

GURU ARJAN DEV INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

***DIAGNOSTIC ANALYSIS
OF MID DAY MEAL
SCHEME IN RURAL
PUNJAB***

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DIAGNOSTIC ANALYSIS OF MID DAY MEAL SCHEME IN RURAL PUNJAB



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Preface

Education empowers a child to explore his potentials and earn a decent living and live a respectable life in our society. Lack of education curtails opportunity for development and leads to the vicious cycle of poverty and hunger. The Government of India has made education for children in the age group of 6 to 14 years compulsory but poverty prevents the underprivileged from getting full value of their educational experience. Hunger obstructs education as children are forced to leave schools and take up menial jobs. Mid day Meal Scheme is a strategic program to address two of the most pressing problems of India: Hunger and Education. To many of our children, the MID DAY MEAL is the only complete meal that they have access to during the entire day. This has produced dramatic results in terms of enrollment, attendance and attention spans. Together we can make a World of Difference, Children of today are our promising hope of Tomorrow, let us make our tomorrow bright by working on our today.

*The present study is undertaken to have an in-depth analysis of the MDM scheme in rural Punjab - one of the agriculturally advanced state of Indian Union. The study is sponsored by Indian Council of Social Sciences Research, Ministry of Human Resources Government of India under their **Senior Fellowship** Program. Financial assistance provided under the scheme is duly acknowledged.*

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Highlights

- *Mid day meal scheme has failed to achieve the goal of Universalization of Elementary Education as prescribed by the **UN Millennium Development Goals (2000)** and followed by Government of India.*
- *In majority of the schools the provision of meals was never interrupted though there has been delay in the delivery of grains and funding.*
- *Teachers were able to keep the meal programme going on either by spending out of their pockets or borrowing from the store and vegetable vendors on loan basis.*
- *Teachers make an extra effort and purchase the grocery items and also take food items on loan so that the children can get food regularly.*
- *Though the activity of the teachers has increased on account of the preparation and supervision of mid day meal, but they did not find it as burdensome. It was an encouraging finding that most of the teachers take it as one of their pleasant duties and many teachers get pleasure to feed the hungry children as they believe no learning is possible with empty stomach.*
- *Teachers are approaching the Trusts, Village Panchayats, Religious Organizations and NGOs for resource mobilization.*
- *The food prepared though not-delicious in majority of the schools yet the students were seen to be having second helping.*
- *In few schools, the parents were regularly visiting to supervise the quality of food grains and cooked food.*
- *None of the schools had displayed on board the attendance for the day; the menu and quantity of food cooked on that day and the expenditure incurred on it.*
- *The poor academic performance of government run schools of Rural Punjab was also very shocking.*

Executive Summary

*Education empowers a child to explore his potentials and earn a decent living and live a respectable life in our society. Lack of education curtails opportunity for development and leads to the vicious cycle of poverty and hunger. Government of India has made education for children in the age group of 6 to 14 years compulsory, but poverty prevents the underprivileged from getting full value of their educational experience. Hunger obstructs education as children are forced to leave schools and take up menial jobs. Mid day Meal scheme is a strategic program to address two of the most pressing problems of India: **Hunger** and **Education**. To many of our children, the mid day meal scheme is the only complete meal that they have access during the entire day. This has produced dramatic results in terms of enrollment, attendance and attention spans. Together we can make a World of Difference. Children of today are our promising hope of Tomorrow; let us make our tomorrow bright by working on our today. Significant efforts have been made in the last sixty years to Universalize Elementary Education. The transition from primary to upper primary and upper primary to secondary level is as high as 94 and 83 per cent. However, the learner's achievement across the country remained unsatisfactory and far below the expectations. Government of India initiated a number of programmes and projects to attain the status of universal enrollment. These include, improvement of infrastructural facilities and sanction of new teacher posts in the Government schools, free textbooks to all the children in Government and Government aided schools, provision for in – service training up to 20 days every year to the teachers of the Government and aided schools, regular academic support to the teachers through Block Resource Centers and Cluster Resource Centers, school grant to all the Government and aided schools and teacher grant for relevant teaching aids to the teachers of these schools, libraries in the Government schools and provision for financial support for context specific quality enhancement interventions. Despite all these significant achievements, the goal of Universal Elementary Education remains elusive and far a distant dream.*

Punjab is no exception to all this. Punjab government has also taken many steps to improve educational status, but in spite of such efforts, the educational status of Punjab is not improving as per expectations. Besides affecting academic achievements of the bright students; the

standards of education are declining fast. Some apparent causes are (a) inadequate inputs, including teachers, (b) defective syllabus, (c) lack of supervision and guidance, (d) absence of clear-cut education policy, (e) centralization of authority with the ministry, sidelining the education officers, (f) uneven distribution of resources, and (g) a parallel system of completely independent public schools.

In Punjab, mid day meal scheme could not be started from the very beginning due to scarcity of funds involved in the conversion of dry foodgrains to cooked meal. However, in compliance with the Supreme Court's order of November 28, 2001; cooked meal was provided to the children of primary classes in one block in every district of Punjab during the year 2002-2003. Government of Punjab started providing cooked meal to all the students of primary classes in government schools with effect from September, 2004. It becomes imperative that a comprehensive evaluation of the scheme be undertaken to judge the efficacy of this scheme. The present study is an in-depth analysis of the MDM-scheme in Rural Punjab - one of the agriculturally advanced states of Indian Union. But from education point of view, there still exists strong regional and gender variations within the state. From a survey, it was said, "The dropout rate of girl's students in government schools of Punjab is increasing. The teacher fraternity attributes it to the poor economic condition of rural masses coupled with lack of awareness and government is blaming on unplanned public schools coming up in every nook and corner of the state." And thus to reduce the dropout rate in the government schools, the state government is providing incentives such as Mid day Meal-scheme, free text books, free stationary, free school uniforms, free bicycles and scholarships etc. to economically weaker section(EWS), SC, ST and OBC students.

From this present analysis, one of the major benefits we observed was the improvement in the enrollment of students due to the MDM-scheme. This indicates a positive improvement as education is also an important indicator of Inclusive Growth of an economy. And some disadvantages we observed were: the inferior quality of meals, poor infrastructure facilities, poor sanitation facilities and major problem we figured out was lack of availability of a teacher i.e. uneven Teacher-Pupil ratio.

Moreover, government schools are dominated by reserved categories enrollment, especially of Schedule castes. The General category students mainly prefer to go for private schools due to various constraints prevalent in the government schools. Delay in funds, poor infrastructure and

shortage of teachers were the biggest problems that we observed through this analysis. Further, poor academic performance of government run schools of Rural Punjab was also very shocking. Average marks obtained by 5th standard students were merely 31 per cent. One of the reason to this problem is that teachers are assigned to supervise the preparation of mid day meal and then distribute that meal to students, this leads to the wastage of precious time of a teacher and a student as well. Because of this time constraint some schools think that due to MDM-scheme the study of student suffer. Furthermore, half an hour is not sufficient for distribution of food to the children. More time is needed, which results into negative impact on studies. Moreover, government teachers are used to assign different non-academic duties also like duties during elections etc. The teachers of government schools take least interest in teaching due to burden of non-academic work. All these causes lethargy, de-motivation, lack of will and personal interests. Moreover, because of lack of proper class rooms; teachers have to combine two or more classes. Sometimes they have to arrange the classes in open areas where the concentration is reduced. The students were not able to answer even simple questions out of their syllabus taught to them. Moreover the children do not know how to write in Hindi, English and even in Punjabi- their mother tongue, their reading skills were so dull, which shows that their performance has to be improved with the adoption of new ideas and innovative techniques.

And some schools do not have proper Kitchens, due to which they cooked the food in open area by using woods and cow-dung cakes. Smoke emitted cause the problem for children especially of respiratory who are attending the lecture in an open area. The traditional method of cooking is due to lack of gas cylinders provided to schools. These are also some reasons for poor academic performance of government run students in Rural Punjab.

Although number of primary schools has increased yet the enrollment of primary government schools is decreasing day by day. Study reveals a lack of infrastructure, lack of teaching aids, low level of education and old teaching methods and techniques are used to teach the students. They do not use CD's, Projectors and computers etc due to lack of knowledge about innovative techniques of teaching. Though government has launched MDM-scheme and has a positive impact on increasing enrollment of students, but still there are lots of loop holes in this scheme. And to get better results out of this MDM-scheme; government must correct these loopholes by framing suitable policies.

To improve the standard of education in rural Punjab, various constraints of government schools should be removed. Financial help has to be given to schools for their daily use. More teachers should be appointed so that the education of students do not effect adversely. For the teachers, training should be arranged so that they can use the innovative teaching technology/methods. Fresh teachers should be appointed in schools only after giving the training about how to teach in class. Moreover the non-academic burden of teachers should be reduced so that they can concentrate on teaching only and improve the student's capabilities. For reducing the teacher's burden, non-teaching staff should be appointed. The confidence level of students will improve through debates and discussions. Their reading-writing and speaking skills will also improve which is also a part of education. A large number of children continue to dropout from the system before completion of an education cycle, which severely affects the efficiency of the education system. The children are taking more years to become primary graduates than ideally required. The unfinished task in terms of enrollment and out-of-school children is a challenging one. Rigorous efforts are needed to bring and retain them under the umbrella of education system. Disaggregated planning with block as its unit may help to identify disadvantage groups and areas. The community, in this direction, can play a vital role in bringing and retaining unenrolled children to schools. Micro planning exercises and development of village education plans may be useful. Despite these efforts, people should be made aware about the importance of education. They should understand that how education is important for their children. For creating awareness, the help of NGOs can be taken which can boost up the level of education in Punjab.

*Apparently, it is the total neglect of government schools by the successive governments by not providing adequate number of teachers as well as infrastructural facilities which has led to the collapse of the elementary education in the rural area of Punjab. In order to ensure quality education in government schools, emphasis should be on teacher's training, motivations and on basic issues related to school management. It is a very serious matter and state must find solution to the problem otherwise state will be **Educated Illiterates** in reality. Furthermore, due to lack of non-academic/infrastructural development in Punjab schools, the obesity epidemic is sweeping Punjabi children with half of the children aged between seven and 17 years found unfit to compete in sports events. The findings are significant as these involve future of Punjab, the state traditionally known for high fitness levels among their masses.*

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AIE: Alternative Innovative Education</i>	<i>NER: North Eastern Regions</i>
<i>AIU: Association of Indian Universities</i>	<i>NGO: Non Government Organization</i>
<i>BRC: Block Resource Centre</i>	<i>NMP: Nutritious Meal Programme</i>
<i>BRP: Block Resource Person</i>	<i>NPEGEL: National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level</i>
<i>BMKP: Bharatiya Manav Kalyan Parishad</i>	<i>NP-NSPE: National Programme for Nutrition Support to Primary Education</i>
<i>CEO: Chief Executive Officer</i>	<i>PASWAK:</i>
<i>CPI: Consumer Price Index</i>	<i>PDS: Public Distribution System</i>
<i>DPEP: District Primary Education Programme</i>	<i>PIL: Public Interest Litigation</i>
<i>EBB: Educationally Backward Block</i>	<i>PTA: Parent Teacher Association</i>
<i>EE: District Education Officer</i>	<i>PTMGR NMP: Puratchi Thalaivar MGR Nutritious Meal Programme</i>
<i>EFA: Education for All</i>	<i>PUNSUP: Punjab State Civil Supplies Corporation</i>
<i>EGS: Education Guarantee Scheme</i>	<i>SCERT: State Council of Educational Research and Training</i>
<i>EPW: Economic Political Weekly</i>	<i>SDMCs: School Development Monitoring Committees</i>
<i>GHI: Global Hunger Index</i>	<i>SHG: Self Help Group</i>
<i>GOI: Government of India</i>	<i>SSA: Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan</i>
<i>FAQ: Fair Average Quality</i>	<i>UEE: Universal Elementary Education</i>
<i>FCI: Food Corporation of India</i>	<i>UN: United Nations</i>
<i>HRD: Human Resource Development</i>	<i>UNDP: United Nations Development Programme</i>
<i>IEC: Information, Education and Communication</i>	<i>UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</i>
<i>IIM: Indian Institute of Management</i>	<i>UNICEF: United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund</i>
<i>IIT: Indian Institute of Technology</i>	<i>UPE: Universal Primary Education</i>
<i>INSHI: India State Hunger Index</i>	<i>UT: Union Territory</i>
<i>ISKCON: International Society for Krishna Consciousness</i>	<i>VECs: Village Education Committees</i>
<i>KGBV: Kasturba Gandhi Bal Vidyalaya</i>	<i>VEDCs: Village Education Development Committees</i>
<i>MCD: Municipal Corporation Schools of Delhi</i>	<i>WEF: World Economic Forum</i>
<i>MDG: Millennium Development Goals</i>	
<i>MDMS: Mid day meal scheme</i>	
<i>MME: Management, Monitoring and Evaluation</i>	
<i>MSHGs: Mother Self Help Groups</i>	
<i>NCPL: National Child Labour Project</i>	

CHAPTER 1

Evolution of Mid Day Meal in India

IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION:

India is increasingly being recognized internationally as a knowledge hub but on the flip side only 10 per cent of its total student's strength is enrolled in higher education. Education is the most important element of growth and a critical input for investment in human capital. It is indeed a fundamental right of every Indian child to receive at least the basic education. India is in the process of transforming itself into a developed nation. Yet we have 350 million people who need education and many more that have to acquire employable skills to suit the emerging modern India and the globe. Can we allow the situation to continue in which million of these children are forced into lifelong poverty? The need of the hour is that the parents should be able to go to any nearby school, admit their wards and happily come back with the confidence that their kids will get good value based quality education in that school.

The first major international affirmation on Education for All (EFA) was at World Conference on Education in Jomtien (Thailand) in 1990 when 155 countries including India resolved to *Universalize Primary Education* and significantly reduce illiteracy by 2000. The conference adopted the vision that all children have the fundamental right to basic education. Later in the *World Education Forum* at Dakar Senegal (2000) 164 countries including India reaffirmed the goal of education for all as laid out at Jomtien and other international conferences. It urged Governments to achieve quality basic education for all by 2015 or earlier with emphasis on girls' education. This was followed by the *UN Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 2000* which binds countries to ensure that all children everywhere must complete primary schooling by 2015. The right to basic education is spelled out explicitly in Article 26 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The first paragraph of Article 26 proclaims that:

“Everyone has the right to education, Education shall be free at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory”

Education lays the foundation of a nation. It is considered to be critical component in enhancing the enjoyments of rights that we are entitled to and for overloading social and economic deprivation or poverty. Education is important, but as a right and as a means of promoting peace and respect for human rights. However much before these International commitments and affirmations, India has begun its journey towards Universal Elementary Education (UEE). Independent India's first Education Minister Mulana Abul Kalam Azad, in an educational conference in 1948 remarked that:

“It was the birth right of every individual to receive at least the basic education without which he cannot fully discharge his duties as a citizen.”

Struggle to achieve goal of Universal Elementary Education in India began during the colonial period led by the rulers of some of the princely states and national leadership involved in independent movement. Yet planned efforts in real terms with concerted policy of mass education that ensures elementary education for all become a reality only after country got independence in 1947. More than 56 years ago in 1950, the Indian Constitution emphatically stated that:

“State shall endeavor to provide free and compulsory education for all children up to 14 years within ten years- by 1960.”

Regrettably where we are now? India has approximately half of the world's illiterates. Why is Indian record so dismal? But this journey was long and hard, as literacy and school participation rates were very low at that point of time. Consider the educational situation in 1950's. The overall literacy rate was just 16.6 per cent (female literacy less than 9 per cent). The gross enrollment ratio at the primary stage (Grade-I to Grade-V covering 6 to 11 age groups) was only 42.6 per cent. At the upper primary stage (Grade-VI to Grade-VIII in 11 to 14 age group); only 1 out of 8 children was enrolled in school and among girls only 1 out of 20. Even those who enrolled in the school; about two-third dropped out by Grade-V and four-fifth by Grade-VIII. The quality of education was poor and schooling facilities were dismal. Such was the education scenario when India embarked on the journey for attaining education for all children.

