mid-day meal and supply the same to the schools covered under the scheme. While the ‘Istrishakti Sangathan’ would prepare and supply packed mid day meal in Nawanshahar and Ferozepur, Indicare would do it in Tarntaran. The Mumbai-based NGO Istri Shakti Sangathan has set up a centralised kitchen near Barnala village on the Chandigarh road here for launching the packed mid day meal. About 50 women had been engaged to prepare food and 20 vehicles hired.

**Verinder Sareen (Sept. 16, 2008)** a correspondent of The Hindustan Times reported from Nawanshahar that Punjab education minister Dr. Upinderjit
Kaur launched the packed mid day meal scheme for nearly 60,000 children of 650 primary and upper primary schools in the district by flagging off vehicles carrying steaming hot mid day meal in stainless steel containers for various schools from centralized kitchen in Barnala village, near here.

Later, the minister herself served the packed lunch to the tiny tots of government primary school in Jadla, the oldest primary school of the district. The scheme is being launched in the three districts Tarantarn, Nawanshahr and Ferozepur in the first phase.

“The packed mid day meal scheme when launched throughout the state is expected to mitigate the hardships of around 70,000 school teachers in Punjab who are associated with the preparation of mid-day meal in the schools for around 22 lakh children”, said the minister while addressing a gathering at Jadla.

It is also expected to maintain uniformity and nutrition levels of the meal across the state, she said, adding that in Nawanshahr district alone a sum of Rs. 30.20 lakh would be spent per month under the scheme. The minister further said that the scheme would enable teachers to devote more time to teaching students.

“The services of two NGOs, Mumbai based ‘Istrishakti Sangathan’ and Delhi Based ‘Indicare’, have been roped in to prepare and supply packed mid-day meal in the three districts”.

DGSE Krishan Kumar on the occasion said that all schools would get the packed meal daily well in time within an hour and a half of preparing it. He said that there was a set, different menu for all the six days of the week to ensure students’ interest in these meals. “A minute study preceded the viability of the project of supplying packed mid-day meal through mechanized, central kitchens”, he revealed. He added that the government officials would monitor the quality and quantity of food.

DC Nilkanth Avhad assured all help to the NGO Istrishakti Sangathan which has been entrusted with the job of supplying the mid day meal in
Nawanshahr district. In Nawanshahr, 50 women have been engaged to prepare food and 20 vehicles have been hired to serve it in stainless vessels capable of keeping the food hot for nearly 6 hours.

Rozana Ajit (Sept. 23, 2008) reported through a news item that the DEOs would make sudden inspections to find out how efficiently and effectively the mid day meal scheme was being implemented in schools. The DEOs would look into the problems being faced by the students and teachers and would find out the ways to solve them. Quoting the example of DEO Ferozepur, S. Harbans Singh Chahal, the news item revealed the seriousness of the government in implementing the scheme.

The Tribune (Jan. 1, 2009) published a news item that the Centre had sanctioned Rs.77 crore to construct kitchens in various schools in the state to implement the mid day meal scheme. It was reported that there were 18,000 schools in the state, where the students from Class I to VIII were being given cooked food. Every school would get Rs.60,000 for proper kitchen. Director General of School Education (DGSE) Krishan Kumar said that Punjab was the only state in the country that was being given amount for all schools.

Karamjit Mann from Rozana Ajit (Jan. 23, 2009) reported from Jaiton that every possible effort was being made to start mid day meal scheme in the schools, where it had not been started. While introducing the mid day meal scheme at Government Elementary School Ran Singh Wala, the deputy DEO (Sec.) Faridkot, impressed upon the teachers to ensure that quality food would be distributed among the children.

Jeewan Garg from Rozana Ajit (Jan.23, 2009) published another news item from Baja Khana, reporting that efforts were being made to set up separate kitchens in the schools so, that the class rooms should be used only for teaching purposes. These remarks were given by the Chairman of the PASWAK committee.
SHILLONG Times, (March 10, 2009) reported that the Meghalaya Government has entrusted the task of evaluation study of Mid Day Meal Scheme to the Council for Social Development (CSD) of Hyderabad which is recognized by Indian Council of Social Science Research under the Ministry of Human Resource Development, to study the progress of centrally sponsored scheme Mid Day Meal in the State.

The evaluation study is entrusted by the State Government to find out the success as well as the unsuccessful implementation of the scheme meant for school students in the State.

And, it was found that in 2008-09, Meghalaya has 7015 lower primary, 700 EGS (Education Guarantee Scheme) and 2259 Upper primary schools. Almost 6.27 lakh were Lower primary students while 1.42 lakh belonged to Upper primary schools.

Regarding the implementation of the scheme, the scheme was somewhat disrupted as the central government did not provide the quota of midday meal as per the proposal of the State last year. As per the enrolment, there are 6.27 lakh students in 2008-09 who are to benefit from the scheme but the central government gave sanction only for 2.16 lakh students rejecting the State proposal. The central government had stated that the statistics as given by the State were not acceptable as the data was too high and they considered their own projection of children that was prepared by the Registrar General of India.

“As the Central Government has not agreed to provide our proposal, we have to deduct and adjust the quota of midday meal to distribute to other students”, Mr. Synrem (Officer on Special Duty) said.

The delay in release of money both by the State and Central Government has become another problem for the department to execute the scheme.

Shariq Majeed in The Sunday Tribune (June. 7, 2009) reported that there were reports of an alleged scam in the mid day meal scheme in Rajouri and
Punch districts of Jammu and Kashmir. The State Education Department had ordered an inquiry into the matter. The vigilance department of the state raided 70 schools across the Rajouri and Punch districts. More than 30 schools complained that they had not received rations for the past six months, which might have been sold in the open market by the District Education Authorities.

**IANS (July 31, 2009)** reported from Chandigarh that the Punjab government had asked the Centre to spare more funds for food so that children in government schools across the state could get a better ‘mid-day meal’. Punjab wanted the contribution to be raised from Rs.1.58 to Rs.2.33 per day per child for primary classes and Rs.2.10 to Rs.3.85 per day per child for upper primary classes so that a more balanced and nutritious diet could be provided.

“With the present allocation of Central Assistance, Punjab, with its share of 25 percent or Rs.0.50 per child, has been providing 480 kilo-calories with 12 gms protein and 700 kilo-calories with 20 gms protein per meal per day in primary and upper primary schools, respectively,” Punjab Education Department has been successfully providing mid day meals to about 2 million (20 lakh) students from class one to eight in all the primary and upper primary schools of the state for 245 days in a year.

The education minister said the present total conversion cost for the meal comes out at Rs.2.08 per day for primary students and Rs.2.60 per day for upper primary students. The newsitem also reported that the state government would spend over Rs.1.05 billion (RS.105 crore) for the mid-day meal scheme. The central assistance in this is over Rs.820 million (Rs.82 crore).

**Anjali Singh Deswal from Tribune News Service (Aug 15, 2009)** reported from Bathinda that earlier anaganwari workers used to make food in schools, but, due to regular complaints regarding the quality of food cooked by these workers, the task was outsourced and some self help groups come forward to cook food. Now, these groups have told the government that if the funds given to them are not increased then they would stop the meal supply after August 15. One
incharge of the self help group reported that the funds given to them were not adequate and they were working on no profit no loss base. It was also reported that they were paid Rs. 2.8 paise per child in elementary section and Rs. 2.60 paise per child in secondary section. The price of sugar had gone upto 35 a kg, Bengal gram cost Rs. 40 a kg, Kabligram was Rs. 65 per kg and Pulses had shot up by Rs. 30 to 40 per kg, and they could not afford these items in such meager funds given by the government. Around 16 to 17 kg Ghee was used per week and they could not get any profit from the work, they were doing.

Chandel, Amar (Sept. 20, 2009) reported that utilizing the services of women from low income families to cook food had widened the beneficial aspect of the mid day meal scheme in schools. The writer reported about the Swami Sivananda Memorial Institute (SSMI) that cooked mid day meals for more than 20,000 school children in Chandigarh. He reported that the “Jahangirpuri Model” of “Women Empowerment for Child Welfare” used by the institute was changing the ground rules of feeding children. The model, if implemented judiciously, can be a panacea for the whole country.

UNI (Nov. 27, 2009, The Tribune Chandigarh) and Surinder Aklia (Dec 20, 2009, Rozana Ajit Jalandhar) reported that taking note of persistent requests by the Punjab Government, the Union Government had revised the cooking costs and food norms under the mid day meal programme being implemented in the state schools.

Education Minister Upinderjit Kaur said the Punjab Government had earlier asked the Central Government to enhance its share of cooking cost norms under mid-day-meal scheme from 75 per cent to 80 per cent of its existing share for primary and upper primary classes as Punjabis were well known over the diaspora for their healthy diet and eating lifestyle and there was a dire need to provide more balanced and nutritious food enriched with proteins to the growing children of Punjab under this scheme.
She said the Punjab government would revise the food norms that would become effective from December 1.

Under the revised food norms for upper primary classes, the quantity of pulses has been increased from 25 gm to 30 gm, vegetables from 65 gm to 75 gm and that of oil and fat decreased from 10 gm to 7.5 gm. Besides, the upper primary students would continue to get 150gms of foodgrains per day. The cooking costs, excluding labour and administrative charges for cooking the midday meal in primary schools, had been increased from Rs 2.08 to Rs 2.50. The cooking cost for upper primary schools has been increased from Rs 2.60 to Rs 3.75. "Now, the cooking costs will include the cost of pulses, vegetables, oil and fats, salt and condiments and fuel" and cooking costs will be shared between the Centre and Punjab on a 75:25 basis. The Central Government had promised to further revise cooking costs by 7.5 per cent on April 1, 2010 and again on April 1, 2011. Separate provision has been made for the payment of honorarium to cooks-cum-helpers at the rate of Rs 1,000 per month.

"One cook-cum-helper may be engaged in a school having up to 25 students, two cooks-cum-helpers for schools having 26 to 100 students, and one additional cook-cum-helper for every addition upto 100 students. The Education Minister said during the current fiscal 2009-10, the department would spend Rs 105.09 crore as cooking costs to provide mid-day-meal to the students with Central Assistance of Rs 82.2 crore. To provide better facilities for safe and hygienic cooking, kitchen devices, proper sheds, storage bins, gas 'bhatties', fire extinguishers and LPG gas connections have been provided in all the schools

**Bhupinder Singh (Nov. 30, 2009)** reported in Rozana Ajit, from Abohar area that now the mid day meals given to the students of Government schools, will be checked by the Government doctors. Regarding this, Dr. Dilip Kumar, SMO, instructed the doctors to send the verification reports to Ferozepur.
Mid-day meal debate continues

Review of Related Literature

Chefan Chauhan
New Delhi, April 7

WONDERFUL reports have different versions on which meal is better for children - fortified or hot cooked. The HRD Ministry's tidy says hot cooked meals are better but a new Women and Child Development Ministry study recommends starting a new experiment with fortified food.

The study for the HRD Ministry was undertaken by the National Institute for Nutrition, Hyderabad some time ago. The report contradicts to get the proposal through due to stiff resistance from other ministries and the Planning Commission. In fact, the WCD Ministry finds itself isolated on the issue with not even a single other government department supporting it. The ministry now appears to have mellowed its stand and wants that both forms of food to be served for about two years and whichever proves to be better can be given throughout the country.

According to WCD Ministry sources, the study was to be conducted in 5000 villages to assess the outcome of serving fortified food. The study was also to be done in comparison with hot cooked food. The ministry now appears to have mellowed its stand and wants that both forms of food to be served for about two years and whichever proves to be better can be given throughout the country.
Probe into alleged mid-day meal scam

SHARID MAJEED
Tribune News Service

RAJOURI, JUNE 6
Amid reports of an alleged scam in the mid-day meal and the authorities might have sold it in the open market.

Sources in the Education Department and the vigilance Department told The Tribune that of the 70 schools raided in over 20 schools had scheme in the open market.

“In Rajouri districts, of more than 40 schools raided by vigilance in Buddhal, Baddha, Khawas, Thanamandi and Manjakote areas, it was found that in large number of school

Mid-day meal eludes many schools

Mid-Day Meals Scheme to include cooked food

JYOTSNA JALALI CHANDIGARH, MARCH 10, government schools from April 2. Also, it was has been proposed to provide food to all classes up to Class VIII.” Earlier, matthies
Mid-day meal debate continues

Chetan Chauhan
New Delhi, April 7

GOVERNMENT reports have different views on which meal is better for children: cooked or fortified. The HRD Ministry's stand is that hot cooked meals are better, but a report by the Women and Child Development Ministry recommends starting a new experiment to test fortified food. The study for the HRD Ministry was undertaken by the National Institute for Nutrition. The report claims that it would take at least two years to get the proposal through due to stiff resistance from other ministries and the Planning Commission. In fact, the WCD Ministry finds itself isolated on the issue with not even a single other government department supporting it. The only support it got was from a few state governments such as Uttar Pradesh.

The ministry now appears to have mellowed its stand and says that both forms of food to be served for about two years and whichever proves to be better can be given throughout the country. According to WCD Ministry sources, the report claims that hot cooked meals are better as they require by the human body and fills nutritional gaps. One view within the Commission is that if the proposal is not accepted by the Planning Commission, the government can move towards the proposal in stages. The study was carried out in five states like Verka, Vita, and Mahanand in Punjab, Haryana, and Maharashtra. The ministry also claims that the fortified meals are cheaper and require less staff than the cooked meals.
No mid-day meal, inquiry ordered

ACTION BY TOMORROW

District-level committee for implementation of the Central government's plan to expand mid-day meal scheme.
2.2.2 Publications Related with the Problems linked with Mid Day Meal Scheme

Anupama, G.S. (2003) in an article highlighted the numerous problems encountered in the mid day meal scheme. In remote village of district Bangalore, children of government primary school were not served meal for 10 days and the food stock was diverted under Akshara Dasoha mid day scheme by Chief Minister S.K. Krishna, many discrepancies came up while catering to nearly 50 lakh primary school children. “After visiting 10 sample schools, many irregularities were found. If continued, chief of the institutions and head cooks will be punished”, said L. Revana Siddaiah, a special advisor to Akshara Dasoha Scheme. The scheme fixed the responsibility on officers at different levels. But, still many setbacks are prevailing for implementing the above scheme in true spirit.

Prasenjit, Maiti (March 2003) reported that this scheme is primarily a central government funded public welfare scheme where the Centre provides uncooked cereals (and transportation of food grains) free of cost. However “Cash strapped” state governments plead inability to provide cooked meal to children in the below poverty level category and seek to provide uncooked cereals instead (that too on an irregular basis), although it costs about Rs. 1 per child per day to provide cooked meals for the stipulated 200 days a years.

The Supreme Court of India, the country’s apex federal court, in an interim judgment, has recently ordered these state governments to immediately comply with the Union government’s regulations, or else the centre’s aid and to the states will be diverted to sponsor the mid day project in primary schools. NGOs like the Right to Food and Work Network, Campaign against Child Labour, West Bengal Education Network and the Calcutta NGO Forum of Street and Working Children organized demonstrations by underprivileged children on 14 November 2002 against government’s inability to provide mid day meals to primary schools students.
Children mobilized a symbol fund raising drive with banners stating “Our State Government claims it doesn’t have the necessary money to provide us with food in our schools, so we are begging for money from the common people. We shall send this money to the Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee so that he can provide cooked meals to hungry children.” However, the Government citing financial shortage, hasn’t yet sanctioned Rs. 190 crore to provide cooked meals to about 95 lakh students in the state. The West Bengal Government in response to Supreme Court’s ruling that states should not compromise with children’s food, had earlier petitioned that it was unable to implement the Central Government funded mid day meal project due to severe funds crunch. But, the apex Court rejected the petition and cautioned on 3 September 2002 that Central aid to the states would be diverted for the meals project if cooked meals were not duly provided in schools.

Parvathi Menon (August 1, 2003) reported that the Karnataka government’s mid day meal scheme for primary school children in all government schools across the state has a troubled start with initial reports of food poisoning, but the greater danger relates to upper caste opposition to Dalits cooking the food. Several villages in Mandhya district have boycotted the programme, protesting against the appointment of Dalit cooks. Even the non Dalit assistant cook refused to work. The writer further suggested that if a Public Campaign of Education against caste discrimination is made part of the mid day meal programme, it may offer the only assurance of making the programme fully effective.

Anita Pratap (Aug. 18, 2003) reported that Tamilnadu’s legendary Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran was rebuked for launching free mid day meal scheme for school children. In the beginning this scheme faced some problems like poor hygiene. Education is disrupted because teachers have to substitute as cooks and the class room as kitchen. Hostile Sarpanch’s disrupt food supplies. Mean spirited upper castes oppose free meal for low caste children. The writer further suggested that proper commitment can make the mid day meal scheme function effectively. It is not a question of money, it’s a matter of priorities. Only
one thing required to priorities in the mid day meal scheme in every state is the Chief Minister’s political will.

A news item by The Tribune (Jan. 5, 2004) stated that Mr. M.K. Bhan asserted that mid day meal schemes being run by the government were not sufficient to meet the nutritional requirements of students. He concluded that providing calories was not good enough to rear an undernourished child who required all nutrients in his food. The scheme is a failure as far as nutrition is concerned.

A news report by Patar Prerak (July 19, 2004) stated that mid day meal programme had come to standstill in the Shivalik Region of Haryana. This is due to non availability of material. Under this plan schools had been neither providing sweet rice nor salty rice for the past three months. But, the raw materials were being supplied every day in official files.

Ambika Sharma (Sept. 3, 2004) published an article in The Tribune which stated that the teachers were burdened with mid day meals. Besides teaching, the teachers had many other problems to deal with, including arranging food, cooking material and fuel etc. Teachers had to spend even from their pockets. The biggest challenge, opined by the teachers, was to arrange for an alternative mode of fuel as provision of using LPG cylinder was ruled out as safety measure.

A news report by Tribune Correspondent from Himachal Pradesh (2004) revealed that the State Government had launched the scheme in a haste without providing basic infrastructure. Primary teachers lament that they are already burdened with teaching job but this extra responsibility has diverted their attention from their basic duty.

The Tribune Correspondent (Sept. 9, 2004) reported that a few months after launching mid day meal scheme, it came to a halt. The teachers in the local primary school found it very difficult to cater to the strength of 400 students. The Deputy Director Education (Primary) said that the teachers had been instructed to bring to notice the problems they encountered.
A report by Chander Sharma (Sept. 20, 2004) revealed that three dalit students were made to sit separate by teachers when they were being served mid-day meal. Many dalit students’ parents were very upset over the step-motherly treatment being meted out to their children in the schools. However, the Headmaster of the school said that students sat in a separate row on their own and it was wrong to say that they were made to sit separate.