The 1990's witnessed very intensive level of activities on the elementary education front leading to substantial improvement in the participation of children and also in overall literacy figures. Probably buoyed by this improvement, Tenth Plan set very stiff targets to achieve in terms of

almost all indicators National Policy on Education in 1965, 1986 and 1992(modified) reiterated the resolve to achieve UEE. Also numbers of schemes and programme were launched over the past 56 years especially after the constitutional amendments in 1976 to include education in the concurrent list making it joint responsibilities of the Union and the states. Some of the major schemes initiated were:

- **Non-formal Education** - 1977 later revised as **Education Guarantee Scheme** and **Alternative and Innovative Education** in 2000 for targeting out of school children.
- **Operation Black Board** (1987) for improving human and physical resources in schools.
- **Teacher Education Scheme** 1987 for teacher teaching and providing academic support.
- **Mid-day-Meals Scheme** (1995) to enhance nutritional status of students.
- **District Primary Education Programme** (1994) for achieving Universal Primary Educations.
- UNICEF assisted **Janshala** Programme (1988) for community participation in schools.
- **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan** (SSA) was launched for achievement of UEE in 2001-2002.
- Indian Parliament enacted the **Constitutional 86th Amendment Act 2002** to make education a Fundamental right of every child.
- To give impetus to girls education two programme, **National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary level** (NPEGEL) and **Kasturba Gandhi Bal Vidyalaya** (KGBV) were initiated in 2003.
- **Parambhik Shiksha Kosh** was created for a separate, dedicated non-lapsable fund to maintain by Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Elementary Education and Literacy by imposing two per cent cess on all direct and indirect taxes with effect from 2003-2004.
- **Right of children to Free and Compulsory Education Act** has come into force from April 1, 2010.

Notwithstanding the expectations set in the constitution to achieve UEE benchmark within ten years, it should be recognized that the country began at an abysmally low-level in 1950 with respect to adult literacy rates and participation of children in schooling. Since then the country has achieved commendable success on the front of expansion of educational institution at different stages due to concerted and conscious endeavor of both central and state governments. While at the dawn of independence, the literacy rate was 16.67 per cent. Today, the literacy rate

as per 2001 census is 65.38 per cent (i.e. 75.85 per cent for male and 64 per cent for female). The increase of 13.2 percentage point in 2001 over 1991 is highest in a single decade since 1901. The gender gap has also narrowed down from 28.84 percentage point in 1991 to 21.70 percentage points in 2001. Although the country has made significant progress in improving the entry rates in Grade-I and in enrollment ratio at primary level, the completion rates at both the primary (Grade-V) and upper primary (Grade-VIII) are still very low. Out of 100 children entering Grade-I in country, only about 61 reach Grade-V and only 45 reach Grade-VIII. This is despite significant improvement in retention rates during 1980's and the 1990's. Low enrollment ratios at upper primary and secondary levels coupled with high dropout rates even within the primary stages means low completion rates at various stages.

Recent study conducted by the Human Resource Development Ministry has found that out of every two students enrolled in school drop out before reaching the ninth standard. Further the study reveals that one out of every four students does not go beyond class five. By class eight the dropout rate gets worse at 50.8 per cent. The decline in dropout rates is only modest since 1990. The dropout rates of scheduled caste (SC) and schedules tribes (ST) children declined marginally from 68 per cent and 79 per cent respectively in 1990-91 to 57 and 66 per cent in 2005. Furthermore, as many as 60 per cent of SC and 67 per cent of ST girls leave school without completing upper primary cycle of education, compared to 51 per cent of girls from General category. No doubt, government is striving to achieve Universalization of elementary education by 2010 and confessed that one out of five teachers at primary level was not attending class. UNESCO report of Corrupt Schools, Corrupt Universities: "What can be done", has indicated that 25 per cent teacher's absence rate at the primary school level. The government is implementing Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (Education for all) programme for UEE by augmenting availability of school infrastructure and improving the quality of education in elementary schools, but the quality of primary and elementary education is a matter of great concern.

Chairing the meeting of the Governing Council of the *National Mission for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh expressed his deep concern over the high dropout rates of students at primary and elementary levels. The dropout rate at primary level is 34 per cent and that at elementary level is 52.9 per cent. Describing this dropout rate as unacceptability high, attributed to the lack of adequate facilities, large scale absenteeism of teachers and inadequate supervision by local authorities. Reiterating the government's commitment to UEE,

Dr Singh said, “We give dates that has lost meaning. We need education for all today”. Recognizing the importance of the right based approach to elementary education, Indian Parliament has recently enacted the constitution (86th Amendment) Act 2002. The amendment places a legal obligation on states to make elementary education a fundamental right in India for children between the age group of 6 to 14 years. This is stated in Article 21(A) of the Amendments, which reads as follows:

“The states shall provide free compulsory education for all children aged between six to fourteen years in such a manner as the state may, by law determine”.

The 86th constitutional Amendment can be seen as a major step in the direction of clearly defining the entitlement of all children in the age groups of 6 to 14 years to formally receive at least eight years of elementary education. Although Indian constitution always preceded this right in the form of Directive Principles (Article 45) of the Directive Principles of State Policy of Indian Constitution, the amendment has made at a justifiable right and hence a step forward. However, the act, which would define the entitlement in more concrete terms and also the boundaries of justifiability, is yet to be formulated and passed by the Parliament. In the absence of concrete measures in the right direction, the recent 86th amendment will remain rhetoric. But an act alone cannot achieve the goals unless the education is delivered in a manner which will take into account the socio-economic reality, and perception of people to whom it is addressed. Apart from attracting children to schools, the education system should be able to provide nourishment and inject creativity among the children. Also the aim of the education system should be to build character; human values enhance the learning capacity through technology and build the confidence among the children to face the future. The challenge before us is not a small one. No nation can become strong when it ignores its most precious natural resource- its people. No great cause is achieved without even greater efforts. Thus is a great case- one that can ennoble each of us – just as the freedom movement ennobled those who serve it. It is a cause that can be achieved only if each of us plays a part, and it is a cause, that must be achieved because the future of our nation depends on it.

MID DAY MEAL IN INDIA:

Health status has a significant impact on the development of children and on their education prospects. Malnourished children or children with poor health often have more limited capacity

to pay attention in school and perform poorer as a result, have higher than- average absenteeism rates, often fall behind at school, and ultimately may be at greater risk of dropping out of school (World Education Forum, 2000). Acknowledging that the problem of malnutrition is multidimensional, multi-sectoral and inter-generational in nature, Government of India (GOI) has introduced a number of schemes to improve nutrition needs of the children. *Mid-Day Meal Scheme* (MDMS) is the popular name for school meal programme in India which started in the 1960s. It involves provision of lunch free of cost to school-children on all working days. Mid Day Meal in schools has had a long history in India. In 1925, a Mid Day Meal Programme was introduced for disadvantaged children in Madras Municipal Corporation. By the mid 1980s three States viz. Gujarat, Kerala and Tamil Nadu and the UT of Pondicherry had universalized a cooked Mid Day Meal Programme with their own resources for children studying at the primary stage. By 1990-91 the number of States implementing the mid day meal programme with their own resources on a universal or a large scale had increased to twelve states. The Mid Day Meal is now the world's largest school feeding programme reaching out to about **12 crore children** in over 12.65 lakh schools/EGS centres across the country.

Free mid-day meals for school students were first introduced in a Japanese private school in the late 1800s, in Brazil in 1938 and in the United States in 1946 with evidently satisfactory results. Both Japan and the US boast 100 per cent adult literacy and even Brazil which (like India) is classified as a medium income nation by the United Nations Development Programme has attained 87.3 per cent literacy according to UNDP's Human Development Report, 2003 as against India's 58 per cent. The *Global School Feeding Report* of the United Nations World Food Programme comments: "*School feeding programmes often double enrollment within a year and can produce a 40 per cent improvement in academic performance in just two years. Children who take part in such programmes stay in school longer and the expense is minimal.*"

The reluctance of India's central planners, policy formulators and educationists to action the free mid-day meal scheme to incentivize parents at the base of the social pyramid to send their children to school is especially surprising. The scheme was first introduced in the southern state of Tamil Nadu way back in 1956, has proved remarkably successful in improving school enrollment 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. The scheme has been adopted by most of the states in India after a

landmark direction by the Supreme Court of India on November 28, 2001.http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mid-day_Meal_Scheme - cite_note-0. The success of this scheme is illustrated by the tremendous increase in the school participation and completion rates in the state of Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu's mid-day meal programme is among the best known in the country.

One of the pioneers of the scheme is the Madras that started providing cooked meals to children in corporation schools in the Madras city in 1923, but became a state-wide scheme in 1956 under then chief minister the late K. Kamaraj who introduced it in *Adi Dravida* community schools as the '*Poor Feeding*' programme. There is an interesting story about how K. Kamaraj got the idea of a noon meal scheme. He saw a few boys busy with their cows and goats. He asked one small boy, "What are you doing with these cows? Why didn't you go to school?" The boy immediately answered, "If I go to school, will you give me food to eat? I can learn only if I eat." The boy's retort sparked the entire process into establishing the mid-day meal programme.

In 1961, the government started receiving American aid for the programme and it was expanded to all corporation and government schools in urban areas. But it was only in July 1982 under the leadership of the legendary Chief Minister, the late M.G. Ramachandran, that the '*Puratchi Thalaivar MGR Nutritious Meal Programme*' (PTMGR NMP) was introduced in a phased manner in child welfare centers in rural areas for pre-school children in the age group two to five years and for primary school children in the age group five to nine years. Subsequently on September 15 the same year, despite widespread criticism from economists and pundits, MGR presciently extended the scheme to *Nutritious Meal Centers* in urban areas. It was further extended to school students between 10 to 15 years in 1984. The successful introduction of Tamil Nadu's NMP prompted the creation of a *National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education* (popularly known as the mid-day meal scheme) in 1995. Under this programme, the Union HRD ministry supplies free food grains to primary school children at the rate of 100 gm per child for ten months in the year.

National Programme for Nutrition Support to Primary Education:

Although the programme in Tamil Nadu was initially termed as an act of "*Populism*", the success of the scheme made the project hugely popular. The success was so spectacular that in 1995, the Indian Prime Minister Sh P.V. Narsimha Rao hailed the success of the project and suggested that the scheme be implemented all over the country, and thus began the "*National*

Programme for Nutrition Support to Primary Education". With a view to enhancing enrollment, retention and attendance and simultaneously improving nutritional levels among children, the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (NP-NSPE) was launched as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on 15th August 1995 initially in 2408 blocks in the country. By the year 1997-98, the NP-NSPE was introduced in all blocks of the country. It was further extended in 2002 to cover not only children in classes 1 to V of Government, Government Aided and local body schools, but also children studying in EGS and AIE centres. Central Assistance under the scheme consisted of free supply of food grains @ 100 grams per child per school day, and subsidy for transportation of food grains up to a maximum of INR 50 per quintal. Since most State governments were unwilling to commit budgetary resources they just passed on the grains from Government of India to the parents. This system was called provision of 'Dry Rations'.

The Supreme Court Direction:

In April 2001 People's Union for Civil Liberties (Rajasthan) initiated the now famous ***Right to Food*** Litigation. This Public Interest Litigation (PIL) has covered a large range of issues relating to right to food, but the best known intervention by the court is on mid-day meals. In its judgment in People's Union for Civil Liberties vs. Union of India & Ors (Writ Petition (Civil) No. 196 of 2001) the apex court decreed that state governments must "implement the mid-day meal scheme by providing every child in every government and government assisted primary schools with a prepared mid-day meal with a minimum content of 300 calories and 8 to 12 grams of protein each day of school for a minimum of 200 days. On November 28, 2001 the *Supreme Court of India* gave this landmark direction to government to provide cooked meals to all children in all government and government assisted primary schools and directed:-

1- We direct the State Government/Union Territories to implement the Mid-Day-Meal Scheme by providing every child in every Government and Government Assisted primary schools with a prepared Mid-Day-Meal with minimum contents of 300 calories of energy and 8-12 grams of protein each day of school for a minimum of 200 days. Those Governments providing dry rations instead of cooked meals must within 3 months started providing cooked meals in all Government Aided primary schools in all half the districts of the state(in order of poverty) and must within a further period of 3 months extend the provisions of cooked meals to the remaining parts of the state.

2- We direct the Union of India and the FCI to ensure provision of fair average quality grain for the scheme on time. The State/Union Territories and the FCI are directed to do joint inspection of foodgrains. If the Foodgrains is found, on joint inspection, not to be of fair average quality, it will be replaced by the FCI prior to lifting”.

On November 28, 2001 the *Supreme Court of India* gave a famous direction that made it mandatory for the state governments to provide *cooked meals* instead of ‘dry rations’. The direction was to be implemented from June 2002, but was violated by most States. But with sustained pressure from the court, media and in particular from the *Right to Food Campaign*, more and more states started providing cooked meals. Those governments providing dry rations instead of cooked meals must within three months (28 February 2002) start providing cooked meals in all government and government-aided primary schools in half of the districts of the state (in order of poverty) and must within a further period of three months (28 May 2002) extend the provision of cooked meals to the remaining parts of the state.”

In May 2004 a new coalition government was formed in the centre, which promised universal provision of cooked meals fully funded by the centre. This promise in its *Common Minimum Programme* was followed by enhanced financial support to the states for cooking and building sufficient infrastructure. Given this additional support the scheme has expanded its reach to cover most children in primary schools in India. Though, the direction was resisted vigorously by State governments initially, but the programme has become almost universal by 2005.

This landmark direction converted the Mid-Day Meal Scheme into a *legal entitlement*, the violation of which can be taken up in the court of law. The direction and further follow-up by the Supreme Court has been a major instrument in *universalizing* the scheme.

Seven states with an aggregate population of 400 million don’t provide a cooked meal despite a Supreme Court judgment of 2001 directing all state governments to provide cooked mid-day meals in primary schools within six months. Though most of the defaulting state governments failed to meet the apex court deadline of May 28, 2002, the governments of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh have expanded their mid-day schemes to cover all primary schools administered and aided by them. The recalcitrant states which despite repeated warnings from the Supreme Court have not yet implemented the cooked mid-day meal scheme was Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Jharkhand which host an aggregate population of 275 million citizens of whom 50 per cent are comprehensively illiterate. These rogue states have remained indifferent even to the Supreme

Court's order of May 2, 2003 that they "make a meaningful beginning of the cooked mid-day meal scheme in at least 25 per cent of the districts, which may be most poor".

Following this latest directive of the apex court, in Uttar Pradesh — India's most populous (160 million) state, the government cleared the decks for providing cooked mid-day meals in six of its most backward districts. But following the fall of the Mayawati government on corruption charges, this project still awaits implementation. The initiative which would benefit 1.5 million students in 8,670 primary schools and cost the state exchequer a mere Rs.20 crore (an infinitesimal percentage of the state government's annual expenditure of Rs.49, 000 crore) has been shelved because of "lack of funds".

In September 2004 the scheme was revised to provide cooked mid day meal with 300 calories and 8-12 grams of protein to all children studying in classes I – V in Government and aided schools and EGS/ AIE centers. In addition to free supply of food grains, the revised scheme provided Central Assistance for (a) Cooking cost @ Re 1 per child per school day, (b) Transport subsidy was raised from the earlier maximum of Rs 50 per quintal to Rs. 100 per quintal for special category states, and Rs 75 per quintal for other states, (c) Management, monitoring and evaluation costs @ 2per cent of the cost of food grains, transport subsidy and cooking assistance, (d) Provision of mid day meal during summer vacation in drought affected areas.

In July 2006 the scheme was further revised to provide assistance for cooking cost at the rate of (a) Rs 1.80 per child/school day for States in the North Eastern Region, provided the NER states contribute Rs 0.20 per child/school day, and (b) Rs 1.50 per child/ school day for other States and UTs, provided that these States and UTs contribute Rs 0.50 per child/school day.