A report by UNI (Sept. 20, 2004) highlighted the quality of mid day meal. As many as 50 children of Government primary school Palthori, district Sirmour of H.P., started vomiting after taking their mid day meal. Paonta Sahib SDM C.P. Verma said that he had sent a team of doctors to school. The samples of water and food were taken. The first aid treatment was given to the affected students.

Kuldeep Chauhan (Sept. 26, 2004) in The Tribune highlighted the problems faced by teachers in preparing mid day meal. In his report he says that though schools are attracting more children, teachers say that there is shortage of fuel and utensils to cook the meal. Sometimes teachers procure utensils from tentwalas. Some parents have written to headmasters asking them not to serve meals to their children, as they feel these are not cooked in hygienic conditions and the water is not good.

Patar Prerak (Sept. 27, 2004) highlighted the corruption in mid day meal scheme by teachers and PTA members. In his report, he stated that a school teacher and PTA member were arrested for selling mid-day meal material which had been supplied by government for students. The police of Bassi Pathana in Punjab registered the FIR and started the investigation after taking them under custody.

Geetanjali Gayatari (Nov. 22, 2004) reported in an article in The Tribune that “Students of some government primary schools of Haryana are being served food unfit for human consumption”. She added “Students are being forced to eat worm infested grains and porridge which was found fungus affected (infected)”. In Kurukshetra some schools were identified that had not received their share of food supplies for the mid day meal and the children could not be provided food for
more than fortnight. Many schools reported to the correspondent that they were virtually under a great burden of organizing meals, which was not related with their teaching work. She reported that at many places a handful of students were even taken ill after consuming the worm ridden food.

Dharmendra Ritolia (Feb.25, 2005) published a survey in Amar Ujala from the area of Abohar and Mandhi Ladhuka. It published that many times, the teacher incharge gave the students Marunda (Rice cake) instead of the mid day meals. Many students sold wheat in the Bazar and bought toffees. It shows that students are not getting nutritious food at many places. The teachers argue that they are meant to teach, not to cook and distributed food. To save themselves from the headache of cooking, some teachers, on the condition of anonymity, admitted that they distributed wheat among students on the last day of the month. The news brings out the problems related with the mid day meal scheme in detail.

Punjabi Newspaper Chardi Kala (April 26, 2005) brought out a report on the problems of the mid day meal scheme. It reported that the schools had not received grants against the expenditure made on the scheme from Jan 2005 to March 2005. By the time the report was published, no sanction had been made by the department. The expenditure made during this period was not being sent by PASWAK. The school teachers pointed out that the schools did not have either a kitchen or a cook, or fuel. The cooks who had been hired were coming to the schools every other day for the payment of their work. Many times they insult the teachers who had hired them. The teachers were feeling belittled.

Mandeep Singh Khanna (May 27, 2005) published a news item in Rozana Ajit. The report pointed out that schemes like mid day meal had been creating a great hurdle in the teaching work because the responsibility of bringing the raw material from the BPEO office to its distribution to the bowl of the students fell on the teachers. The reporter further pointed out in the newsitem that the cooks wanted more rumeration than sanctioned by the government. The whole exercise has been found to be highly cumbersome and time consuming. At the end the reporter suggests to the government this scheme should be handed over to
different agency so that the students’ studies do not suffer and the teacher is not reduced to the status of a cook.

Chitleen K. Sethi (Aug 23, 2005) reported in the Tribune from Mohali. This news item throws light on the bad condition of mid day meal scheme. It reads “The State has no funds to continue with it .... In majority of the districts, the primary school students have not been served mid day meal after summer vacation in July”. DEO also confirmed that no more funds were available with them to get the meals cooked and the FCI had not supplied the wheat and rice. Besides, Government of India had turned down the demand of the Punjab Government for extra money for its proper implementation. The Correspondent wrote down the miserable condition of the scheme in districts like Jallandhar, Kapurthala and Mansa etc. Almost all concerned officers admit that there is a great shortage of funds and the same too are not received in time.

Neelam Takyar (Oct 5, 2005) reported from Chandigarh that “it is sad that Punjab, though known as the Food Basket of India, is unable to provide mid day meal to its own students”. The reason reported is that there are No Funds. The question arises: why has the government failed to do this when food is rotting in the godowns?

The Government has also said that there are no big kitchens and utensils required for cooking and serving food to the school children. However, what the state government is lacking is not funds, utensils or raw material but a thought and concern for the children. In the same news item the author reported that in Delhi government schools, the Government had tied up with NGOs for implementing the mid day meal scheme. One of the teachers reported that hot, neat and clean meals (like pulao, rice and dal, rice and sambhar and aaloo puri) were provided to the students. In the end the Correspondent suggested that the Chief Minister Capt. Amrinder Singh should seek sponsorship from NGOs and others and provide mid day meal to the students.

Ashok Mishr (March 8, 2006) in Hindi Vernacular Newspaper Amar Ujala reported that in many schools the quality of the mid day meal was...
Review of Related Literature

intolerably bad and at many places, the food had small stones in it. It reported that the food was not fit for human consumption. It was also noticed that the raw material was sold in the Bazar and the same was replaced by low quality of raw material. The newspaper also reported that at certain places, the teachers distributed the cereals among themselves instead of giving it to the students.

Rajmeet Singh (April 04, 2006) published a news item in The Tribune reporting that in Kharrar Block insect and beetle ridden wheat flour was being served. The same was dumped by the teachers. The Tribune team visited government elementary school, Kansal Village, where they found the flour weevil-ridden and it contained different types of other small insects. Those flour bags had been brought from the nodal centre school at Nayagaon.

Naresh Kumar Sharma (May 6, 2006) reported from Dharamshala in The Times of India. It reported how badly the mid day meal scheme was affecting the quality of primary schools education. It reads “...............teachers are getting involved in cooking, rather than teaching ............ in primary schools, in villages, education has become a major causality”. it was further reported that parents were unhappy with the mid day meal scheme because the studies of their wards were not going on regularly and smoothly because the teachers were spending most of their time carrying out cooking and distribution of mid day meals. People, in general, wanted that there should be separate staff for this exercise. The newspaper also carried the report that some children of upper castes refused to eat together with children of lower castes. The report also hinted at the low rumerations being paid to the support staff, who more often declined to work on regular basis.

Subash Chander Kushwaha (Aug 3, 2006) from Amar Ujala published a full article on the logic of introducing mid day meal scheme. The writer criticized the scheme in a very scathing and clear language. He wrote that no sensitive person would oppose the idea of feeding poor children, but if the scheme was proving detrimental to the standard of studies, it needed a serious debate to find out whether the scheme should continue or not. It was being claimed by the government that the benefit of the scheme was reaching about 12 crore children and it was reported that there was an increase of 15% students in the first primary
class. But, the writer feels that the data was totally imaginary and fictitious. People were reported to have found the meals not of good quality. The scheme became so controversial that ultimately the Supreme Court had to intervene which gave the Judgment that every child should be given 300 calories and 8-12 grams proteins everyday and this type of food should be served to the children at least for 200 days per year. It was also alleged that children came to the schools, just to eat not to study. The aim should have been to provide standard education to the students so as to help them stand on their feet and make progress. For that, they should have been provided with better facilities in the schools, books, stationery etc. But, at present the focus seems to be on the success of mid day meal scheme. The news item threw light on the shortcomings found in the schools. New teachers were not being recruited. Shortage of black boards, mats, chairs and benches, chalks, clean toilets, clean drinking water and unhygienic buildings were destroying the primary schools, which led to the mushroom growth of private model schools. Despite the facility of mid day meals, it is yet to be seen whether a student from these schools is able to get success in competitive examination such as IAS, PCS, Medical or Engineering profession or Indian forces. The writer feared that the mid day meal scheme would produce only beggars with a bowl in their hands. The government should make all out efforts to make the government primary schools capable rivals of the model schools.

Sukhjinder Jit Singh Sodhi (Aug 18, 2006) reported in Rozana Ajit that despite the big claims made by the Punjab Government and the Education Department that the students were being given balanced and nourishing food and the mid day meal was proving a great success, the Correspondent of the Ajit who wrote the article brought out the fact the Punjab Government was shrinking from the responsibility of providing mid day meals and the scheme had become only political stunt.

He pointed out that the prices of the raw material had increased and the grants were not compatible with the price rise. The quantum of funds should also be increased keeping in view the price rise. To provide 300 calories and 8-12 gms proteins to every child was not possible to arrange for 1 Rs 70 paisa. The teachers
Review of Related Literature

were under much strain because they had to spend money from their own pockets to meet the difference between the grant and the actual expenditure.

Mid-day meal scheme was affecting the teaching work very badly. The main stress should have been on increasing the standard of education in the schools and providing the schools with basic facilities. It was stated that the government was living in a fool’s paradise to imagine that mid-day meal would improve the health of the students and motivate them to attend the school regularly.

Amar Ujala (Aug. 23, 2006) carried a news item telling about a surprise visit by SDM Sh. Sukhwinder Singh Gill in a village in Jagraon. He was told by the students that they were not being served the mid-day meals. The reason was that there was only one teacher, who could not manage mid-day meal scheme along with teaching the students and keeping them under discipline.

Amrit Sachdeva reported in Dainik Jagran (Sept. 5, 2006) the anger developing among teachers regarding mid-day meal scheme. They said that on one end the government wanted to raise the standard of education in primary schools; but on the other end they were kept busy in non-teaching duties including that of mid-day meal scheme and the teachers had been reduced to the status of a cook. This would result in lowering the standard of education.

S.B. Misra (Sept. 21, 2006) published an article entitled Striking Hunger in The Hindustan Times reporting that the mid-day meal scheme, in particular, has succeeded in bringing children to school. They may forget to bring their book, but do not forget to bring their plates. The writer said that the scheme should not be confined to the students of government schools. There is no justification why a meal cannot be provided to the children of aided and government recognized schools as well. Students in these schools are also a part of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

The reporter also points out that the government provides money to village panchayat under the mid-day meal scheme. The pradhan of the panchayat allocates the funds and makes necessary arrangements for its utilization. Teachers
of the school play no direct role and have no control over its implementation. Sadly, in most cases the pradhans are musclemen. Teachers are mere jobbers and so not dare to complain to anyone. The cook or sevika appointed for cooking and distribution of food is paid Rs.40/- a day for upto 100 students and Rs.58/- for meals for more than 100 children. In villages more emphasis is on meals, not on education. Expenditure on the scheme is calculated on a six-day plan with a changing menu. The government has modified the menu to be served from Monday to Saturday and has increased the allocation of money from Rs.1 per child to Rs.2 per child per day, along with a detailed calculation on protein content, energy content and item wise expenditure. But, the estimates are a bit of a joke and not based on any ground realities. After all 25 g dal costs about Rs.1 and not 50 paise as estimated. Similarly, 14g ghee would cost nearer to Rs.2.10 rather than the 70 paise allocated. It is not clear which dry fruits the State intends to provide children that will cost 10 paise per child. The scheme has attracted students from families below the poverty line. Parents of well-to-do families prefer quality education to mid day meals. So, they prefer private schools because government primary schools have one or two teachers for as many as 200 children or more and the teachers are also supposed to organize vaccinations, perform census count, electoral poll preparation, tree count, cattle count and give or take training.

Padamalatha Ravi (Dec. 5, 2006) reported that in southern states of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, school authorities say and the records show that while enrolment has not been substantially improved as a result of meal programme, school attendance has certainly gone up by 10-12%. In Karnataka, by the year 2005-06, the programme covered 5 lakh government primary schools and 7 lakh government aided primary schools. Records at DPI office show that school attendance has increased by 2-10% across the state. Attendance registers collaborate this data. It was also stated that there was considerable room for improvement in the scheme. This article brought out some of the problems linked with the scheme like cooks were not paid enough, so they were very unhappy and did a bad job, and would even steal the rations meant for children. But, if we questioned them, they would show their anger on the food, and the children would
suffer. One of the headmasters reported that there was 80 minutes’ loss to school time everyday due to this scheme. The situation improved after the NGO ISKCON’s Akshaya Patra; Samarthanam, a trust for the disabled in Bangalore, started supplying ready to eat meal to the schools.

The Tribune (March 25, 2007) in its pull out Spectrum, published a few articles on the very first page reporting that mid-day meals dished out to primary school children across the country under orders of the Supreme Court were still to meet expectations. The record in the northern states is patchy; good only in parts. Faced with inadequate infrastructure, pilferage, poor quality of food and official apathy, the scheme has a long way to go before it meets the objectives of improving school attendance and health of students. Chitleen K. Sethi from Punjab, in one article, pointed out that lack of infrastructure like kitchens and store rooms in the schools made the implementation of the scheme difficult. Firewood was used for cooking the meal, which increased the burden of the teachers. The quality of the food being given to the students needed drastic improvement. Raw material had been found infested with worms. Rodents and fungus had been reported to be present in food in many schools. There were no arrangements to save the raw material from rains and rainy water. Firewood also got wet, which did not burn easily and properly. In the absence of proper kitchens every nook and corner of the school was being used for cooking, which made the whole school look untidy and messy.

The article by Rakesh Lohumi from Himachal Pradesh entitled Unwarranted Burden, pointed out that the biggest criticism came from the teachers, who felt that their main duty of teaching the students was being affected. It added that more than one third of the total schools had just two teachers, one was preoccupied with mid-day meal scheme, and, the other was unable to handle all the five classes. In both the cases, the studies of the students suffered a lot. The teachers were finding the maintenance of accounts in stock registers, making purchases and other related duties too cumbersome. The staff at block, district and state headquarters was also not happy with the additional duties given to them regarding the mid day meal scheme.
The writer also reported that a recent survey conducted by Himachal Pradesh University revealed that the school managements at times found it difficult to meet the expenses of vegetables and fruits, but the children were happy with the quality and quantity of meals. They no longer brought their own tiffins. The schools get Rs.2.50 per child per day but it was not enough. The state has authorized the school management committees to make purchases of ingredients such as pulses, vegetables, fuels, spices and oil for which funds are provided by BPEO’s. The schools were supposed to display the menu approved by the local community, but most of them were lax in this regard. In the same pull out, after having surveyed different Government primary schools in Haryana, Geetanjali Gayatri reported that the incentive of mid-day meal scheme in the schools had started giving positive results in regard to the attendance of students. She says, “The mid day meal scheme has proved to be a boon as far as getting children to school is concerned. The high dropout rate has been checked.” The education scenario changed for the better in the state. Parents, who withdrew their children from the schools and sent them to shops and people’s homes to wash utensils, felt interested in sending their children to schools where the children could get mid-day meal. The writer quoted many students saying that they liked to come to school because they could get food with knowledge. Despite much resentment shown by the teaching staff, the scheme had flourished and spread-across the state very successfully. The complaints of rotten food items supplied through the central agency were also declining in number. The procurement committee headed by Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) at each district head quarter ensured that quality food was supplied to the students. However, the writer of the article pointed out that the system of supplying the raw material was very erratic. The raw material was deposited at the centre that catered to a group of 5 to 6 schools. The material was provided at different times of the month. As a result the teachers were forced to make the rounds of the centre to get their supplies. Another drawback pointed out was that the schools did not have proper infrastructure to cook the meals. The exercise of cooking turned out to be a bitter experience during rains. In the absence of proper kitchens, classrooms and varandhas were converted into kitchens in the time of rains and scorching heat.
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In the same pull out of the Tribune Shahira Naim wrote from Uttar Pradesh that the mid day meal scheme had no impact on the rate of attendance. A headmistress was quoted as having said that as the food was prepared in a far away kitchen, it was not possible to keep a check on the quality and quantity of the food. Many times a mismatch was found between the attendance of students on a particular day and the amount of food cooked for them. Many times the food had to be thrown because it had been cooked in a large quantity. The write-up admired the efforts made by the UP government to raise the grants of the mid-day meal scheme and ensuring that every student got atleast 450 calories, including 12 grams of proteins, everyday. The menu had also been standardised and painted on the walls of every school. When the write-up was written the total amount that the government was spending everyday on a child was Rs.3.31 which included food grains, transport, administrative and monitoring costs.

In the same pull out, Vibha Sharma wrote from Delhi that in January 2006, the Delhi police brought to light a big scam in the mid day meal scheme. The police caught eight truckloads of rice meant for primary school children that were being siphoned off to a UP based NGO. The writer suspected that this was only the tip of the scam because the NGO was not just supplying rice to primary schools in Delhi, but also to Rajasthan and UP. Besides, there had been instances of food poisoning in Delhi, particularly in Vazirabad and Azadpur areas. From time to time many groups raised a hue and cry about the quality and hygiene of the food. Children were treated like beggars and food was thrown in their plates in a most undignified and disrespectful manner. The article mentioned that the quality rice supplied by the government for the purpose was sold by the contractors in the market. In its place, poor quality of rice costing Rs.6-7 per kg was brought and given to the children. There had also been instances when leftovers from evening schools were supplied to the students of the morning shift. There had also been many cases of cockroaches, flies, worms and pests found in the food. Most of the suppliers treated the scheme as a business opportunity to earn money by false and foul means. In many government schools it was found that they had enrolled the
names of children studying in the private schools to get financial benefits out of the scheme. The article brought out the views of some office bearers of some NGOs as having said that the midday meal scheme had protected children from classroom hunger, increased school enrolment and attendance and provided employment to women. The scheme was found to be really praiseworthy in a country, where more than 50% of the children suffered from malnutrition. It had boosted primary education by increasing enrolment, retention and attendance and had improved nutritional status of children. At the time, the write up was written 11 NGOs were running several centralized kitchens in Delhi and New Delhi from where meals were provided to morning and evening shifts of the schools. Municipal Corporation Delhi officials admitted that there were a few complaints about the food going bad during summers. But, on the whole the scheme was doing just fine.

Puja Awasthi (March. 31, 2007) reported in India Together from Uttar Pradesh that when the mid day meal scheme was launched, 1.86 crore children went to schools. Two years later this figure has risen by 52 lakhs. An equally important challenge is widespread poverty in a state where 40 percent of the population lives below the poverty line and is plagued by severe malnutrition, a mid-day meal scheme is a mass feeding programme unlike anywhere else. And, officials would like to believe that the large rise in enrolment during the last two years is the evident result of the mid day meal scheme. But with Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan and a number of other government initiatives such as the provision of free text books, and scholarships also being launched concurrently, only some of the gains in enrolment can be attributed to the meal programme. Moreover, as in many other parts of the country, the increase in the enrolment bears little relation to the actual number who attend school for all hours. A study in 216 schools of 28 districts with a total enrolment of 34,359 students, carried out by the Movement For Right To Food and Employment, an umbrella organization of 40 grassroot bodies, revealed that the school attendance is uniformly poor and on average
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stands at a shocking low of 16 percent. The writer also reported that school officials are also under great pressure to show rising enrolment. One of the Principals reported that there have been instances when children are enrolled in more than one school for the meal. Teachers are also guilty of marking absent children present just to prove that attendance is high. There is a lot of pressure to show high enrolment and retention figures even though children are not staying in school after the meal. The writer also reported that even after improving the mid-day meal scheme, in 2006 the nutrition is questionable. When this scheme was checked in 2006 by a team dispatched by UP’s Lok Ayukta justice Verma it was found far from satisfactory. They reported that children throw away food because it tastes bad or they fear that they will fall sick. The scheme is turning into a nightmare. Instead of providing nutrition and strength, the mid day meal is eating into our children’s health. How do we justify something like this?