In October 2007, the scheme has been further revised to cover children in upper primary (classes VI to VIII) initially in 3479 Educationally Backwards Blocks (EBBs). Around 1.7 crore upper primary children was expected to be included by this expansion of the scheme. The programme will be extended to all areas across the country from 2008-09. The calorific value of a mid-day meal at upper primary stage has been fixed at a minimum of 700 calories and 20 grams of protein by providing 150 grams of food grains (rice/wheat) per child/school day.

During the year 2009 following changes have been made to improve the implementation of the scheme:

- 1. Food norms have been revised to ensure balanced and nutritious diet to children of upper primary group by increasing the quantity of pulses from 25 to 30 gms;***

vegetables from 65 to 75 gms and by decreasing the quantity of oil and fat from 10 gms to 7.5 grams.

- 2. Cooking cost (excluding the labour and administrative charges) has been revised from Rs.1.68 to Rs.2.50 for primary and from Rs. 2.20 to Rs.3.75 for upper primary children from 1.12.2009 to facilitate serving meal to eligible students in prescribed quantity and of good quality. The cooking cost for primary is Rs 2.69 per child per day and Rs 4.03 for upper primary children from 1.4.2010. The cost will be revised by 7.5 per cent from 1.4.2011.*
- 3. The competent authority has decided to increase the cooking cost for 2013-14 @ 7.5 per cent over and above the cooking cost for the year 2012-13 w.e.f. 1st July, 2013. The increased cooking cost will be shared between the Centre and the States in the ratio of 75:25 except NER States where this ratio would be 90:10. The norms of cooking cost admissible w.e.f. 01.07.2013 during 2013-14 for Primary and Upper Primary classes will be Rs. 3.34 and Rs 5.0 respectively*

Honorarium of Cooks cum helpers:

Following norms for engagement of cook-cum-helper have been made:

- (i) One cook- cum-helper for schools up to 25 students.
- (ii) Two cooks-cum-helpers for schools with 26 to 100 students.
- (iii) One additional cook-cum-helper for every addition of up to 100 students.

Earlier, honorarium for cooks-cum-helpers was paid from the labour and other administrative charges of Rs.0.40 per child per day provided under the cooking cost. In many cases the honorarium was so little that it became very difficult to engage manpower for cooking the meal. A Separate component for Payment of honorarium @ Rs.1000 per month per cook-cum-helper was introduced from 1.12.2009. Honorarium at the above prescribed rate is being paid to cook-cum-helper. However the honorarium of the cook-cum-helper was deducted for holidays. Furthermore the payment of honorarium was delayed for months even up to three to four months as the necessary finance was not released by the concerned authority which dampens the spirit of the cook-cum-helpers for cooking of foods.

Construction of Kitchen-Cum-Store:

A common unit cost of construction of kitchen shed @ Rs.60, 000 for the whole country was impractical and also inadequate. Now the cost of construction of kitchen-cum-store will be

determined on the basis of plinth area norm and State Schedule of Rates. The Department of School Education and Literacy vide letter No.1-1/2009-Desk (MDM) dated 31.12.2009 had prescribed 20 sq.mt plinth areas for schools having up to 100 children. For every additional up to 100 children additional 4 sq.mt plinth areas will be added. States/UTs have the flexibility to modify the slab of 100 children depending upon the local condition.

Transportation Cost:

Due to difficult geographical terrain of the special category States, the transportation cost @ Rs.1.25 per quintal was not adequate to meet the actual cost of transportation of food grains from the FCI godowns to schools in these States. On the request of the North-Eastern States the transportation assistance in the 11 Special Category States (Northern Eastern States, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Uttarakhand) have been made at par with the Public Distribution System (PDS) rates prevalent in these States with effect from 1.12.2009.

Cost of Foodgrains:

The existing system of payment of cost of foodgrains to FCI from the Government of India is prone to delays and risk. Decentralization of payment of cost of foodgrains to the FCI at the district level from 1.4.2010 was allowed officers at State and National levels to focus on detailed monitoring of the Scheme.

OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of the mid day meal scheme are:

- ***Improving the nutritional status of children in classes I – VIII in Government, Local Body and Government aided schools, and EGS and AIE centers.***
- ***Encouraging poor children, belonging to disadvantaged sections, to attend school more regularly and help them concentrate on classroom activities.***
- ***Providing nutritional support to children of primary stage in drought-affected areas during summer vacation.***

RATIONALE:

• ***Promoting School Participation:*** Mid day meals have big effects on school participation, not just in terms of getting more children enrolled in the registers but also in terms of regular pupil attendance on a daily basis.

- **Preventing Classroom Hunger:** Many children reach school on an empty stomach. Even children who have a meal before they leave for school get hungry by the afternoon and are not able to concentrate - especially children from families who cannot give them a lunch box or are staying a long distance away from the school. Mid day meal can help to overcome this problem by preventing “classroom hunger”.
- **Facilitating The Healthy Growth Of Children:** Mid day meal can also act as a regular source of “supplementary nutrition” for children, and facilitate their healthy growth.
- **Intrinsic Educational Value:** A well-organized mid day meal can be used as an opportunity to impart various good habits to children (such as washing one’s hands before and after eating), and to educate them about the importance of clean water, good hygiene and other related matters.
- **Fostering Social Equality:** Mid day meal can help spread egalitarian values, as children from various social backgrounds learn to sit together and share a common meal. In particular, mid day meal can help to break the barriers of caste and class among school. Appointing cooks from Dalit communities is another way of teaching children to overcome caste prejudices.
- **Enhancing Gender Equity:** The gender gap in school participation tends to narrow, as the Mid Day Meal Scheme helps erode the barriers that prevent girls from going to school. Mid Day Meal Scheme also provide a useful source of employment for women, and helps liberate workingwomen from the burden of cooking at home during the day. In these and other ways, women and girl children have a special stake in Mid Day Meal Scheme.
- **Psychological Benefits:** Physiological deprivation leads to low self-esteem, consequent insecurity, anxiety and stress. The Mid Day Meal Scheme can help address this and facilitate cognitive, emotional and social development.

NUTRITIONAL CONTENT:

To achieve the above objectives a cooked mid day meal with the following nutritional content is provided to all eligible children.

<i>Components</i>	<i>Primary</i>	<i>Upper Primary</i>
<i>Calories</i>	450	700
<i>Protein</i>	12 Gms	20 gms
<i>Micro-nutrients</i>	<i>adequate quantities of micro-nutrients like Iron, Folic Acid and Vitamin-A.</i>	

Components of Central Assistance:

Mid Day Meal Scheme provides the following assistance to State Governments/UT Administrations:

- (i) Supply of free food grains (wheat/rice) @100 grams per child per school Day from the nearest FCI godowns for primary classes (I to V).
- (ii) Supply of free foodgrains (wheat/rice) @150 grams per child per School Day from the nearest FCI godowns for upper primary classes (VI to VIII)
- (iii) Reimbursement of the actual cost incurred in transportation of foodgrains from nearest FCI godown to the Primary School subject to the following ceiling:
 - (a) Rs.100 per Quintal up to 30.9.2007 and Rs.125 per Quintal with effect from 1.10.2007 for 11 special category States viz. Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, Tripura, Sikkim, J&K, Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal.
 - (b) Rs.75 per quintal for all other States and UTs.
- (iv) Assistance for cooking cost at the following rates:-

Primary stage (classes I – V)

- (a) States in North-Eastern Region: - @Rs. 1.80 per child per school day, provided the State Government contributes a minimum of 20 paise
- (b) For Other States & UTs: - @Rs. 1.50 per child per school day provided the State Governments/UT Admn contributes a minimum of 50 paise

Upper Primary stage (classes VI – VIII)

- (a) States in North-Eastern Region: - @Rs. 2.30 per child per school day, provided the State Government contributes a minimum of 20 paise
- (b) For Other States & UTs: - @Rs. 2.00 per child per school day provided the State Government/UT Admn contributes a minimum of 50 paise
- (iv) Assistance for cooked Mid-Day Meal during summer vacations to school children in areas declared by State Governments as “drought-affected”.
- (v) Assistance to construct kitchen-cum-store in a phased manner up to a maximum of Rs. 60,000 per unit. However, as allocations under MDMS for construction of kitchen-cum-store for all schools in next 2-3 years may not be adequate, States would be expected to proactively pursue convergence with other development programmes for this purpose.

(vi) Assistance in a phased manner for provisioning and replacement of kitchen devices at an average cost of Rs. 5,000 per school. States/ UT Administration will have the flexibility to incur expenditure on the items listed below on the basis of the actual requirements of the school (provided that the overall average for the State/ UT Administration remains Rs 5000 per school):

(a) Cooking devices (Stove, Chulha, etc)

(b) Containers for storage of food grains and other ingredients

(c) Utensils for cooking and serving.

(vii) Assistance for Management, Monitoring & Evaluation (MME) at the rate of 1.8 per cent of total assistance on (a) free foodgrains, (b) transport cost and (c) cooking cost.

Another 0.2 per cent of the above amount will be utilized at the Central Government for management, monitoring and evaluation. Programme Intervention and Coverage.

Monitoring Mechanism:

The Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development has prescribed a comprehensive and elaborate mechanism for monitoring and supervision of the Mid Day Meal Scheme. The monitoring mechanism includes the following:

a) Arrangements for local level monitoring: Representatives of Gram Panchayats/ Gram Sabha, members of VECs, PTAs, SDMCs as well as Mothers' Committees are required to monitor the (i) regularity and wholesomeness of the mid day meal served to children, (ii) cleanliness in cooking and serving of the mid day meal, (iii) timeliness in procurement of good quality ingredients, fuel, etc, (iv) implementation of varied menu, (v) social and gender equity. This is required to be done on a daily basis.

b) Display of Information under Right to Information Act: In order to ensure that there is transparency and accountability, all schools and centers where the programme is being implemented are required to display information on a *suo-moto* basis. This includes information on:

i. Quantity of foodgrains received, date of receipt.

ii. Quantity of foodgrains utilized

iii. Other ingredients purchased, utilized

iv. Number of children given mid day meal.

v. Daily Menu

vi. Roster of Community Members involved in the programme

c) Inspections by State Government Officers: Officers of the State Government/ UTs belonging to the Departments of Revenue, Rural Development, Education and other related sectors, such as Women and Child Development, Food, Health are also required to inspect schools and centres where the programme is being implemented. It has been recommended that 25 per cent of primary schools/ EGS & AIE centres are visited every quarter.

d) Responsibility of Food Corporation of India (FCI): The FCI is responsible for the continuous availability of adequate food grains in its Depots and in Principal Distribution Centres in the case of North East Region. It allows lifting of foodgrains for any month/quarter up to one month in advance so that supply chain of food grains remains uninterrupted.

For the NP-NSPE, 2006, FCI is mandated to issue foodgrains of best available quality, which will in any case be at least of Fair Average Quality (FAQ). FCI appoints a Nodal Officer for each State to take care of various problems in supply of foodgrains under the MDM Programme.

The District Collector/CEO of Zila Panchayat ensures that foodgrains of at least FAQ are issued by FCI after joint inspection by a team consisting of FCI and the nominee of the Collector and/or Chief Executive Officer, District Panchayat officer, and confirmation by them that the grain conforms to at least FAQ norms.

e) Periodic Returns: The State Government/ UT is also required to submit periodic returns to the Department of School Education and Literacy, GOI to provide information on (i) coverage of children and institutions, (ii) Progress in utilization of central assistance, including cooking costs, transportation, construction of kitchen sheds and procurement of kitchen devices.

f) Monitoring by Institutions of Social Science Research: Forty one Institutions of Social Science Research, identified for monitoring the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, are also entrusted with the task of monitoring the mid day meal scheme.

g) Grievance Redressal: States and Union Territories are required to develop a dedicated mechanism for public grievance redressal, which should be widely publicized and made easily accessible.

Salient features of the revised scheme, in addition to extension of the Scheme to upper primary stage, are:-

(i) Including Inflation Adjusted Index (Consumer Price Index) while assessing annual financial requirements towards Central Assistance for cooking costs for every two years beginning 2008-09 for mid day meal both for primary and upper primary stages.

(ii) Modifying the existing system of payment of transportation subsidy to States/UTs from reimbursement to Grant-in-aid as in the case of other components of Central assistance under the Scheme.

(iii) Incorporating Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities as a component of Management, Monitoring and Evaluation costs.

Evaluation Studies Conducted by Independent Agencies:

Independent evaluation studies on the Mid-Day Meal have been conducted by different agencies in various parts of the country, which find *inter alia* enhancement in enrollment and attendance. The studies include:

(a) “Cooked Mid-Day meal programme in West Bengal - A study of Birbhum district”. Professor Amartya Sen’s Pratichi Research Team (2005). The study shows that Mid Day Meal has made positive intervention in universalization of primary education by increasing enrollment and attendance. The increase has been more marked with respect to girls and children belonging to SC/ST categories. The study also points out that Mid Day Meal scheme has contributed to reduction in teacher absenteeism and a narrowing of social distances.

(b) “Situation Analysis of Mid-Day Meal Programme in Rajasthan”. University of Rajasthan and UNICEF (2005): states that the introduction of menu based mid day meal has positively impacted enrollment and attendance of children. It has contributed to social equity, as children sit together and share a common meal irrespective of caste and class. It has further contributed to gender equity in that it has provided employment to women.

(c) “Mid day Meal in Madhya Pradesh”: Samaj Pragati Sahyog, 2005: Undertook a survey in 70 most backward villages. The findings show that there was a 15% increase in enrollment, which was more marked in the case of SC and ST children (43%).

(d) “Mid Day Meals: A Comparison of the Financial and Institutional Organization of the Programme in Two States,” Farzana Afridi; April EPW (2005): The implementation of the programme is improving, but a lot more needs to be done. The new initiative of ‘Suruchi Bhojan’ is more attractive than the earlier ‘Daliya’ programme.

(e) “Mid-Day Meal Scheme in Delhi – A functioning programme” Anuradha De, Claire Noronha and Meera Samson; CORD; (2005). Surveyed 12 MCD schools – school children in all schools were receiving food; impact of attendance more likely on girls, who often come to school without breakfast.

(f) "Report on Akshara Dasoha scheme of Karnataka", Dr. Rama Naik; University of Dharwad (2005) has reported sharp rise in enrollment, particularly in rural areas. The programme has had an impact on teacher absenteeism: 64% schools stated that teacher absenteeism has been reduced.

(g) National Council of Educational Research & Training's latest Report (2005) – Learning Achievement of Students at the End of Class-V has inferred that children covered under mid day meal have higher achievement level than those who were not covered under it.

(h) "Mid Day Meal Scheme in Karnataka – A study" by National Institute of Public Cooperation & Child Development, Annual Report 2005-06:- Mid Day Meal improved the school attendance in majority of the schools and reduced absenteeism. It has fostered a sense of sharing and fraternity and paved the way for social equity.

(i) "Mid Day Meal Scheme in Madhya Pradesh – A study - 2007" by National Institute of Public Cooperation & Child Development, Indore:- School enrollment indicated marked improvement in enrollment pattern of children in primary school. Mid Day Meal Scheme undoubtedly resulted in increased school attendance and facilitated in retention of children in school for a longer period. The Scheme has played a crucial role in reducing drop out, especially among girls. Parents viewed that the mid day meal had reduced the burden of providing one time meal to their children and considered it as a great support to their families. Teachers opinioned that mid day meal aided in active learning of children, which indirectly improved their academic performance. The Scheme has played a significant role in bringing social equity.

Scams:

Various scams involving Mid-Day Meal Scheme have been unearthed since it was started. In January 2006, the Delhi Police unearthed a scam in the Mid-Day Meal Scheme. In December 2005, the police had seized eight truckloads (2,760 sacks) of rice meant for primary school children being carried from Food Corporation of India (FCI) godowns in Bulandshahr District of UP to North Delhi. When the police detained the trucks, the drivers claimed that the rice was being brought all the way to Delhi to be cleaned at a factory. However, according to the guidelines, the rice has to be taken directly from FCI godown to the school or village concerned. Later it was found that the rice was being siphoned off by a UP-based NGO, Bharatiya Manav Kalyan Parishad (BMKP), in connivance with the government officials.