It was also reported that besides the provision of a weekly menu (painted on school walls) that provides an interesting mix of food options, most schools do not follow this. The resulting monotony puts children off. Diversions from the menu are attributed to lack of cooking utensils, as well as unwillingness among the staff to put in the required hours of work.

J.N. Singh a consultant from Uttar Pradesh Voluntary Action Network (UPVAN) (March. 31, 2007) regarded Mid Day Meal Scheme as a flawed approach.......reported in India Together by saying that fault lies in the mindset with which the scheme has been approached. “Children are entitled to the mid day meal as a right, yet they are treated like beggars. Food portions are small and served with little interest. There was hype of the mother touch when the scheme was launched. That is completely missing. Children place their food on newspapers. There are no hand pumps to wash hands. The cook does not have clean clothes. And no one is bothered about what the children are eating.” The quality of food is also impacted by the lack of storage facilities. Instances of foodgrains being stolen are not rare. It was also reported that problems with the
scheme are also linked to the poor compensation provided to the cooks and the rules for their selection. Teachers too have begun to regard the scheme as a burden, because they are expected to assist in the operations of the scheme, and are also held accountable for failures that are not directly within their purview. The writer reported that Rajesh Mishra, founder director of Lok Mitra, a Raebareli based NGO, says, “In rural areas, teachers’ involvement is a must. Most schools have only one teacher who is hard pressed to keep an eye on the quality of the food. As the gram pradhan is often unapproachable, complaints are made to the teachers. If utensils go missing the teacher is supposed to compensate. How can there be any enthusiasm?

In government corridors there is the realization that the scheme needs to be remedied at once. One reaction has been to start grading schools according to their commitment to the scheme. Another is to carry out surprise checks. Informed opinion holds that proper co-ordination, concentration of responsibilities with the Pradhan, denial of scholarship if attendance falls below 80 percent and the establishment of separate accounts to deposit conversion charges, could all be helpful. At heart, what the mid-day meal scheme in UP appears to need, is a commitment to the basic dignity of the state’s children.

Satish Seth (April 3, 2007) published a news item in The Tribune, with very stunning title which reads, “36 students fall ill after mid-day meal.” Nearly 36 students of government primary school Kailram of Kaithal district fell ill after taking sweet rice as mid day meal. The victims were admitted to the civil hospital. The news reported that after consuming sweet rice, some students started vomiting and complained of nausea and loose motions. One parent named Nathuram, a BSF Hawaldar on leave, said that government should stop the scheme as it was not being managed properly and food was of poor quality. In this context the State Deputy General Secretary Haryana Teachers Union Sh. Jaiparkash Shastri said that the government should provide proper cooking and storage facility for food.
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**Amar Ujala (April 8, 2007)** carried a news item from Jalalabad quoting Sh. Lakhwinder Singh Ladhar, the headmaster of government elementary school Village Rakha Hamir having said that the government was keeping its eyes shut to the problems faced by the schools and teachers in regard to the mid day meal scheme. He pointed out that the schools were neither getting wheat and rice regularly nor the schools are being provided funds for the purpose. He further pointed out that at many places the teachers had spent money on the scheme from their own pockets. For the smooth and successful run of the scheme, he impressed upon the government to provide sufficient rations to the schools regularly and on time.

**Pioneer (April 25, 2007)** reported that the mid day meal scheme of the Ministry of Human Resource Development which was meant for the primary school children had run into rough water in the National Capital Territory (NCT). A performance audit by the Comptroller Auditor General of India (CAG) of the scheme covering the period 2001-02 to 2005-06 had revealed the poor performance of mid-day meal scheme of the ministry of HRD with respect to planning and implementation. The report said that the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), New Delhi Municipal Corporation (NMCD) and the Government of National Capital Territory (NCT) had failed in delivering the benefit of the scheme. The implementation of the scheme lacked the necessary co-ordination and overall perspective that contributed to delays in assessing the requirements of foodgrains, differences in quantities of cooked meal provided to children and lack of uniformity in implementing the scheme by the NCT Government, NDMC and MCD. Nearby 74,000 children enrolled in Education Guarantee Scheme/Alternative and Innovative Education Centres were yet to be benefited from the scheme. There was also a shortfall of 50 percent in lifting of foodgrains during the period from 2001 to 2006, indicative of poor planning and monitoring of the scheme.
Ratna Bharali Talukdar (May 7, 2007) published an article entitled Driving up attendance, but penetration poor in India Together. The writer visited Simina Adarsha Prathamik Vidyalaya of Assam and reported that a total of 261 barefooted students had come to school and all of them had enjoyed the khichri served during the tiffin break. The Headmaster said that the attendance had increased that year, after it was made mandatory for the school authorities to provide students a cooked mid-day meal, since January 2007. Prior to introduction of the scheme, the attendance varied between 50 to 60 percent. The school has a tin-roofed cooking shed, but no store, one cook and three helpers for preparing the meals. None of them has undergone any training on nutrition, hygiene, maintenance of accounts, and other essential skills, although the National Advisory Council had recommended for training of cooks. The school has a tubewell as source of drinking water but no filter. The children cleaned the dishes after taking the meal. The reporter also reported the Nagaon, established by the Gauhati University, working as the Monitoring Institute (MI) of SSA reported that there was no uniformity in the implementation of the mid day meal scheme in the schools of the district visited by MI. The report revealed that many schools were serving cooked meal and many schools were distributing uncooked rice. Fruits, eggs were rarely served and green vegetables also rarely added to the meal. Many of the children were not happy with the quality of the meal provided to them.

Although the Department of Education in the State is yet to make a study on impact of mid day meal scheme on the attendance of students, headmasters of a number of schools particularly in rural and conflict affected areas in the state have already said that proper implementation of the scheme may be an effective instrument in ensuring regular attendance of children, particularly the children of underprivileged families.

The challenges in reaching the goal of mandatory cooked mid day meal scheme in Assam, that the DEE has identified are: (i) Foodgrains and funds do not flow together, ii) Reimbursement of transportation cost is cumbersome, iii) Proper
kitchen cum store is not available in the schools, iv) Storing of foodgrains is not safe in most of the schools, v) Utensils/kitchen devices could not be made available to EGS and AIE Centres and vi) Dearth of committed NGOs to volunteer for the implementation of the scheme.

Surendra Miglani (May 14, 2007) from The Hindustan Times, published a news item from Kaithal. In this news, the writer pointed out that the inspecting team had found foodstocks in many schools of Kaithal district not only substandard, but also of a grade inferior to the samples that the tender committee had cleared on March 6, 2007. At the time the report was published, the Kaithal district didn’t have any inspection team to check the mid day meal scheme in schools.

Sarabjit Singh Dhaliwal (May 29, 2007) published a news item in Rozana Ajit from Ferozeshah, which reported that the scheme might be great success only in the papers, but the reality is totally contrary. The correspondent pointed out that the scheme was totally a misuse of the government funds and it was nothing more than a torture for the teachers. The decision of the government to spend Rs.1.95 on every student was found to be laughable. This meagre amount was to be spent right from the purchase of salt to fuel. The teachers always remained occupied with the updating of the registers which adversely affected the studies of the students. The news item also reported that in the absence of the supply of raw material, the teachers had to get the same on credit from the local shops. The data filled in the papers did not correspond with the reality.

Harpreet Singh, a teacher from Government Primary School, Sanghu Rumana, Faridkot (July 6, 2007) published a news item which pointed out that mid day meal scheme had not shown its magic. Students were found to have become fed up with the same type of menu of porridge (Dal) or watery dal or watery khichri. This news item also pointed out that the burden of the teachers had increased. They could not pay proper attention to the teaching work because they remained busy most of time with the preparation
and distribution of mid-day meals. The writer pointed out that instead of giving porridge, khichri, rice etc biscuits, toffees, chocolates, fruits etc could be given to the students, which would save the teachers from the burdens and responsibilities. The students could be given stationary, instead. If the mid day meal scheme left an adverse effect on the studies of the students, it would not be a beneficial exercise. The writer also pointed out the prevailing party politics in many schools, which hindered the smooth run of the scheme.

Puja Awasthi (Aug. 17, 2007) reported from Uttar Pradesh that during a surprise visit, district magistrate was told by the students and parents that the teachers would regularly throw the plates with mid day meals at Dalit Children, make them sit apart from rest of the class and cane them with a separate stick, washing their hands soon after. Dalit Children wait in the background for their mid day meals while other eat in front. At a government primary school of village Bhagwanpura of Jalour District. Sanjeev Kuamr, a class-IV student of this school says, “My teachers do not permit me to sit on the mat. The Thakurs and Brahmin students in my class ask me to keep away from the mat. My teachers ask me to sit on the ground. During mid day meals, we are forcibly seated very far and in the last. The children from general castes don’t like to play with us. If I go to the teachers for getting the home work or class work checked they see it without touching it”. Kumar is lucky that his teachers don’t thrash him.