In November 2006, the residents of Pembong village under the *Mim Tea Estate* (around 30 km from Darjeeling), accused a group of teachers of embezzling mid-day meals. In a written complaint, the residents claimed that students at the primary school had not got mid-day meal for the past 18 months.

In December 2006, The Times of India reported a scam involving government schools that siphon off foodgrains under the mid-day meal scheme by faking attendance. The *modus operandi* of the schools was simple—the attendance register would exaggerate the number of students enrolled in the class. The additional students would not exist—they were "enrolled" to get additional foodgrains which were pocketed by the school staff. The scam was exposed, when P Asha Kumari, an Assistant teacher at the government model primary school, Jakkur, in Yelahanka acted as a whistleblower. She informed the *Lok Ayukta*, who conducted a probe and indicted four persons for misappropriation. The whistleblower was harassed by the school staff and requested a transfer. She was transferred to a Government Primary School at Cholanayakahalli, where she again found the same *modus operandi* being used to siphon off the foodgrains. She again complained to the Lok Ayukta, who issued notice to the school.

Criticism:

Though *ex facie* the incremental sum of Rs.9,000 crore per year required to implement the free mid-day meal scheme in all government and aided schools countrywide seems too large to be affordable, in reality it's a small price to pay to reap a potentially monumental socio-economic benefit. Particularly if one bears in mind that the national annual expenditure on unmerited subsidies to the relatively rich middle class (on electricity, water, cooking gas, food, fertilizer, higher education etc) aggregates Rs.120,000 crore and the nation's annual defence expenditure is Rs.70,000 crore. Quite clearly the question is the lack of *Political and Societal Will* to redraw national spending priorities.

This conspicuous lack will to implement a scheme which offers great cost-benefit advantages is rooted in several socio-economic factors. For one, India's new tribe of self-perpetuating politicians is subliminally aware that an educated population is certain to demand good governance and accountability from them. Secondly there is a deep-rooted bias in favour of merit-based rather than universal education within the nation's dominant middle class. Thus while considerable pains are taken to establish excellent institutions of education such as the *Kendria Vidyalayas* and *Jawahar Navodayas* and top-rung private sector schools for high

performance primary and secondary students (and the IITs and IIMs for school leavers), there is little interest within governments at the central and state levels to raise universal primary and secondary education standards which would benefit poor citizens at the base of India's complex and massive social pyramid.

“Politicians and bureaucrats tend to be lukewarm about the free mid-day meal programme because there are very few rent-seeking opportunities in such low-budget schemes. Hence the lack of pressure (from the poor) for the noon meal programme despite its obvious socio-economic benefits. But with the free mid-day meal scheme having dramatically improved enrollment and retention in schools in the southern states, the central government accepts that beyond merely providing free food grains to state governments, it will have to also allocate monetary resources to some of the laggard state governments. Accordingly, the prime minister's Gramod Ayojana programme contributes 15 per cent of its funds for the mid-day meal scheme. That will convert into an additional allocation of Rs.450 crore per year which will be disbursed to the states for conversion of food grains into cooked meals.

Low rent-earning opportunities apart, a possible cause of the general lack of will within state governments to action the school mid-day meal programme could be lack of confidence about implementing this inevitably massive programme while maintaining minimum quality standards. NGOs and social activists alleged that the food was prepared by untrained cooks in unhygienic cooking conditions. But despite this initial hiccup, the scheme is continuing. The general lack of establishment enthusiasm in some states is also influenced by the widely held belief that the provision of cooked meals disrupts classroom processes. Some media reports suggest that teachers spend too much time supervising culinary operations to the detriment of academic time tables. Jean Dreze (quoted earlier) acknowledges this apprehension while dismissing it as exaggerated. “Sensitisation of teachers about the positive aspects of the scheme is very important. The majority of teachers fear classroom disruption and worry that it will take up too much of their time. Greater awareness of the benefits of mid-day meals would help to overcome such fears,” says Dreze.

But while there are pockets of resistance and scepticism about the cost-benefits of the free mid-day meals within the teachers community, somewhat belatedly a groundswell of societal pressure is building up across the country in favour of the scheme. In Karnataka within a short while of the free mid-day meal scheme having been expanded to cover 4.5 million students in all lower

primary schools across the state, parental pressure is being exerted to expand it to cover students in higher primary classes — standards VI and VII — as well. “After some initial glitches the Karnataka government’s Akshara Dasoha scheme is running very smoothly because local level SMDCs (school development monitoring committees) comprising parents and panchayat governments are monitoring the scheme. Decentralization is the vital prerequisite of the success of this scheme,” says V.P. Niranjana Radhya, research officer at the Centre for the Child and Law of the National Law School University of India, Bangalore.

The critical importance of decentralizing the free mid-day meal to the maximum possible degree has impacted itself upon the educates of the Union HRD ministry in New Delhi. The ministry is currently proposing the constitution and involvement of independent self-help groups in the form of mothers’ groups in every school offering the scheme. “The main work is at the micro level. The more we involve government machinery, the more difficult it becomes to supervise because this is a programme which needs micro-management at the grassroot level. Village Education Committees and Village Panchayats have to assume responsibility of ensuring that the mid-day meal scheme works in their local schools.

State governments also need to co-opt and involve India’s massive number of NGOs (non-government organizations) which are ever-ready to lend a helping hand to education causes. For instance in Karnataka 20 NGOs provide free mid-day meals to 100,000 children in 670 schools while the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) in Bangalore offers a daily mid-day meal to 50,000 children (see box). Likewise in Hyderabad, the Nandi Foundation manages a central kitchen which provides mid-day meals to approximately 200,000 children. Quite clearly the introduction of nutritious and quality free mid-day meals for children in all government schools — primary and secondary — is a long overdue and urgent necessity. The Supreme Court believes it; the over-whelming majority of academics and NGOs agree, and a growing number of hitherto apathetic parents at the base of the social pyramid has emerged as a pressure group for this programme whose vital connection with the spread of literacy and education is painfully self-evident.

Despite the success of the program, child hunger as a problem persists in India. According to current statistics, 42.5 per cent of the children under 5 are underweight. This is due to simple reasons such as not using iodized salt. “India is home to the world’s largest food insecure population, with more than 200 million people who are hungry,” India State Hunger Index

(ISHI) said, adding that the country's poor performance is driven by its high levels of child under-nutrition and poor calorie count. "It's rates of child malnutrition is higher than most countries in Sub-Saharan Africa," it noted. A report released as part of the 2009 [Global Hunger Index](#) ranks India at 65 out of 84 countries. The 2008 report says that India has more people suffering hunger - a figure above 200 million - than any other country in the world, it says. The report also says "improving child nutrition is of utmost urgency in most Indian states".

The present study is undertaken to have an in-depth evaluation of mid day meal scheme in the rural schools of Punjab - one of the agriculturally advanced state of Indian Union. The study was sponsored by Indian Council of Social Sciences Research, Ministry of Human Resources Government of India under their Senior Fellowship Program.

CHAPTER II

PUNJAB STATE PPERPECTIVE OF MDM

Punjab has great historical discoveries unearthed at Ropar, Kirtarpur, Dholbaha, Rahira, Ghuram and Sanghol. The state has an epithet; "through the enterprising spirit and untiring toil of its people" and is a land of river, fertile soils and steady achievements. Many great religious movements that found world wise appeal grew in its fertile plains of Punjab. This ethnic and religious diversity is reflected in the culture values. Over different period of history, Punjab has seen its boundaries expand and shrink. The state of Punjab was last divided in 1966 for administrative reasons creating Haryana. Although Punjab comprises less than 1.5 per cent of land area, it provides 55 per cent of India's Wheat and 37 per cent of its rice to the central pool. The Punjab provides a third of all the milk produced in the country.

*Punjab (Punjabi: ਪੰਜਾਬ) – the land of five rivers is a state in north-western India, a treasure trove for an ardent individual. This land of great gurus not only boasts ancient monuments but is also throb with historical embodiments. There is a saying that “if you throw a Punjabi into the ocean he will climb the mountain”. It indicates that ‘endeavor’ and ‘adventure’ are two words that are reflected in the life of all Punjabis and ‘impossible’ is a word which is never found in the dictionary of the people of Punjab. The people of Punjab have always been an enterprising lot. Capable of much hard work, sweat and toil, it is they who must be given the credit for showing the way to abundance and prosperity with the ‘green’ and ‘white’ revolution. Maybe it’s in their genes; or maybe it’s in the waters of the land’s five rivers; **Panj** (five) and **Ab** (water or rivers).*

Geographical Location

Punjab is a state endowed with rich culture, tradition, religion, and acknowledged for its self-dependence-self-reliance and glory. It is located in the North-Western region of India on 35 degree latitude and 74 degree longitude covering an area of 50362 sq. kms (2 per cent of the country’s total geographical area), comprising mostly of plain and fertile soil and is bounded on the West by long border with Pakistan, on the North by Jammu and Kashmir, on the North East

by Himachal Pradesh and Union Territory of Chandigarh and on the South by Haryana and Rajasthan. Chandigarh, a new planned city was conceived and built in the 1950's to serve as the capital of Punjab. The economy of Punjab is characterized by a productive, increasingly commercial agriculture, a diversity of small-and medium-scale industries and the highest per capita income in the nation. One can read the success story of Punjab in every sector whether it is agriculture or technology. Punjab is widely acknowledged as the “**Granary of India**”. Modern Punjab has boundless opportunities, offering advantages in the fields like education, industry, agriculture, tourism, and politics. Some of India's best intellectuals, business people, sports personalities, artists, military and political leaders are from Punjab. Punjab is customarily value and show great respect for their traditions and history. Over different period of history Punjab has seen its boundaries expand and shrink. The state of Punjab was last divided in 1966 for administrative reasons creating Haryana.

The century old Punjabi culture is renowned for its tolerance, progressive and logical approach to life. The state is the location of one of the world's first and oldest civilizations - the Indus Valley Civilization. Above all, the warmth and hospitality of the people are the main attractions in this region. The state has many things to offer to an enthusiast who wants to explore Punjab. Prior to independence, this predominantly agricultural state was not very focused on education related issues. However, post independence, Punjab witnessed steady improvement in educational performances. However, there still exists strong regional and gender variations in education within the state.

CULTURAL REGIONS OF PUNJAB

Culturally, Punjab can be divided into three regions - **Majha, Malwa and Doaba**. These regions, over the time, have metamorphosed into distinct regions, separate in their physical environment, economic structure, social organization and cultural pattern. Thus, there are cultural variations and each region possesses a separate cultural identity of its own.

- **Majha region is surrounded by three rivers Ravi, Beas and the Sutlej and embrace the modern districts of Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Pathankot and Tarn Taran. It comprises of about 17.17 per cent of the total area of Punjab and contributes to 21 per cent of the total population of the state. With the average density of population at 597 persons per square km, it is most densely populated region of Punjab (Census: 2001). This region is called “the heartland of Punjab” and is celebrated as being the 'Cradle of Sikhism'.**

- **Doaba region** of Indian Punjab lies between the rivers Beas and Sutlej. The name "Doaba" literally translates to "land between two rivers" ("Do" two, "Ab" river; Punjabi). It is one of the most fertile regions of the world and was the centre of the Green Revolution in India. To this day, it remains one of the largest per capita producers of wheat in the world. It has an area of 8844 square km, 17.6 per cent of the total area of Punjab. It is a densely populated region, accounting for 19.64 per cent of the population. Average density of the population is reported to be 539 persons per square km. The districts in the region are Nawanshahr, Jalandhar, Kapurthala and Hoshiarpur.



- **Malwa region** is the area south of river Sutlej. Malwa region constitutes majority of the region in the state (largest region of Punjab) and constitutes of the eleven districts, namely, Mansa, Ferozepur, Faridkot, Fatehgarh Sahib, Rupnagar, Muktsar, Sangrur, Bathinda, Moga, Patiala and Ludhiana. Malwa is also famous for cotton farming.

History of Mid Day Meal Scheme in Punjab

In order to improve enrolment, retention and reduce dropout rate of students in primary classes and also to improve the nutritional status of primary students, Government of India, launched a countrywide scheme, 'National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Mid Day Meal Scheme)' on 15th August-1995 (effective from 2-10-1995). Under this Scheme, students of primary classes were to be provided wheat @ 3 Kg per student per month (for 10 months in a year) subject to 80 per cent attendance and later on the states were to switch over to



cooked meal scheme within two years. Punjab did not switch over to cooked meal scheme *inter-alia* due to paucity of funds involved in the conversion of foodgrains to cooked meal. This legislation was further supported in 2001 by a landmark Supreme Court order requiring the State governments to provide cooked mid-day meals to children studying in primary classes (I-V) in all government schools. Under the Mid-Day Meals Scheme, the central government provides 100 grams of wheat or rice per child in attendance per school day, plus a transport subsidy for movement of grains from the nearest storage depot to the schools. The central and state governments share the cost of converting the food grains into meals (cooks' salaries, additional food ingredients, dishes and utensils, etc.). Panchayats and other local governing bodies are responsible for organizing and monitoring the transportation of grains and regular provision of cooked meals in the government schools. Local governments may choose to have the cooked meals provided through NGOs, as long as coverage is limited to government, local body, and aided schools. The Mid-Day Meal Scheme does not normally extend to private unaided schools and non-formal schools. The speed and success of implementation has varied greatly in different states of India.

In Punjab, cooked Mid Day Meal was provided to children of primary classes in one block in every district during the year 2002-03 and the cost of meal was Rs.3.80 per child per day. A writ petition (civil) No. 196/2001 was filed by 'Peoples Union for civil Liberties' in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in which it was ordered on 20.04.2004 to provide cooked meal to all the students of primary classes. In compliance of above orders, Government of Punjab started providing cooked meal to all the students of primary classes in government schools from September 2004 and since then it has been providing cooked meal in all primary schools. Recently it has also started providing cooked meal to upper primary school children in twenty one educationally backward blocks of seven districts.

Salient Features of Mid-Day-Meal

Currently Mid-Day-Meal Programme covers 22.23 lacs children in Government, Government Aided Schools, EGS and AIE Centres in 15567 Institutions (Classes I-V) and 5823 Government and Government Aided Schools (Classes VI-VIII) as per details given below :-

S.No.	Type of Primary Institution	Primary Schools	Upper Primary Schools	Grand Total
1.	Govt.	13285	5424	
2.	Local Bodies			
3.	Govt. Aided	77	399	
4.	EGS Centres	2205		
5.	AIE Centres			
Total No. of Institution		15567	5823	21390
Total Enrolment		1354626	868849	2223475

Though the scheme is also applicable to government-aided schools, their managements tend to be uninterested because children in such schools are usually from a higher strata of society and tend to be vary about the quality of food provided.

Central Assistance under the Mid-Day-Meal Scheme consists of the following: - a) Free supply of foodgrains Wheat/Rice per child per school day from nearest Food Corporation of India (FCI) Godown @ 100 Grams for Primary @ 150 Grams for Upper Primary Classes The transportation of foodgrains from nearest Food Corporation of India (FCI) Godown to the Primary School carried out through PUNSUP. Its cost is reimbursed by the Government of India. b) Cost of Cooking includes cost of ingredients e.g. pulses, vegetables, cooking oil and condiments etc. It also includes cost of fuel and wages/remuneration payable to personnel or amount payable to an agency (SHG, VEC) responsible for cooking.

Nutritional Status:

Children are the future of the nation, if the children are healthy; the Nation is bound to be strong. In the light of these observations, the School Health Programme is an important component of total health care delivery system in the state, which helps in keeping close watch on health of school going children. Under the School Health Programme, all the school going children from class I-XII of Government and Government Aided Schools (approximately 21.26 Lakhs children) are examined at least once in the academic year.

Management Structure

Mid Day Meal Scheme in the State is implemented under the overall supervision of The Chief Secretary, Punjab. School Education Department has been declared Nodal Agency for the implementation of the scheme in the schools, which is headed by the Secretary School Education and is looked after by the Director-General School Education at the State level. Under his control a separate Mid Day Meal Cell has been constituted at the State Level with a General Manager and four Managers. They are assisted by one Accountant and four Data Entry Operators. At the District Level one District Manager has been posted in each District assisted by one Accountant and one Data Entry Operator. One Assistant Block Manager has been posted in each Block to implement and supervise the Mid Day Meal Scheme at the school level.

Process of Plan formulation:

With the start of the secession in the schools data with respect to number of children enrolled, number of children who are actually served Mid-Day-Meal, No of days on which Mid-Day-Meal is served, foodgrains lifted from FCI and utilized, funds received at school level and utilized start collecting. Information collected from the schools is compiled at the District level and is submitted to Head Office in the specially designed formats every month. Data received at Head Office is tabulated District wise and is discussed in the monthly meeting of District Education Officers with respect to lifting of foodgrains from FCI, utilization of foodgrains, funds available with the District and their utilization. Number of children enrolled, number of school working days in a month, number of days on which Mid-Day-Meal has been served and number of students to whom Mid-Day-Meal is actually served. Progress of construction of kitchen sheds progress of procurement of kitchen devices, health checkup of students under the school health programme are also reviewed in the monthly meeting.

Assessment of the Programme (2012-13)

The State Government ensures that the scheme is implemented wholesomely and effectively, a three tier system has been defined in compliance with the directions given by Government of India. The Chief Secretary is the Chairman of the State Level Steering and Monitoring Committee; Deputy Commissioner is the Chairman of the District Level Steering and Monitoring Committee whereas the Sub Divisional Magistrates are the Chairmen of the Sub Divisional Steering and Monitoring Committee. In addition to it, there is a complete synergy between Department of School Education, Health Department, Department of Rural Water Supply and Sanitation and Department of Food and Civil Supplies at the District and Block Level. Sub Divisional Magistrates get the schools inspected either themselves or through senior revenue officers with the objective to check the Mid Day Meal at regular intervals. The Department of health collects the food samples of the cooked meal and takes further necessary action after following the due procedure. The Department of Rural Water Supply and Sanitation ensures the potable quality of drinking water to the schools on the basis of sample collected by the Health Department. Regular meetings of the Sub Divisional Level and District Level Steering and Monitoring Committee are held in the State. In addition the State Level Steering and Monitoring Committee also meet at regular intervals to monitor the programme. The State Government has also constituted a "Core Group of Officers" under the chairmanship of Secretary, School Education to monitor and sort out the problems, if any, in smooth implementation of the scheme.

Coverage of NCLP children:

87 Schools of NCLP children in the districts of Amritsar, Jalandhar and Ludhiana with a strength of 4350 children who are studying in Primary classes but, are being served Mid Day Meal at the Upper Primary norms in accordance with the instructions of the Government of India.

Foodgrains Management:

The allotment of foodgrains is made by the Government of India as per the requirement of the State. The District wise allocation is made by The Nodal Officer at the State Level. Allocation of foodgrains is communicated to the Districts in advance so that there is no difficulty in procuring the Foodgrains from F.C.I. The transportation agency, namely, The Punjab State Civil Supplies Corporation (PUNSUP) has been identified as the Nodal Agency by the State Government to lift the foodgrains from the FCI godowns and deliver it to the schools. As per the guidelines issued by the Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development, New Delhi, Deputy

Commissioners / District Magistrates have been asked by the State Government to ensure that the quality of foodgrains lifted from FCI godowns is best available and at least should be of FAQ standard. Regular meetings are held by the District Magistrate to monitor the quality and supply of foodgrains where in District Manager, PUNSUP and District Education Officer participate in such meetings. Quality of foodgrains and its availability in the Districts and implementation of the Mid Day Meal Scheme is also reviewed by The Chief Secretary at the State Level, in the Monthly Meetings of Deputy Commissioners.

Punjab State Civil Supplies Corporation (PUNSUP) has prepared the route chart covering all the schools and supply of foodgrains is ensured regularly depending upon the consumption of the foodgrains in the schools. At the school level a Local Committee has been constituted in all the Districts to receive the foodgrains. The school Teacher is a Member Secretary of this committee and is responsible for the maintenance of the records. It is ensured by the Deputy Commissioners that the foodgrains delivered at the schools are stored in appropriate storage bins, though at some places such Storage bins still remains to be provided. Directions have been issued separately allowing the School Level Committees to procure the storage bins out of the sales proceeds of the *Bardana* rendered empty after utilization of the foodgrains. Timely delivery and proper weight of the foodgrains in the schools is the biggest challenge. Target of timely delivery has already been achieved; however, the proper weight of foodgrains at school level is being monitored by the school staff, Assistant Block Managers and Field Inspectors of The Punjab State Civil Supplies Corporation (PUNSUP).

Payment System of Cost of Foodgrains to FCI:

The allotment of foodgrains is made by Government of India as per the requirement of the State. The district-wise allocation is made by the Nodal Officer at the State Level. Allocation of foodgrains along with allocation of funds is communicated and is made available to the districts in advance so that there is no difficulty in procuring the foodgrains and making payment to the FCI. The foodgrains are inspected by an Officer deputed by the Deputy Commissioner in the FCI godowns and if found up to the mark the same are lifted by the Nodal Agency PUNSUP up to 25th of the month. Bills for the quantity lifted are raised by the FCI up to 10th of the preceding month which are paid at the District Level by the District Education Officers up to 30th of the month.

During the year 2012-13 from 1st April 2012 upto 31-12-2012 all the bills raised by the FCI in all the Districts have been paid and there is no pendency.

Payment of Honorarium to cook-cum-helpers:

Number of cook-cum-helpers has been determined as per the norm fixed by the Government of India depending upon the strength of the children enrolled in a particular school. Names of cooks engaged and their date of engagement is communicated to the District office where a complete record of the cook-cum-helpers is maintained. Funds for the honorarium of cooks are released to the District Education Officer who on the basis of record releases these funds to the school head. Payment to the cook-cum- helpers is made by the school head by cheque on monthly basis to maintain complete transparency in the system.

System for Procuring Cooking Ingredients:

The cooking ingredients (pulses, vegetables including leafy ones, salt, condiments, oil & fuel etc), and other commodities are locally purchased at the school level. The rate of cooking cost per child per day is as per the norms fixed by the Government of India:-

- i) ***Primary Classes (I-V) (1-4-12 to 31-03-13) @ Rs. 3.11 per child per school day***
- ii) ***Upper Primary Classes (VI-VIII) 1-4-12 to 31-03-13 @ Rs. 4.65 per child per school day.***

System for Cooking, Serving and Supervising Mid-Day-Meals:

(i) Cooks/MSHGs engaged by the Department/Village Panchayats/ VEDCs cook the meal.

(ii) Mothers have been involved in the process of serving and supervising Mid-Day-Meal in the schools. MSHGs have been formed in all the schools.

(iii) NGOs have been engaged in districts of Ferozepur, Nawanshehar, Patiala, Sangrur, Moga, Ludhiana and SAS Nagar to provide Mid-Day-Meal in schools by establishing centralized kitchens.

(iv) Two Officers from the Office of District Education Officers supervise the preparation of Meals daily in the centralize kitchens established by the NGO and food is sent to schools in their presence.

Procedure and Status of Construction of Kitchen-Cum-Store:

Funds released under the Mid-Day-Meal Scheme for the construction of kitchen sheds are released to the District Education Officers for transferring the same to school Head Teacher who is a Secretary of the village Education Development Committee to get the kitchen shed constructed. During the year 2006-07, a sum of Rs. 1150.20 lacs for the construction of kitchen shed-cum-store was released by the Finance Department However; funds were not released by the Treasury. Further, an amount of Rs. 1592.39 lacs was also not released by the Finance Department. The total unspent balance of Rs.2742.59 lacs (Rs. 1150.20 lacs plus Rs.1592.39 lacs) permitted by the Government of India to be carried over to the financial year 2007-08.

During the year 2007-08, a sum of Rs. 2742.59 lacs was released. The total amount drawn from the Treasury was sent to all the Deputy Commissioners for construction of kitchen sheds in 4571 primary schools through Village Education Development Committees (VEDCs). These kitchen sheds have been completed.

An amount of Rs. 8324.40 lacs for the construction of 13874 kitchen sheds in primary and upper primary schools released by Government of India has been drawn during February, 2009. Funds have been released to the districts for raising construction of kitchen sheds as per guidelines and latest position is reported in Table below:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Kitchen Shed Sanctioned</i>	<i>Kitchen Shed Completed</i>	<i>Construction in Progress</i>	<i>Not Yet Started</i>
<i>2006-07 & 2007-08</i>	<i>4571</i>	<i>4571</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>2008-09</i>	<i>13874</i>	<i>7880</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>2010-11</i>	<i>524</i>	<i>8243</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>2012-13</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>2276</i>	<i>524</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>18969</i>	<i>16169</i>	<i>2276</i>	<i>524</i>

Procurement of Kitchen Devices:

During the year 2006-07, a sum of Rs. 217.37 lacs was sanctioned for kitchen devices and gas connections. The State Government released the funds to the Punjab State Civil Supplies Corporation (PUNSUP). Out of the amount of Rs. 217.37 lacs, Rs.200 lacs were advanced to the above corporation for procurement of kitchen devices and for arranging release of gas connections. *Gas Bhatties*, Fire Extinguishers and 4347 gas connections have been supplied by PUNSUP to the primary schools.

Further, during the year 2006-07, an amount of Rs. 245.90 lacs sanctioned by the Government of India for kitchen devices could not be released by the State Finance Department due to late receipt of sanction from Govt. of India i.e. after 31/3/07. Thus, an unspent balance of Rs. 245.90 lacs was allowed to be carried over to the financial year 2007-08 by the Govt. of India.

During the year 2007-08, this amount of Rs. 245.90 lacs for procurement of kitchen devices was released to the Deputy Commissioners for arranging kitchen devices and Gas Connections in 4918 primary schools. All the 4918 Bhatties, Fire Extinguishers and Gas connections have been supplied to the Primary schools. During the year 2008-09 a sum of 52.60 lacs for the procurement of Kitchen Devices for 1052 upper primary schools was released. These funds were released to the Districts and 1052 Bhatties, Fire Extinguishers and Gas Connection have been procured. Further a sum of Rs. 432.60 lac has been released during January 2010 to procure 8652 kitchen devices for the remaining 8652 schools. These funds have been released to Districts for the procurement of kitchen devices and District Committees have been constituted to procure kitchen devices as per rules.

Capacity Building and Training:

Regular training programmes are being conducted by *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* programme to all the teachers in the primary and upper primary schools. A module of Mid Day Meal programme addressing all the aspects of the scheme is an integral part of the training programmes. Further, the trainings are also organized on Mid Day Meal scheme through Educate project of State Government. Medical officers from the Health Department provide invaluable inputs on preventive health care particularly the disease relating to iron deficiency, eyes, ears etc. through Educate as well as through regular training course run by the SSA. One BRP is specifically trained to monitor the Mid Day Meal scheme under the SSA programme at BRC level so as to build the capacity at the grass root level.

Management Information System:

Mid-Day-Meal Programme implementation is the overall responsibility of committees constituted at school level. Teacher-in-Charge of Mid-Day-Meal Programme maintains the day to day record of the programme. There are only two registers to be maintained at school level. One register is for maintenance of funds (Cash Book) and second register is kept for foodgrains. At the end of the month, every school submits its monthly report of stock register for foodgrains to the Centre Head Teacher which transmits it to the Block Primary Education Officer. Block

Primary Education Officer compiles the reports received from various schools and communicates to the District Education Officer (EE), who in turn compiles the entire district report and sends to the State Mid-Day-Meal Cell. District Education Officers (EE) convene monthly meeting of Block Primary Education Officers.

Reports received from the various districts in various formats are compiled at State Mid-Day-Meal Cell and thereafter, progress is reviewed regularly. Monthly meetings of the District Education Officers (EE) are held under the Chairmanship of Director-General School Education-cum-Special Secretary to Govt. of Punjab.

It is also appraised that Punjab Government has already taken a decision to transfer the funds electronically right up to the VEDC level in the State, so that there is least obstruction /delay in making the funds available up to the executive agencies. The funds from the State Level are electronically released to District Education Officers (EE) and further electronically transferred to Block Primary Education Officers for the quick supply of cooking cost to the schools.

All block level officers in the education department are going to be connected through internet facilities. Monitoring of the Mid Day Meal scheme shall also be done through this network by asking the Block Primary Officers to put into the information relating to Mid Day Meal through internet.

Specific registers have been designed and supplied to the schools Block Primary Education Officers, Cluster Heads and District Education Officers. It may also be relevant to mention here that these registers have been simplified in a manner so as to take not more than five minute for a school teacher to make the necessary entries into these registers.

Rectification Measures:

Inter district low and uneven utilization of foodgrains and cooking cost is caused due to late release of cooking cost. Some of the Districts/Schools manage the programme at their own level while other schools wait for the Government assistance, which cause the mismatch. Utilization of cooking cost more or less corresponds to utilization of foodgrains so perhaps does not need much explanation. On line transfer of funds even up to the school level is being implemented to curtail delay in transfer of funds.

Best Practices Adopted:

The following best practices are followed in the rural schools of Punjab:-

- (1) All students, irrespective of their caste, creed and religion take the Mid Day Meal and thus spread a message of common brotherhood and also imbibe good traditions of the Indian society amongst the students;
- (2) Participation of the women, particularly, the mothers in cooking and serving to the children / students is very good practice. It has also enforced the accountability of teachers towards society to impart quality education to students;
- (3) In some of the places, the students have been motivated to produce the vegetables by making use of available land in the schools effectively. This will not only make the school self-sustainable but would also inculcate the habit of self-reliance amongst the students;
- (4) Students have been motivated to wash their hands before and after taking the meals and for that every school has been provided soap. Further with the collaboration of sharp NGO, New Delhi this project is being introduced in all the schools in the State of Punjab.
- (5) Use of Double Fortified Salt with Iron and Iodine has been made mandatory in the schools.
- (6) *Kheer* as sweet dish has been introduced in the schools on every Monday along with the regular meals
- (7) Punjab Government with an expenditure of Rs. 860.00 lacs has provided eating utensils in all the schools.
- (8) Cook-Cum-Helpers engaged by the schools are being imparted training at:-
 - (a) Ambedkar Institute of Hotel Management, Chandigarh
 - (b) Chandigarh Institute of Hotel Management, Chandigarh
 - (c) State Institute of Hotel Management, Bathinda
 - (d) State Institute of Hotel Management, Hoshiarpur

MDM Quality Protocol:

Transport of Material:

- a) Rice qualifying Fair Average Quality standards shall be lifted from FCI.
- b) One Designated Officer by Collector shall access the quality and quantity and acknowledge the receipt of foodgrains.
- c) Lifting is to be need based on monthly bases instead of bulk lifting to avoid congestion and damage.
- d) Transport agent to make delivery of rice to the Headmaster after proper weighment in presence of Headmaster, other Teachers or SMC members.

e) In case of deviation from quality or quantity norm i.e. when the rice is below FAQ standard, discolored, mixed with foreign materials like pebbles and moisture level is more, the Headmaster shall refuse to receive the stock under intimation to higher officials including Collector of the District. In case of non response, they can directly inform the Department on Toll free number.

Local Procurement:

a) Dal, Soya Chunk, Iodized salt, Condiments and cooking oil shall be purchased locally on a weekly basis in packets and not in loose quantity.

b) Eggs are to be procured on the day of consumption or one day before. The Quality of Eggs is to be checked by dipping in the water. Rotten eggs do not sink. They float in the water but good quality eggs sink and lie flat on the water. Rotten eggs are to be discarded.

c) Vendors name / address/ details may be kept on record.