Sarabjit Singh Dhaliwal (Aug. 25, 2007) Correspondent of Rozana Ajit published a news item from Ferozeshah that mid day meal scheme was on the death bed in primary schools. It pointed out that funds were being misused in the name of mid day meal scheme. It was pointed out that the scheme looked successful only on papers. There was total mismanagement in the supply of wheat and rice and the grants for the purpose. The teachers, who were interviewed, said that they had spent much money from their own pockets due to the non-availability of the funds. Such type of period was from 3 to 6 months. The report said that the mid-day meal scheme should be handed over to some separate
agency, instead of the teachers of the schools. The services of the teachers should be utilized exclusively for teaching work.

**Jupinderjit Singh (Sept. 23, 2007)** Correspondent of The Tribune published a news item saying “Ration for mid-day meal rotting.” In the absence of fund for cooking the food, ration worth crores stored in various schools of the state under the mid-day meal scheme was rotting. The aim to arrest the disease of dropouts stood defeated because the scheme remained non operational for many months. The report revealed that the government was not very prompt in sending the funds. It also pointed out that larva infested rice was found in one of the primary schools in Ludhiana district. At many places school heads and teachers had paid money from their own pockets to cook the food. Storage facilities were also found lacking in most schools.

**Raj Narula (Sept. 25, 2007)** from Dainik Jagran published a news item reporting that the mid day meal scheme was on its last legs. This news item pointed out that schools did not get grants on time; raw material was supplied to them much late, teachers had to spend money from their own pockets; studies were being neglected etc. Many times funds were not found compatible with the expenditure incurred by the teachers on the supply of mid-day meals to the students.

**Bhupinder Singh Brar (Oct. 07, 2007)** in Rozana Ajit, wrote about the new menu introduced by the government. According to it, it was made necessary to cook green vegetables also. But, it was a matter of concern that no extra money was provided in the funds for the purchase of green vegetables. It increased the problem of the teachers because green vegetables could not be stored which meant that the teacher was required to go to the market everyday to bring vegetables. According to this menu, every student was to be provided 50 grams of green vegetables. The news item also pointed out that the rations pertaining to the months of March, and April was received in the month of August and September.
**India edunews.NET (Nov. 21, 2007)** published an article entitled Crises in Mid-Day-Meal Programme reporting that in New Delhi no communication regarding enhancement of prices of wheat and rice for the mid-day meal scheme had been received from the Department of Food and Public Distribution. As per existing terms and conditions, the cost of food grains is reimbursed at the BPL rates. Some complaints about irregularities in the implementation of the mid day meal scheme have come to the notice of the Government. As and when complaints come to the notice of the State Government/Union Territory administrators are asked to conduct suitable enquiry and initiate corrective actions.

State/UT’s are continuously advised and encouraged to establish systems to avoid recurrence of such incidents and give full attention to the issues of quality and regular supply of food and prevent misuse of resources. States have also been urged to involve the parents, community members, village education committee members and Panchayati Raj Institutions to supervise the cooking and serving of mid day meal to children.

**Punjab Kesari (Dec. 11, 2007)** wrote an editorial pointing out that mid day meals scheme was a futile experiment. The editorial brought out the problems being faced by the teachers in carrying out this mid day meal scheme in a very emphatic manner. It also revealed that rations had been often found worm-infested, not fit for human consumption. The teachers themselves had to manage the preparations of the meals because no separate staff had been provided to schools. The scheme had resulted in the neglect of the studies of the students. There were no facilities for the storage of the raw material. As a result many times the raw material was stolen at many places. Inquiries are held against the teachers in case the students fell ill. As a result the teacher could not pay attention to the teaching work properly. The editorial also pointed out that a major part of the raw material is sold in the market by the corrupt people. The editorial vehemently opposed the mid day meal scheme and wanted the government to wind it up. It wrote that instead of spending crores of rupees on mid day meal scheme, the same
amount should be spent on improving the conditions of the government schools. The government should implement Compulsory Education Act forcefully so that children upto the age of 14, should attend the school by all means without being given the temptation of mid day meal scheme.

Brar (Dec. 15, 2007) brought out a news item in Rozana Ajit, that the teachers of 19 blocks of Abohar area wanted the government to send them a grant of Rs.82 lakh, which they had spent from their own pockets to carry out the mid day meal scheme. The news item also carried the split-up detail of the expenses spent by the teachers.

Aditi Tandon (Dec. 23, 2007) reported in The Tribune that the Punjab was the worst in the implementation of mid day meal scheme.

Rozana Ajit (2008) published the view points of Sh. Gurmail Singh of Senior Secondary School Badni Kalan, Moga, who very strongly opposed the policies of the government of allotting such duties to the teachers as were not remotely concerned with their teaching job. He criticized the mid-day meal scheme saying that teachers had been reduced to the status of a cook. He asked the government how reasonable it was to expect good results from them when most of the time of the teachers was spent on non educational duties. The scheme work could be given to unemployed youth, paying them suitable rumeration. In the same article, Jaswinder Kaur of Senior Girls School Takhanwad (Moga) and Tarsem Singh Rodhe of Government Elementary School Dusanjh (Moga) also expressed similar views regarding the mid day meal scheme.

The Tribune (Feb. 05, 2008) reported that the implementation of mid day meal scheme was all the more difficult in the schools where a single teacher was appointed to look after all the five classes. The newspaper gave the example of Manjit Kaur, working in Government Elementary School Tarapur near Chandigarh.
**Dainik Jagran (Mrach. 14, 2008)** carried a news item which revealed that in the district of Abohar, many schools had not received the grants for mid-day meal scheme for more than two months despite the fact that the SDM of Abohar had himself talked to Director Krishan Kumar. Block Primary Education Officer Mr. Bhatti was quoted to have said that many teachers had spent money from their own pockets in the absence of grants. It was also pointed that grant and ration were supplied for 80% of the enrolled students, whereas the meals were served to more than 90% students. It also compelled the teachers to make adjustments in the expenditure.

In the same news item Rakesh Sharma revealed from Ferozepur that the scheme was coming to a stop because the teachers were not being given funds and rations on time. In that case children would be the sufferers. A few teachers, told Rakesh Sharma, that they made arrangements for cooking from their own pockets. The money spent by them in this regard is disbursed to them after a gap of many months.

**Goyal (May 5, 2008)** reported in Rozana Ajit from Malout that many children did not like the mid day food as they found it to be under cooked, which causes digestive problems resulting in pain in the stomach.

**S.S. Phul (July 14, 2008)** published a news item in Rozana Ajit, saying that mid day meal had become a headache for schools and teachers. In this news item he compared the students to beggars. A grant of 45,751 lakh was sent to 13,332 primary schools to get sheds prepared by some expert agency for the preparation of mid day meals, but the same was got done by ordinary artisans resulting in the construction to be shabby and undependable. The amount of grant sent to buy gas, gas stoves, utensils etc. was also not properly spent because most of the schools bought only those utensils which could be used for only cooking. Schools were not left with any amount to buy plates, bowls, spoons etc, which the students brought from their homes. The news item reported that PUNSUP was required to supply rice, wheat etc to every school, but the department supplied the
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material to the centre schools, from where the dependent schools carried the raw material at their own. It was also pointed out that the burden of the teachers had increased since they had to fill in different registers. They had to attend meetings related with mid day meal scheme which badly affected the teaching work of the school.

Sanjeevan Singh Dadhwal (Aug. 1, 2008) published an article in Rozana Ajit, which pointed out that the studies of the students was a big casualty in the wake of mid day meal scheme. The teachers remained occupied with the mid day meal scheme most of the time, which they could dedicate to the education of children. The government of India itself carried out surveys from time to time which revealed that the teachers were being put on non-teaching duties which had proved very harmful for the students. It was said that the students came to schools not only to eat food but to get education which was the primary aim of the schools and the teachers. The stress had completely shifted from the impartation of education to the distribution of mid day food and carrying out different surveys, which were not remotely related with the teaching work of the teachers. The news item reported that with the extension of the scheme upto VIII class, the studies of IX, X, XI and XII class would also suffer on account of the non availability of some teachers to the higher classes. It would create mismanagement and indiscipline to a large extent, especially in the schools where the staff was already short and the buildings were not spacious.

Jaspal Pali and Iqbal Shaant (Aug. 24, 2008) published a news item in Rozana Ajit, telling that in a government primary school, Mandhi Dabhwali, 51 students fell ill, after having eaten parched grams, which were served to them as mid day meal. Parents gathered in the school and raised slogans against the teaching staff. This situation arose because the raw material had not been of a very good quality and it had not been checked. The teachers said that they had used the raw material which had been supplied to them by government agency. The
situation worsened so much that the SDM Dabhwali ordered that a police case should be registered against the head teacher Leela Dhar Sharma.

Master Malkiat Singh (Aug. 31, 2008) published an article in Rozana Ajit. The writer made fun of the mid day meal scheme. In a very ironical way, the writer pointed out that the teachers had been reduced to the status of a cook. The article compels us to think whether the mid day meal scheme has raised the status of the teachers or otherwise. People are found making fun of them.

Express News Service (Oct 25, 2008) reported from New Delhi that the CAG has said in its performance audit report of the Mid Day Meal (MDM) Programme (the report covered the implementation of the scheme across the country from 2002-03 to 2006-07) that the Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry has failed in proper assessment, monitoring, data collection, and ensuring proper infrastructure in schools for implementing the scheme. The ministry, which started the programme with an aim to improve the status of primary education, is yet to assess the impact of the scheme with respect to the rise in enrolment, attendance and retention level of children. “Neither the ministry nor the state governments have established or even attempted to establish any system for measuring a direct relationship between the increase in attendance and the MDM scheme, despite the scheme delineating increase in attendance as a specific objective in guideline up to 2004”.

“Though the scheme has been operational for more than 12 years and involved outlays reaching Rs 5234.27 crore in 2006-07, the ministry has not established any system to assess the outcome of the scheme in terms of well-defined parameters”. The report also says that the implementation of the scheme has been marred by lack of proper monitoring, leading to leakages and states submitting inflated transportation costs. Even though the scheme is aimed at increasing the nutrition level of children in schools, the ministry does not have any information on the nutrition status of children covered under the scheme. The
steering -cum- monitoring committee (SMC), set up to review the impact of the scheme at national and state levels, did not meet regularly.

Syed Ali Ahmed (April 20, 2009) reported from New Delhi that the recommendations of Public Accounts Committee of Delhi Government on the Mid-Day Meal Scheme were not being implemented by several schools. The Audit report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India relating to the Government of Delhi for 2006 revealed that the implementation of the mid day meal scheme in the national capital had inadequacies in planning, funds management, implementation and monitoring of the project.

“The NGOs involved in preparation and distribution of the much-hyped Mid-Day meal had no licence to prove their experience of food supply. They do not have sealed containers to supply food and their kitchens were also not fully prepared as per the guidelines issued by the government”.

There was almost 50 per cent shortfall in lifting of food grains during the period between 2001 and 2006 indicating poor implementation of the scheme. No joint inspections were carried out by the implementing agencies to ensure that the food grains supplied by the Food Corporation of India were at least of Fair Average Quality. The financial resources meant for the mid day meal were also not fully utilized. The nodal department did not ensure that the cooked meals being supplied to the schools conformed to the stipulated quality or quantity. In 51 out of 308 schools checked, cooked meals were short supplied to the extent of 52 grams per child per day. The monitoring scheme was non-existent till 2005-2006.

India TV (April 22, 2009) reported from Lajpat Nagar, New Delhi that seven students fell ill after taking mid day meal. The victims were admitted to Civil Hospital Safdarganj.

Punjab Kesari (May 31, 2009) published a news item from Bhopal that a frog was found in the mid day meal served at Sarojini Naidu Girls School.
Bhopal. The Bhopal Corporation got a case registered with the police against the Nandhi Foundation, the company which had been contracted to provide food.

**Punjab Kesari (June 10, 2009)** published a news item from Dhanbad district in Jharkhand that a dead snake was found in the mid day meal served to the students in government school at Dhanbad. The news added that on account of this infested food, 60 students fell ill whose treatment was taking place in the local government hospital.

**Punjab Kesari (June 18, 2009)** published a news item from Indore that a lizard was found in the Dal meant to be served as mid day meal to the students of a Government primary school of Indore. The sources added that before this, a cockroach was also found in the mid day meal in the same school.

**Krithika Ramalingan (28 July, 2009)** reported that the only intervention that is available is a noon meal centre run by the NGO. Apart from a nutritious lunch, no other service like weight measurement, nutritious balls or immunization are provided here. The Commissioner appointed by Supreme Court has mandated that mini anganwari centres be opened at sites where bonded labour exists.

**Punjab Kesari (July 31, 2009)** reported from Satna that 86 students fell ill after taking lizard infected mid day meals at Government primary school of Riwara Village. The students were admitted to local hospital.

**P.S. (Aug 8, 2009)** reported from Goa that in Wasko town, 30 students fell ill after taking mid day meals.

**Tapan Chakarvorti (Aug 10, 2009)** reported from Kolkata about the report of CAG on mid day meal scheme in Jharkhand. The CAG pointed out that there were 627 non-existent Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Alternative and Innovative Education (AIE) centres and the expenditure on cooking cost (Rs 3.01 crore) in these schools was "doubtful". There was no marked improvement in attendance rate of students after implementation of MDM scheme. Number of students present was inflated in the attendance register as revealed during physical verification of 10 schools.
Against the total budget allocation (including Central assistance) of Rs 756.73 crore for implementation of MDM scheme during 2003-08, Rs 551.34 crore (72.86 per cent) was spent. In four districts, cooking fund of Rs 21.92 crore meant for serving cooked meals for about 4.38 lakh children were surrendered/allowed to lapse or remitted in Civil Deposit.

CAG report further said that state government did not establish any indicators for measuring the impact on nutrition and health. There was no assurance that stipulated nutritional requirements were being provided. Periodical health check-ups were also not being organised by the district authorities. Monitoring and supervision of the MDM scheme was deficient and impact of the implementation remained unevaluated.

Punjab Kesari (Aug 23, 2009) published a news item from Jaipur that 56 students fell ill after taking mid-day meals in two schools of the district.

Punjab Kesari (Aug 24, 2009) reported from Shiwani, Madhya Pradesh that five students of a government primary school fell ill after taking Poha served as mid day meal. After investigation it was found that a dead lizard was there in the Poha that was served to the students. The students started vomiting and were admitted to the local hospital.

Vijay (Aug 30, 2009) Correspondent of Punjab Kesari, after summarising various incidents related with poor quality of mid-day meal and problems in its implementation reported that mid-day meal scheme is a mere wastage of funds and food grains.

Kannon Kasturi (Oct. 29, 2009) reported from Bundelkhand that a government school that the writer visited had a board displayed that declares the menu for mid day meal each day. The menu included rice, different dals and green and other vegetables. But it was not followed as the residents said that the children only got rice gruel.
Review of Related Literature

Fall in dropout rate

Haryana officials are satisfied with the running of the scheme. Photo: Malkiat Singh

Unwarranted burden

Continued from page 1

PLUS POINT: Attendance in Haryana schools has shot up. Photo: Malkiat Singh

Missing kitchens, stores

PUNJAB

Gagan K. Sethi

If poor People whose only 
the reason for their poor 
health is the lack of food. The village primary 
school in Punjab which is used to cook the mid-day meal. The quality of food 
given to the students is often poor. The village level education committees and 
the mothers' help groups have sent requisitions to the government for grants to 
build kitchens and stores but these are still awaited.
Review of Related Literature

अभिप्रयवक्त ज्ञान की भाषा है। इसे अभिप्रयवक्ता कहते हैं। अभिप्रयवक्ता में अभिप्रयवक्त भाषा की भाषा है। इसे अभिप्रयवक्ता कहते हैं। अभिप्रयवक्ता में अभिप्रयवक्त भाषा की भाषा है। इसे अभिप्रयवक्ता कहते हैं। अभिप्रयवक्ता में अभिप्रयवक्त भाषा की भाषा है। इसे अभिप्रयवक्ता कहते हैं। अभिप्रयवक्ता में अभिप्रयवक्त भाषा की भाषा है। इसे अभिप्रयवक्ता कहते हैं। अभिप्रयवक्ता में अभिप्रयवक्त भाषा की भाषा है। इसे अभिप्रयवक्ता कहते हैं। अभिप्रयवक्ता में अभिप्रयवक्त भाषा की भाषा है। इसे अभिप्रयवक्ता कहते हैं।

जो भी किसी भी माननीय विद्वान का कार्य को संबोधित करता है, उसे अभिप्रयवक्ता कहते हैं। अभिप्रयवक्ता में अभिप्रयवक्त भाषा की भाषा है। इसे अभिप्रयवक्ता कहते हैं। अभिप्रयवक्ता में अभिप्रयवक्त भाषा की भाषा है। इसे अभिप्रयवक्ता कहते हैं। अभिप्रयवक्ता में अभिप्रयवक्त भाषा की भाषा है। इसे अभिप्रयवक्ता कहते हैं। अभिप्रयवक्ता में अभिप्रयवक्त भाषा की भाषा है। इसे अभिप्रयवक्ता कहते हैं। अभिप्रयवक्ता में अभिप्रयवक्त भाषा की भाषा है। इसे अभिप्रयवक्ता कहते हैं। अभिप्रयवक्ता में अभिप्रयवक्त भाषा की भाषा है।
Mid-day meal suppliers seek more funds

Mid-day meal scheme comes to a grinding halt in Punjab

Ration for mid-day meal rotting

Ludhiana, September 22

Ration worth crores stored in cold rooms, never given

Ludhiana: Mid-day meal suppliers are seeking more funds for the noon meal scheme. The government has promised to increase the budget for the scheme, but many suppliers say they are still facing financial difficulties.

A Tribune news report highlights that the mid-day meal scheme is facing a crisis in Punjab, where the scheme has come to a grinding halt due to lack of funds. The report highlights the struggle of mid-day meal suppliers who are seeking more funds to continue providing meals to school children.

The report quotes a source who says that despite the government's promise to increase the budget for the scheme, many suppliers are still facing financial difficulties. They have written to the government for an urgent increase in the budget to ensure the scheme's continuity.

The Tribune news report also highlights the struggle of mid-day meal suppliers in other parts of the country. It mentions that despite the government's promises, the scheme has been facing financial difficulties in many states, leading to a decline in the quality of meals provided to school children.

The report concludes by calling on the government to take immediate action to ensure the scheme's continuity and improve the quality of meals provided to school children.
Mid-day meals on infected wheat

Mid-day meal off, 3 teachers suspended

Fungus-infested meal given to schoolchildren

Kaithal has no one to check quality of midday meals

Confused manager or urges DC to set up panel
2.2.3 Publications Related with the Present Status of Mid Day Meal Scheme in Ferozepur District (w.e.f. Aug. 2008)

Pappu Sandha (Sept. 20, 2008) Correspondent of Rozana Ajit published a news item from Panje Ke Uttar. He pointed out that the standard of the mid day meals supplied by private agencies was not good. Sh. Puran Chand, Block Primary Education Officer (BPEO) and Sh. Balbir Singh, headteacher, criticized the government for introducing mid day meal scheme. They wanted that the students should be provided quality food.