Storage Safety:

a) All Storage containers/ bins shall be super scribed MDM.

b) Dal, Soya chunk, oil shall be stored in an air tight container.

c) Only clean containers should be used for storing MDM materials.

d) Storage area shall be free from rats, rodents, pests, spider webs, cockroaches.

e) No medicines/chemicals/fuel wood/disinfectants shall be kept in the store house.

Kitchen Safety:

a) All kitchens shall be cleaned and white wash within 15 days on a campaign mode. Floors, ceilings and walls shall be regularly cleaned. For this purpose School Improvement Grant and Repair / Maintenance grant under SSA can be utilized.

b) Food stuffs preparation and service area should not be near the toilets/ bathrooms.

c) General villagers, suspicious persons who are not on monitoring duty shall not be allowed inside the kitchen.

d) Cooking utensils should be washed before cooking and after.

e) Food waste and other waste materials shall be properly disposed off to avoid unhygienic conditions in and around kitchen.

f) Vegetables must be washes properly before cooked.

Personal Hygiene:

a) The cook-cum-helper must wash hand properly, frequently and at the appropriate times. As far as practicable hand wash should be encouraged with soap.

- b) Cook-cum-Helper shall keep finger nail regularly trimmed and avoid finger nail polish.
- c) Her hair to be combed and properly tied.
- d) Cook-cum- Helper having contagious / infectious diseases/open wound shall be barred from cooking till she recovers.
- e) Cook-cum-Helper shall not chew tobacco, betel, khaini etc. during the school hours.
- f) Food to be tasted must be taken on spoon not in hands.
- g) Multi tap water source and Multi bottle hand wash liquid must be encouraged at all schools.

Consumption Safety:

- a) Clean water shall be used for cooking, drinking and washing.
- b) Cook-cum- Helper shall be vigilant about the cleanliness and hygiene before cooking, during cooking, during serving of the meals and till the utensils are washed and stored again.
- c) Every day the ration is to be checked by the Headmaster before it is given to the cook-cum-helper.
- d) Every day the cooked food is to be tasted and checked by two teachers and cook-cum-helpers before it is served to the children. The test checking teachers and cook-cum-helper shall sign on the register maintained for the purpose on daily basis.
- e) One member from SMC/ Mothers committee /Parents to be invited to come to school to inspect MDM and taste the cooked food. A Roaster has to be prepared in this regard which is mandatory.

Other aspects of the programme

The other aspect of the programme in Punjab also includes regular provision of iron tablets (to counter anemia) and deworming tablets once in six months and regular medical checkup.

CHAPTER III

THE RESEARCH METHOD

Method means a regular and systematic way of accomplishing something and procedure means a way of performing or affecting something. The terms *method* and *procedure* are frequently used interchangeably in research literature. It is truism that no results are much better than the methods by which they are obtained. Apparently, the selection of the method is very important to have satisfactory results. Research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem where various steps are generally adopted by a researcher in studying the research problem along with the logic behind them. It describes the various steps to be adopted in solving a research problem such as the manner in which the problems are formulated, the definitions of terms, the choice of the subject of investigation, the validation of data gathering tools, the collection, analysis and interpretation of data and the process of inferences and generalizations.

The basic purpose of the research is to find out solution to the certain questions by making use of the scientific and systematic techniques. Before finding an appropriate solution the problem one has to design the way in which he wants to proceed in future, known as development of research design. Research design is concerned with the methods and ways in which the investigator manages the situation to study the selected problem. *A research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure.* In simple words, research design is a process of deliberate application of research methods directed towards bringing an expected situation under control. The present study is an attempt to have in-depth analysis of various problem faced by the elementary education sector in rural Punjab and entitled as *Diagnostic Analysis of Mid day Meals in Rural Punjab.*

RESEARCH SAMPLE:

The locale of study was rural areas of Punjab. There are 20 districts of the state when the study was planned. All the districts were grouped into three categories on the basis of rural literacy rate defined as highly educated, less educated and moderately educated. Distribution of different districts of Punjab is shown in Table 2.1.

Table 1.1: Distribution of Districts According to Rural Literacy

Thinly Rural Educated Areas (less than 65 per cent RP)		Moderately Rural Educated Areas(65 to less than 75 per cent RP)		Highly Rural Educated Areas (75 per cent and above RP)	
<i>District</i>	<i>Block</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Block</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Block</i>
1.Amritsar	8(2)	1.Gurdaspur	16(3)	1.Tarn Taran	8(2)
2. Jalandhar	10	2.Kapurthala	5(1)	2.SBS Nagar	5
3.SAS Nagar	3	3.Ferozepur	10	3.Hoshiarpur	10(2)
4. Faridkot	2(1)	4.Muklatsar	4(1)	4.Moga	5
5.Patiala	8(2)	5.Bathinda	8(2)	5. Ropar	5(1)
6.Ludhiana	12	6. Sangrur	9	6.Mansa	5
		7. Barnala	2		
		8. Fategarh Sahib	5(1)		

SBS stands for Shaheed Bhagat Singh; SAS for Sahibjada Ajit Singh and RLR stands for rural literacy rate

From each group two districts was selected again on the basis of rural literacy rate. Selected districts were Amritsar and Faridkot from thinly rural educated areas; Gurdaspur and Bathinda from Moderately rural educated areas and Hoshiarpur and Ropar from the highly rural educated areas.

From each so selected district; one block was selected having up to five blocks; two blocks having more than five but up to 10 blocks again on the basis of rural literacy rate and three blocks having more than 10 blocks. Selected blocks are represented in Annex 2.1. There were in all 11 blocks selected for detailed analysis.

From each block, 50 government schools up to elementary standard were selected. Accordingly there were 550 schools selected from 11 blocks of six districts of Punjab. The sampling method used was non-probability convenience sampling. Besides time series data was collected from various official publications.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE:

To test the academic performance, students of outgoing class, that is, 5th standard and 8th standard were selected for our purpose. All the students present on the day of visit to the school were selected to test their academic performance. Hence the study sample consists of 3940 students consisting of both the gender (1750 boys and 2190 girls) from upper primary schools. Their academic performance was tested for English, Mathematics and Science subjects.

Likewise a sample of 3830 students of primary standard was selected. To test the academic performance of fifth standard students in Mathematics and Environmental Science/General knowledge and all the three languages, namely, English, Hindi and Punjabi preliminary test was conducted from the syllabus already taught to the students during the visit to the different schools of the selected blocks.

DEFINING RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

Village or Town is recognized as the basic area of habitation. In all censuses throughout the world this dichotomy of Rural and Urban areas is recognized and the data are generally presented for the rural and urban areas separately. In the rural areas the smallest area of habitation, viz., and the village generally follows the limits of a revenue village that is recognized by the normal district administration. The revenue village need not necessarily be a single agglomeration of the habitations. But the revenue village has a definite surveyed boundary and each village is a separate administrative unit with separate village accounts. It may have one or more hamlets. The entire revenue village is one unit. There may be unsurveyed villages within forests etc., where the locally recognized boundaries of each habitation area are followed within the larger unit of say the forest range officer's jurisdiction. It is in defining the urban areas that problems generally arise. However for the 1971 Census the definition adopted for an urban area which follows the pattern of 1961 was as follows:-

- (a) all places with a Municipality, Corporation or Cantonment or Notified Town Area
- (b) all other places which satisfied the following criteria:
 - (i) a minimum population of 5,000.
 - (ii) at least 75% of the male working population was non-agricultural.
 - (iii) a density of population of at least 400 sq. Km. (i.e. 1000 per sq. Mile)

The Director of Census of each State/Union Territory was, however, given some discretion in respect of some marginal cases, in consultation with the State Government to include some places that had other distinct urban characteristics and to exclude undeserving cases.

STATISTICAL TOOLS:

A suitable statistical tool such as Chi square, coefficient of variation was used depending upon the availability of data generated to meet the objectives of the study.

Annex 1.1

LIST OF SELECTED VILLAGES OF SELECTED BLOCKS OF SELECTED DISTRICTS

<i>Thinly Rural Educated Areas (less than 65 per cent RP)</i>		<i>Moderately Rural Educated Areas(65 to less than 75 per cent RP)</i>		<i>Highly Rural Educated Areas (75 per cent and above RP)</i>	
<i>District</i>	<i>Blocks</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Blocks</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Blocks</i>
<i>Amritsar</i>	<i>Chowan</i>	<i>Gurdaspur</i>	<i>Kalanaur</i>	<i>Hoshiarpur</i>	<i>Mukerian</i>
	<i>Majitha</i>		<i>Kahnuwan</i>		<i>Hajipur</i>
			<i>Dorangla</i>		
<i>Faridkot</i>	<i>Faridkot</i>	<i>Bathinda</i>	<i>Bathinda</i>	<i>Ropar</i>	<i>Anandpur Sahib</i>
			<i>Talwandi sabo</i>		
<i>Total</i>	<i>Three+</i>		<i>Five+</i>		<i>Three = 11</i>

CHAPTER IV

IMPACT ANALYSIS OF MDM

Education plays a vital and important role in fulfilling the basic needs of a common man viz. food, shelter and clothing. The main aim of education is to prepare and develop the child physically, mentally and spiritually to lead a quality life. Education is a process through which a child is made capable to attain the necessary competencies and skills to face the challenges in life to survive, and to make struggle for existence. Four important factors are identified for achieving the goal of Education for All. These are Access to Education, Enrollment of children, and Retention of the enrolled children and Achievement. Various schemes were implemented in the primary education sector by the Government to reach the disadvantaged population. Access to primary education was universalized through flagship programmes of Government like *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*. However, despite this, a few children are still deprived of Primary Education due to inability of their parents to send them to schools because of their poor economical status. For, these parents, sending their children to school means not only incurring extra financial burden but also depriving them of some money which their children would have earned otherwise by doing labour. That being the attitude of these economically backward parents, one may, perhaps, to motivate the parents and children to bring their children school by providing them food and nutritional needs. Mid Day Meal scheme is an effort to achieve and facilitate all the four above said objectives.

This chapter is an attempt to examine the impact of MDM on enrollment and retention of elementary students in the rural areas of Punjab.

Enrollment of Students:

One of the major objectives of Mid Day Meal scheme is to increase enrollment, retention and to tone up the learning abilities of the beneficiaries, especially of children belonging to poor and down trodden sections of the society. Table 4.1 reveals the total enrollment of the elementary students in the selected rural schools of Punjab.

Table 1.2: Total Enrollment of Students in Elementary Schools in Rural Punjab

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Enrollment in Base year</i>	<i>Enrollment in Current year</i>	<i>Percentage change</i>
<i>Amritsar</i>	<i>7870</i>	<i>8796</i>	<i>111.76</i>
<i>Bathinda</i>	<i>5853</i>	<i>5877</i>	<i>100.41</i>
<i>Faridkot</i>	<i>5131</i>	<i>5038</i>	<i>98.18</i>
<i>Gurdaspur</i>	<i>3906</i>	<i>3311</i>	<i>84.77</i>
<i>Ropar</i>	<i>1845</i>	<i>2075</i>	<i>112.47</i>
<i>Tarn Taran</i>	<i>7848</i>	<i>8048</i>	<i>102.55</i>
<i>Rural Punjab</i>	<i>32453</i>	<i>33145</i>	<i>102.13</i>

Source: Survey Undertaken

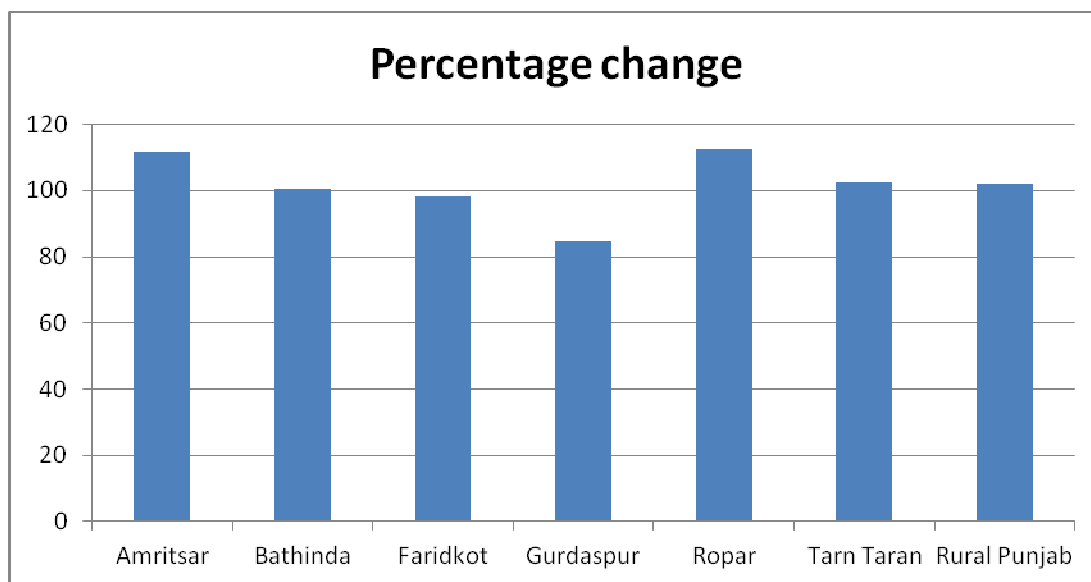


Fig 1.2: Percent Change in Enrollment in Elementary Rural Schools of Punjab

Total enrollment in selected elementary rural schools in Punjab has increased marginally (i.e. 2.13 per cent) in current year as compared to the base year. However, different scenario has been noticed in the selected districts of Punjab. Ropar district showed highest increase in elementary enrollment (i.e. 12.47 per cent) followed by Amritsar where the increment was 11.76 per cent. One of the reasons could be the availability of large number of government, public and private schools in ropar city. Moreover, sex ratio of Ropar (i.e. 913/1000 males) was better than the sex ratio of Amritsar city (i.e. 884 /1000 males) according to census 2011. Furthermore, there was no change in the enrollment of selected rural elementary schools of Bathinda district (i.e. 100.41 per cent). However in Gurdaspur district, the enrollment in elementary rural schools has

Table 1.3: Gender-wise Enrollment in Selected Elementary Rural Schools of Punjab

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Enrollment of Boys</i>			<i>Enrollment of Girls</i>		
	<i>Base year</i>	<i>Current year</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Base year</i>	<i>Current year</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Amritsar</i>	4082	4694	114.99	3788	4102	108.29
<i>Bathinda</i>	3121	3067	98.27	2732	2810	102.85
<i>Faridkot</i>	2749	2684	97.64	2382	2354	98.82
<i>Gurdaspur</i>	2040	1670	81.86	1866	1641	87.94
<i>Ropar</i>	964	1037	107.57	881	1038	117.82
<i>Tarn Taran</i>	3808	3983	104.59	4040	4065	100.62
<i>Rural Punjab</i>	16764	17135	102.21	15689	16010	102.05

Source: Survey Undertaken

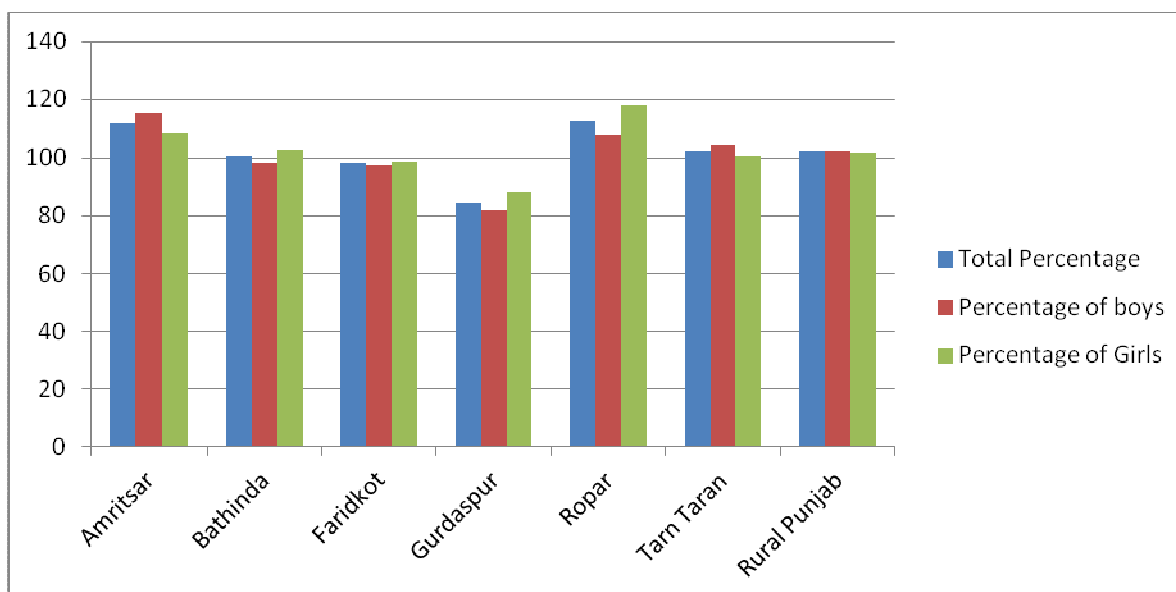


Fig 1.3: Gender-wise Enrollment of Selected Elementary Rural Schools in Punjab

decreased by 16.24 per cent followed by Faridkot district where the decline was less than 2 per cent. Reason of drop out in Gurdaspur could be low sex ratio and also poor infrastructure of schools. Furthermore, we noticed that in Gurdaspur most of the rural schools have average feeding distance of 2 to 5 kms (i.e. 24 per cent) and only 24 per cent rural schools have 5-10 rooms.

Gender-wise Enrollment:

Gender wise enrollment of selected elementary rural schools in Punjab presented in Table 4.2., revealed that enrollment of boys and girls has increased marginally (i.e. 2.21 per cent and 2.05 per cent respectively) during the reference period. However, different scenario has been noticed in the selected districts of Punjab. Moreover, Amritsar district recorded highest increase in boy's enrollment (i.e. 114.99 per cent) followed by Ropar (i.e. 107.57 per cent) and Tarn Taran (i.e. 104.59 per cent). Other districts have shown decrease in enrollment of boys. Girls' enrollment scenario also showed same trend. Ropar district showed highest increase in enrollment of girls (i.e. 17.82 per cent) because of its better sex ratio. However in Gurdaspur district the enrollment of girls decreased to 87.94 per cent and was at the bottom of ladder. Dropout rate of girls students in government schools of Punjab is increasing and in Gurdaspur this situation is worse i.e. enrollment of girls decreased to 87.94 per cent. There could be many reasons behind it, like poor financial situations of a family, gender discrimination by society and immobile schools etc.

Table 1.4: Enrollment of Students in Primary and Upper Primary Schools

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Primary</i>			<i>Upper Primary</i>		
	<i>Base year enrollment</i>	<i>Current year enrollment</i>	<i>Per cent change</i>	<i>Base year enrollment</i>	<i>Current year enrollment</i>	<i>Per cent change</i>
<i>Amritsar</i>	5550	5350	96.39	2320	3446	148.53
<i>Bathinda</i>	5853	5877	100.41	-	-	-
<i>Faridkot</i>	5131	5038	98.18	-	-	-
<i>Gurdaspur</i>	3753	3120	83.14	153	191	124.84
<i>Ropar</i>	1845	2075	112.47	-	-	-
<i>Tarn Taran</i>	5254	5238	99.69	2594	2810	108.33
<i>Rural Punjab</i>	27386	26698	97.49	5067	6447	127.23

Source: Survey Undertaken

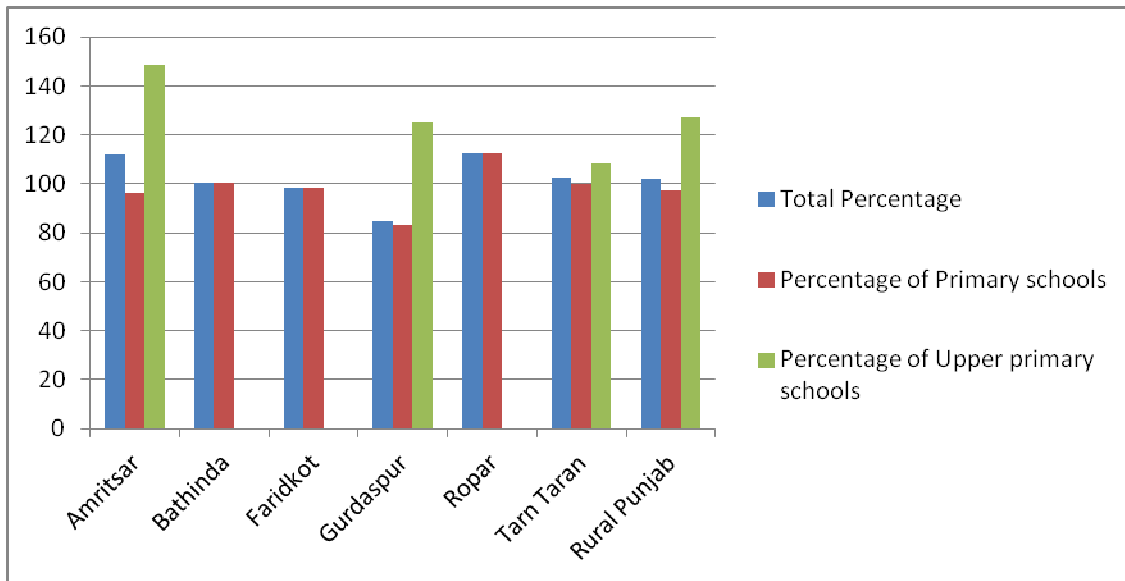


Fig 1.4: Percentage of Enrollment in Primary and Upper Primary Schools

Standard-wise Enrollment:

Standard wise enrollment in selected elementary rural schools in Punjab (as shown in Table 4.3.) has increased by 27.23 per cent in upper primary rural schools as compared to the primary rural schools where enrollment was decreased by 2.51 per cent. However, different scenario has been noticed in the selected districts of Punjab. It has been observed that enrollment of primary rural schools in selected districts of Punjab decreased except in Bathinda (i.e. 100.41 per cent) and Ropar (i.e. 112.47 per cent) where it was other way around. Enrollment of upper primary rural schools in selected districts has been increased and Amritsar district showed the highest enrollment increment in upper primary rural schools (i.e. 148.53 per cent) followed by Gurdaspur district (i.e. 124.84 per cent) and Tarn Taran district where the rise was 108.33 per cent.

Caste-wise Distribution of Students:

Caste-wise distribution of students in elementary rural schools in Punjab during the year 2011-12 has been presented in Table 4.4. Different scenario has been noticed in the selected districts of Punjab where most of the students of rural elementary schools belonged to SC category (i.e. 68.25 per cent). Rest of the percentage of students was almost equally divided among OBC and General category (i.e. 16.48 and 15.27 per cent respectively). Faridkot district recorded highest enrollment of SC students (i.e. 79.42 per cent) followed by Amritsar where the enrollment was (77.66 per cent). However, Ropar district was at the bottom of ladder with the enrollment of SC students (i.e. 37.11 per cent). Moreover, Gurdaspur district has highest enrollment of OBC students (i.e. 40.81 per cent) but lowest number of enrollment of General students (i.e. 10.65 per cent). In Ropar district, the highest enrollment of general students observed was 30.60 per cent.

Table 1.5: Distribution of Students in Rural Punjab Caste-wise during 2011-12

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Total Enrollment</i>	<i>SC</i>	<i>OBC</i>	<i>General</i>
<i>Amritsar</i>	8979	6973 (77.66)	1013 (11.28)	993 (11.06)
<i>Bathinda</i>	5872	3643 (62.04)	1041 (17.73)	1188 (20.23)
<i>Faridkot</i>	5123	4068 (79.42)	384 (7.49)	671 (13.09)
<i>Gurdaspur</i>	3294	1599 (48.54)	1344 (40.81)	351 (10.65)
<i>Ropar</i>	2118	786 (37.11)	684 (32.29)	648 (30.60)
<i>Tarn Taran</i>	8374	5972 (71.32)	1097 (13.10)	1305 (15.58)
<i>Rural Punjab</i>	33760	23041 (68.25)	5563 (16.48)	5156 (15.27)

Source: Survey Undertaken

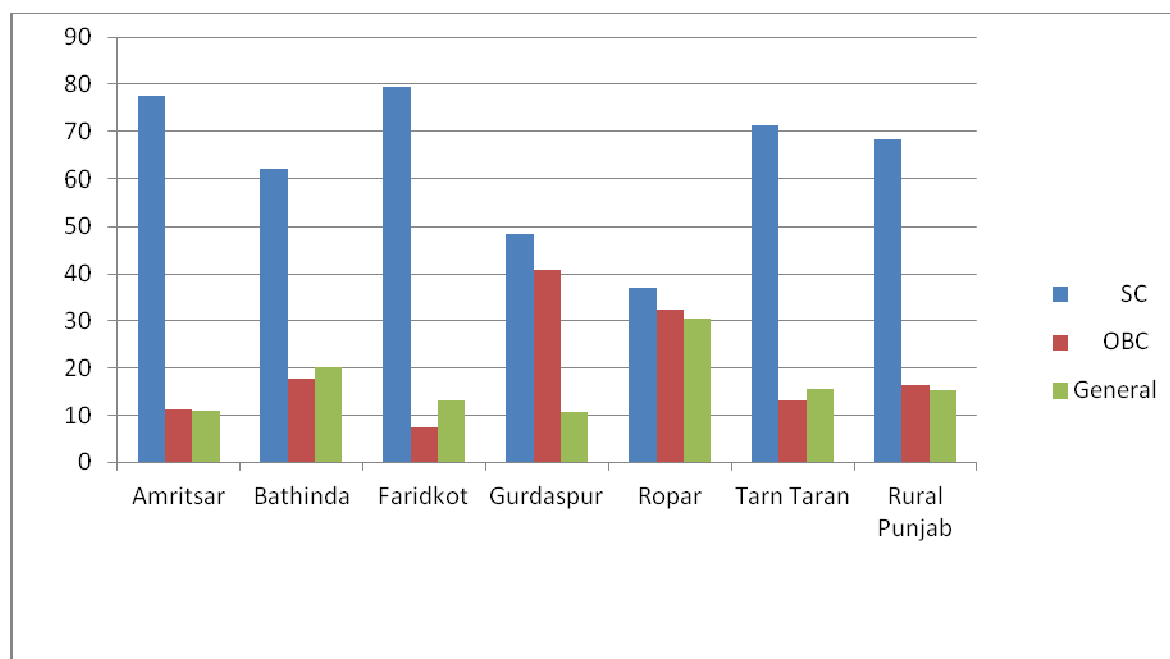


Fig 1.5: Caste-wise Distribution of Students in Rural Punjab during 2011-12

Gender-wise Distribution of Students:

Gender-wise enrollment in elementary rural schools in Punjab during 2012-13 has been presented in Table 4.5. The enrollment of elementary boys exceeded their female counterpart, i.e. 52 and 48 percentage respectively. Similar scenario has been noticed in all the selected districts of Punjab with the only exception of Taran Taran, where enrollment of girls exceeded their boys counterpart (i.e. 51.13 and 48.87 per cent respectively). This may be simply due to female dominated areas; sex ratio of Taran Taran was 898 according to 2011 census. Amritsar district has recorded highest enrollment of boys (i.e. 53.75 per cent) followed by Faridkot where the enrollment was 53.43 per cent. The percentage of girls in Amritsar district was lowest among all the districts (i.e. 46.25 per cent). Reason could be the low sex ratio of Faridkot and Amritsar districts (i.e. 889 and 884 females per 1000 males respectively).

Table 1.6: Distribution of Students in Rural Punjab during 2012-13: Gender-wise

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Total Enrollment</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>
<i>Amritsar</i>	8979	4826 (53.75)	4153 (46.25)
<i>Bathinda</i>	5872	3046 (51.87)	2826 (48.13)
<i>Faridkot</i>	5123	2737 (53.43)	2386 (46.57)
<i>Gurdaspur</i>	3294	1675 (50.85)	1619 (49.15)
<i>Ropar</i>	2118	1080 (50.99)	1038 (49.01)
<i>Tarn Taran</i>	8374	4092 (48.87)	4282 (51.13)
<i>Rural Punjab</i>	33760	17456 (51.71)	16304 (48.29)

Source: Survey Undertaken

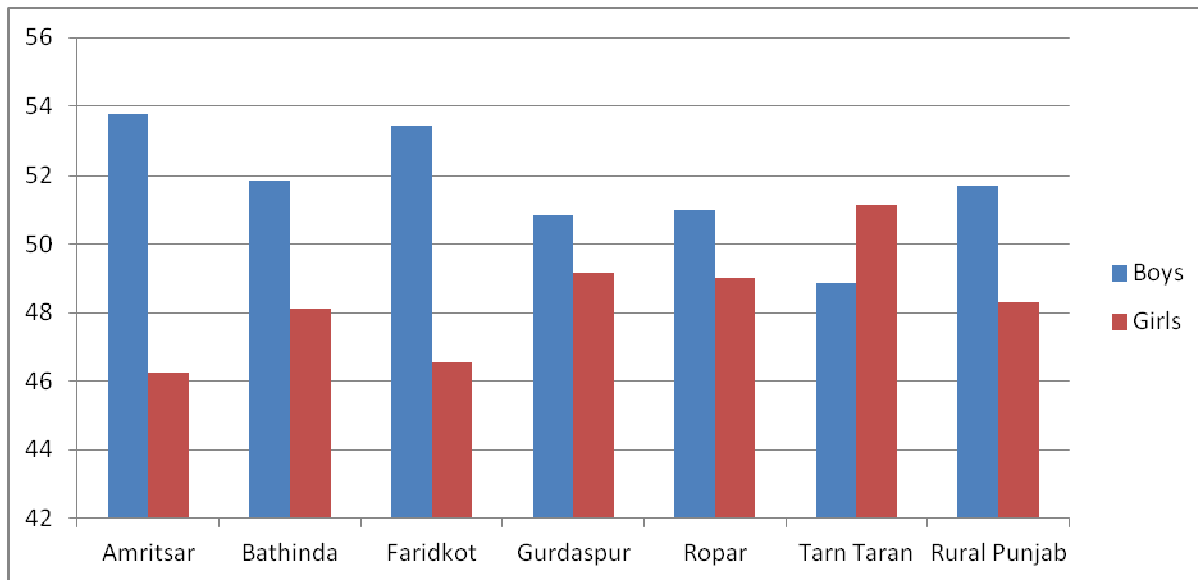


Fig 1.6: Gender-wise Percentage

Pupil-Teacher Ratio:

Pupil-Teacher ratio in elementary rural schools in Punjab of selected districts was estimated at 33:1 revealed in Table 4.6. Further, it was observed that Bathinda district has highest pupil-teacher ratio (i.e. 43:1) followed by Faridkot and Tarn Taran district, where the Pupil-Teacher ratio observed was 38:1 each. Gurdaspur and Ropar district have Pupil-Teacher ratio of 27:1 which showed a healthy sign of development. This is due to least enrollment of students at elementary standard.

However, according to RTE norms and standards for a school, Pupil-Teacher ratio should be 30:1. And it has been observed that only few schools are following RTE norms.