Rajesh Dhand and Jagtar Manes (Sept. 24, 2008) published a news item in Rozana Ajit from Zira. It also brought out the fact that the mid day food was not of good quality. The contractors were using low quality of raw material. The matter was reported to the higher authorities, but it was a matter of sorrow that they did not take any action against the contractors. The news item added that the system of supplying of low quality food should not be allowed to continue any more.

Rajesh Dhand and Jagtar Manes (Oct 11, 2008) reported in Rozana Ajit from Zira saying that non-standard food being supplied as mid day meal played havoc with the health of the students. The teachers knew the facts, but could not oppose the scheme fearing that they would be penalized for it. The contractors were not paying any attention to the quality and standard of the food. The chairman of PASWAK Committee, Kiranpal Singh Sodhi, found dead flies and pieces of stale chapattis in the food. It was also found that there were no proper arrangements in the kitchens to keep the food well covered. There was every chance of any reptile or insect to get into the cooked food.
Bhupinder Singh Brar (Oct 13, 2008) Correspondent of Rozana Ajit from Abohar reported that 9,000 quintal ration lying in different schools of 19 blocks of the district was being spoiled by rats and other insects. The wheat and rice were decaying and decomposing. The teachers were under tension as to how to save the rations from being decomposed. In the absence of proper storage, rains could also play havoc with the rations lying in the classrooms and in the varanadhas.

Jagdish Thind (Oct. 31, 2008) published a news item in Rozana Ajit from Ferozepur, which also pointed out that thousands of quintals of raw material lying in schools was turning into a heap of garbage. Teachers are of the opinion that the main reason of it is the absence of co-ordination between Director General School Education (DGSE) and other education authorities. The focus of DGSE was rivetted only on Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan and Mid Day Meal Scheme, but the Director General was not bothered about the other problems of the schools. The news reported that the scheme of supplying food by the contractors was on trial basis and the same would be stopped considering the complaints against the contractor. It clearly shows that scheme is in quandary.

Jaswinder Singh Sandhu (Nov. 25, 2008) reported in Rozana Ajit, from Ferozepur that the contract of supplying mid day meal had been given to private firms, which had been found extremely careless as frogs, cockroaches and lizards had been found in the food supplied by the contractors. The news item reported that the contractors supplied meal cooked 15-20 hours earlier and the number of students they had been catering to was extremely unmanageable touching about 40,000 students covering 400 schools.
**Sarabjit Singh Dhaliwal (Dec 1, 2008)** a correspondent of Rozana Ajit, published a news item from Ferozshah that the claims of the success of the mid day meal scheme were fake and false and were only on the papers. In fact the scheme was running awry. It was also reported that the food was prepared 10-12 hours earlier than the time of distribution. The food could go stale in such a longtime especially in extremely hot days and in the rainy seasons. The local leaders of Ferozeshah impressed upon the government not to play with the health of the children by providing them non standard food. Many teachers revealed that they were not allowed to talk about the low quality of food and the problems faced by them to the media. They were threatened that strict action would be taken against them if they dared to do so. This could be one reason that the project was not getting rid of its pitfalls.

**Bhupinder Singh Brar (Dec. 5, 2008)** published a news item in Rozana Ajit reporting that worms were found in the mid day meal in government elementary school Rajpura in Abohar subdivision. The angry villagers locked two vans of the contractor in the school. The vans were allowed to go out only when the representative of the contractor apologized in writing and promised to improve the quality of the food. With a great difficulty the villagers and parents were calmed down.

**Jaswinder Singh Sandhu (Dec 5, 2008)** a correspondent of Rozana Ajit pointed out that the mid day meal scheme was on its last legs. The news item pointed out that most of the schools were not sticking to the fixed menu. A private company named Istrishakti was providing rice or daliya everyday. The students had been found not much interested in the same type of food. Many students had been found throwing the mid day meal out on the roadsides or in the canals. The material provided by the Istrishakti agency is not more than 50gm per student, whereas it had been fixed at 150gm. It clearly showed that raw material amounting
Review of Related Literature

to lakhs of rupees was being embezzled. According to the report 5 lakh children were being supplied the same menu everyday in Tarntaran, Nawanshahar and Ferozepur. In the name of nourishing food, infested and worm-ridden food was being served to the students.

Kulwinder Sandhu (Jan 4, 2009) published a news item in The Tribune, from Ferozepur reporting that Deputy Commissioner of Ferozepur Sh. Megh Raj at a surprised checking of government elementary school at village Varaha Bhai Ka, found rat excreta in daliya meant to be given to the students under mid day meal scheme. He wrote to the Director General of School Education (DGSE) to take action against the organization Istrishakti that had prepared the meals. The Deputy Commissioner was compelled to issue a warning to all the concerned to provide quality food.

Batra (March 20, 2009) from Amar Ujala published the present status of the mid day meal scheme informing that Istrishakti mid day meal was proving a blessing for the teachers since it relieved the teachers of the burden of collecting the raw material, cooking the food and distributing the same among the children. Teachers were found very happy over the fact that the government had hired the services of Istrishakti Sanstha to provide food in the district of Ferozepur, Tarantaran and Nawanshahar.

Davinder Pal Singh and Sanjeev Jhamb (March 22, 2009) correspondents of Rozana Ajit published a news item from Fazilka reporting that foul smelling food had been served at village Sureshwala Sainian in Fazilka sub division. The students of that school refused to eat the food when they found it to be giving a foul smell. The local leaders also found the food unfit for human consumption. They took the food to the local SDM to launch a complaint. The SDM reported that when the manager of the firm supplying the food was contacted, he was unable to give any satisfactory answer.
Sarabjit Singh Dhaliwal (April 7, 2009), a correspondent of Rozana Ajit reported from Ferozeshah that the responsibility of the arrangement of mid day meal scheme would be entrusted to the teachers once again keeping in view the unsatisfactory execution of the scheme by the contractors. The responsibility of cooking mid day meal had been given to the contractors keeping in view the protests made by the teachers saying that their teaching work had suffered a lot. But, now, it had been noticed that the food supplied by the contractors was much below the standard and many times the food had been found infested and worm ridden.

Amar Ujala (May 22, 2009) published a news item from Tarantarn reporting that mid day meal supplied to a government elementary school in Noshahara Panuan block was found to be foul smelling and sub standard. The students and their parents protested against it and demanded that the company which had supplied food should be penalized. The Principal of the school, Madam Lakhwinder Kaur, shared her agony with the media saying that the food was often found to be stale and below the fixed quantity and the food never reached the school before 2:00pm and the same menu of food was being supplied to the students. The company was violating the agreement according to which it was required to supply different type of food on every day. The owner of the company, Mr. Vijay Kaushal, denied the charges saying that the company had been supplying the food for the last eight months and the company had been very attentive to the complaints and had always made efforts to keep the standard of food. He added that the government had not paid the company even a single penny for the last five months. Hence, the company was compelled to supply only rice to the students. The company would not stick to the fixed menu on this account.
Pal (May 26, 2009) a correspondent of Jag Bani published a news item that excreta of rat was found in the mid day meal supplied at government primary school, near Bus stand, Talwandi Bhai. The excreta was visible in the rice and the same was giving out a foul smell. The notable persons of Talwandi Bhai stopped the distribution of that foul smelling rice. General Secretary of the Akali Dal and many other well known people of the area asked the government to take strict action against the defaulters.

Raju (July 7, 2009) a correspondent of Rozana Ajit reported from Gidderbaha that foundation stone of a New Kitchen was laid down under mid day meal scheme in Government high school Chotian by the Chairman PASWAK Committee.

Dhand (July 25, 2009) a correspondent of Rozana Ajit reported from Zira that insects were found in the mid day meal supplied by istrishakti in government primary school Butar Roshan Shah. The well known persons of the village requested the higher authorities that good quality food should be sent so that students’ health should be taken care of.

Jaswinder Singh Sandhu (Aug. 28, 2009) reported from Ferozepur that foundation stone of a new kitchen was laid at Government primary school Rame Wala. After laying down the foundation stone, S. Jarnail Singh Chairman PASWAK committee said that they would try their level best to supply clean, balanced and fresh food to the students.
Rat excreta found in mid-day meal

"Diet magistrate of other foreign papers. We have taken a sample from these seeds. Object will be..."
Review of Related Literature

स्कूली बच्चों के परिजनों ने नजायजा गुस्सा

कंपनी पर एक ही तरह का रखना देने का आरोप

मिड-डे मील पूर्ण खाना खाने का निषेध

मिड-डे मील में चावल के साथ मेंडक परोसने पर नांदी फाउंडेशन पर केस दर्ज

भोपाल, 30 मई (इंट.): मिड-डे मील भोजन योजना के तहत दिए जा रहे भोजन में मेंडक पाए जाने के बाद नांदी फाउंडेशन पर केस दर्ज कर बच्चों की जिद्दी रखी।

मिड-डे मील में अब मिली छिपकली

इंदौर, 17 जुन (प.स.): मध्य प्रदेश की राजधानी भोपाल के एक सहकारी क्या विवाद में मिड-डे मील में भोजन मिलने पर बचाव का काम नहीं होता जिसके कारण निर्माणी व्यवसायी ही होता।