Table 1.7: Pupil-Teacher Ratio in Selected Schools

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Total no. of students</i>	<i>Total no. of teachers</i>	<i>Pupil Teacher ratio</i>
<i>Amritsar</i>	8979	304 (3.39)	29:1
<i>Bathinda</i>	5872	138 (2.35)	43:1
<i>Faridkot</i>	5123	134 (2.62)	38:1
<i>Gurdaspur</i>	3294	152 (4.61)	27:1
<i>Ropar</i>	2118	79 (3.73)	27:1
<i>Tarn Taran</i>	8374	222 (2.65)	38:1
<i>Rural Punjab</i>	33760	1029 (3.05)	33:1

Source: Survey Undertaken

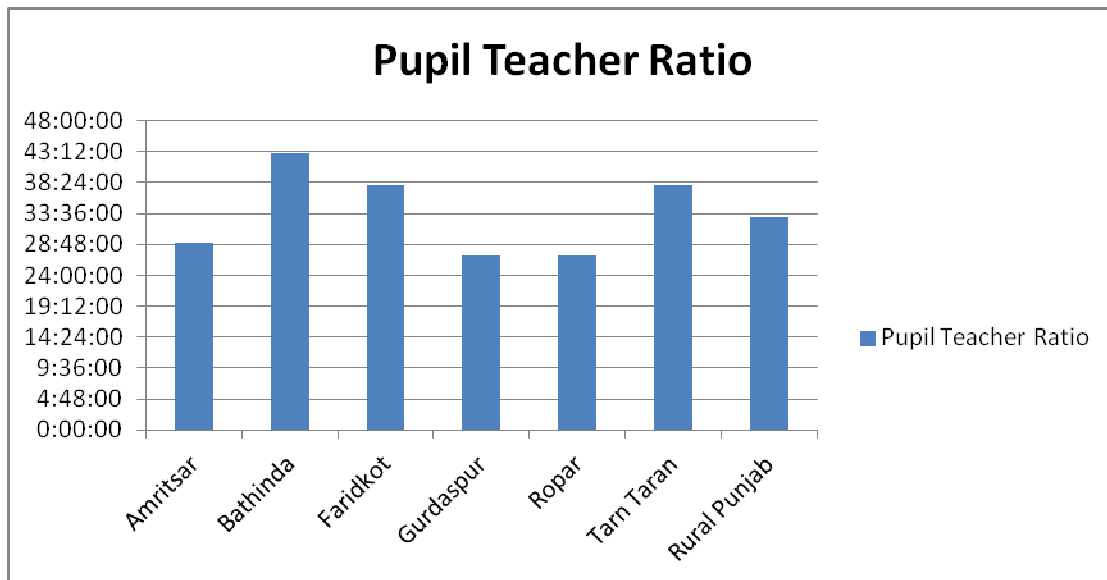


Fig 1.7: Pupil-Teacher Ratio

Mealing Pattern:

Table 4.7., represents the Mealing pattern of students in selected elementary rural schools of Punjab. It has been noticed that 99.66 per cent of the students take mid day meal in schools because most of the students did not take breakfast in the early morning. Surprisingly, 40.44 per cent students also take lunch at home.

However, different scenario has been noticed in the selected districts of Punjab. In Gurdaspur and Ropar district 100 per cent of students eat mid day meal. From the given data, we also observed that some students due to their religious sentiments did not take mid day meal in their school. Furthermore, low percent of the students opted for Lunch at home. Like in Faridkot 24.74 per cent students and in Bathinda 26.84 per cent students did not take lunch after mid day meal. Almost similar scenario has been noticed in the selected districts with varying degree. In Ropar 75.85 per cent) students also eat lunch after taking mid day meal. But in some districts like in Tarn Taran district 75.48 per cent students take tea in the evening. And the highest percentage of students (i.e. 98.14 per cent) takes dinner at night which is highest from all the districts. However, it is noticed that only 43.97 per cent students take milk at bed time from which the Amritsar district is the highest among all districts (i.e. 54.27 per cent).

Table 1.8: Mealing Pattern

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Total Sample</i>	<i>No. of Students Opted for:</i>						
		<i>Early Morning</i>	<i>Breakfast</i>	<i>Mid day meal</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Evening Tea</i>	<i>Dinner</i>	<i>Bed time Milk</i>
<i>Amritsar</i>	1312	1155 (88.03)	1135 (86.51)	1301 (99.16)	911 (69.44)	946 (72.10)	1279 (97.48)	712 (54.27)
<i>Bathinda</i>	5104	3177 (62.25)	1561 (30.58)	5092 (99.76)	1370 (26.84)	3133 (61.38)	4957 (97.12)	2254 (44.16)
<i>Faridkot</i>	3266	1543 (47.24)	1206 (36.93)	3260 (99.82)	808 (24.74)	1806 (55.29)	3169 (97.03)	1414 (43.29)
<i>Gurdaspur</i>	491	131 (26.68)	272 (55.39)	491 (100.00)	252 (51.32)	208 (42.36)	404 (82.28)	61 (12.42)
<i>Ropar</i>	1205	712 (59.09)	445 (36.93)	1205 (100.00)	914 (75.85)	778 (64.56)	1142 (94.77)	542 (44.98)
<i>Tarn Taran</i>	1399	1081 (77.27)	961 (68.69)	1385 (98.99)	912 (65.19)	1056 (75.48)	1373 (98.14)	635 (46.67)
<i>Rural Punjab</i>	12777	7799 (61.04)	5580 (43.67)	12734 (99.66)	5167 (40.44)	7927 (62.04)	12324 (96.45)	5618 (43.97)

Source: Survey Undertaken

Table 1.9: Distribution of Schools according to Teachers

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Up to 2</i>	<i>2-5</i>	<i>Above 5</i>	<i>Total Schools</i>
<i>Amritsar</i>	4 (7.69)	21 (40.38)	27 (51.93)	52
<i>Bathinda</i>	12 (30.00)	25 (62.50)	3 (7.50)	40
<i>Faridkot</i>	6 (20.69)	14 (48.28)	9 (31.03)	29
<i>Gurdaspur</i>	9 (18.00)	24 (48.00)	17 (34.00)	50
<i>Ropar</i>	13 (26.00)	27 (54.00)	10 (20.00)	50
<i>Tarn Taran</i>	12 (23.53)	25 (49.02)	14 (27.45)	51
<i>Rural Punjab</i>	56 (20.59)	136 (50)	80 (29.41)	272

Source: Survey Undertaken

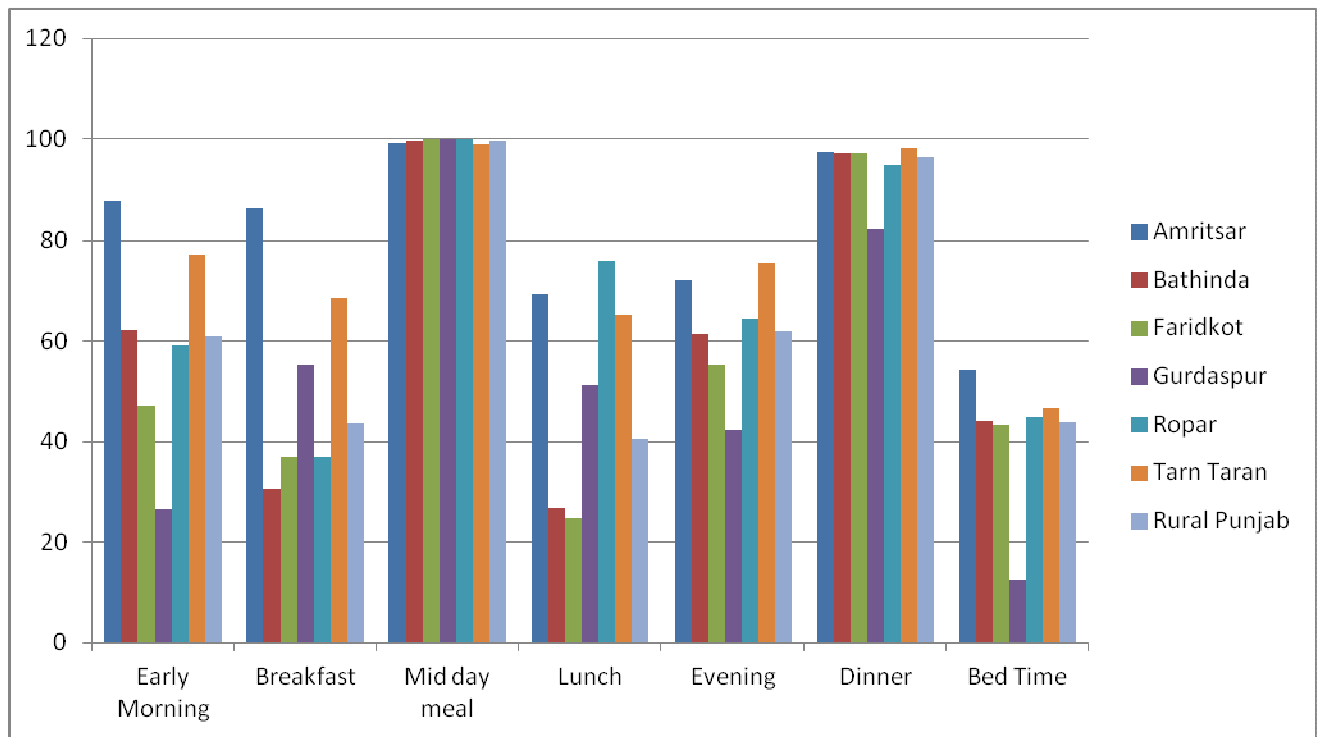


Fig 1.8: Percentage of Mealing Pattern



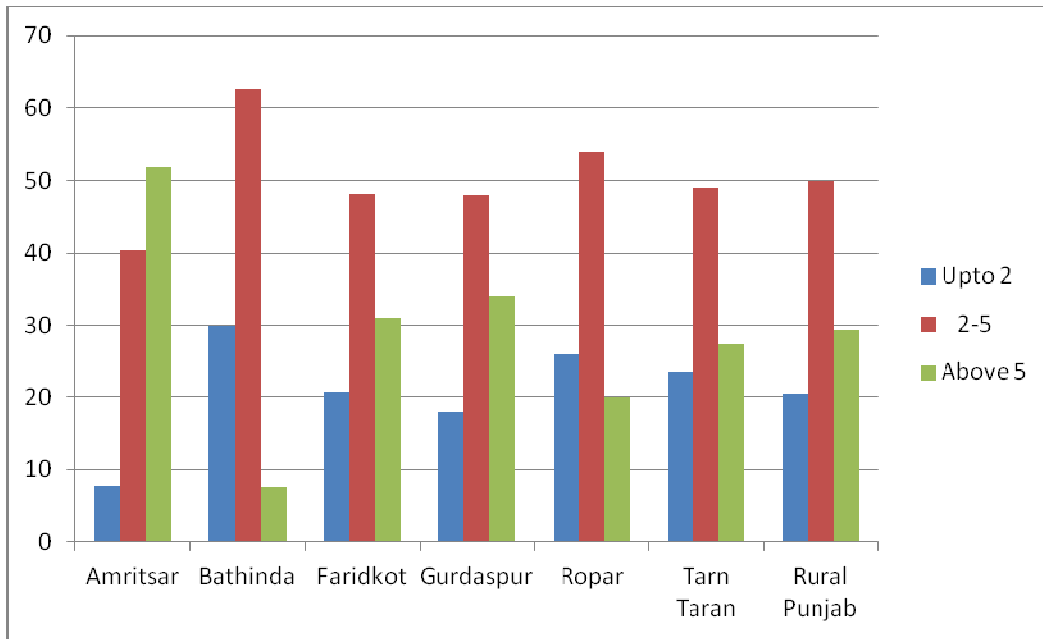


Fig 1.9: Percentage of Distribution of Schools according to Teachers

Teacher-wise Distribution of Schools:

Distribution of teachers in elementary rural schools of Punjab (Table 4.8) showed that nearly 20 per cent of schools had 1 or 2 teachers despite of 5 or more classes in the schools due to which the teachers had to combine the classes. It adversely affected the study of children. This could be one of the major reasons of poor performance of students. Moreover 50 per cent of rural schools had more than 2 but up to 5 teachers. Rest of (i.e. nearly 30 per cent) rural schools had more than 5 teachers.

However, different scenario had been noticed in the selected districts of Punjab. Bathinda district had highest number of rural schools (i.e. 62.5 per cent) where there were more than 2 but up to 5 teachers. Amritsar district had shown satisfactory picture up to some level because in this district only 7.69 per cent of rural schools had up to 2 teachers. However, in Amritsar district some schools had highest number of schools (i.e. 51.93 per cent) where the number of teachers was more than 5 because of multiple sections of each class. And Bathinda district had lowest percentage having teachers above 5 (i.e. 7.50 per cent only). And this could also be the reason why Bathinda had highest pupil-teacher ratio (i.e. 43:1).

Distribution of Schools according to Distance:

Table 4.9 has depicted the distribution of elementary rural schools of Punjab. According to average distance nearly 82 per cent of schools in rural Punjab had a feeding distance of less than 2 kms. And 16.91 per cent of schools in rural Punjab had average feeding distance of 2 to 5 kms

Table 1.10: Distribution of Schools according to Distance

<i>Districts</i>	<i>< 2 Kms</i>	<i>2-5 Kms</i>	<i>5-10 Kms</i>	<i>Total Schools</i>
<i>Amritsar</i>	42 (80.77)	9 (17.31)	1 (1.92)	52
<i>Bathinda</i>	36 (90.00)	4 (10.00)	-	40
<i>Faridkot</i>	25 (86.21)	3 (10.34)	1 (3.45)	29
<i>Gurdaspur</i>	38 (76.00)	12 (24.00)	-	50
<i>Ropar</i>	39 (78.00)	11 (22.00)	-	50
<i>Tarn Taran</i>	43 (84.31)	7 (13.73)	1 (1.96)	51
<i>Rural Punjab</i>	223 (81.99)	46 (16.91)	3 (1.10)	272

Source: Survey Undertaken

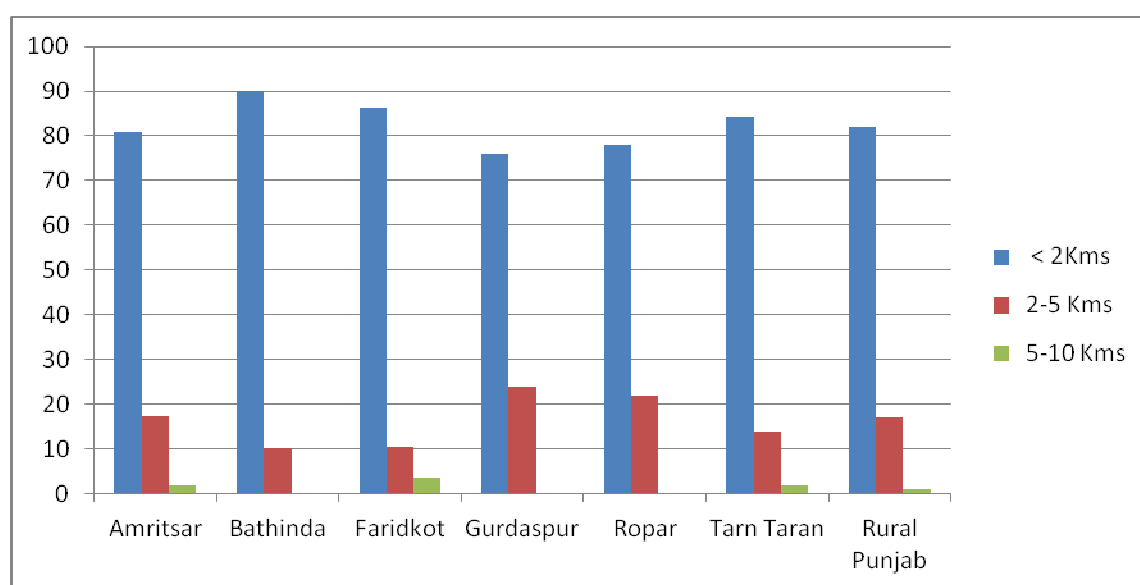


Fig 1.10: Percentage of Distribution of Schools according to Distance

and only 1.10 per cent rural schools had 5 to 10 kms feeding distance from school. Apparently, in the rural areas of Punjab, a child has to cover not more than 2 kms of the average distance to reach the school.

Bathinda district was at the top of ladder in case of less than 2 kms average feeding distance from school (i.e. 90.00 per cent) and Gurdaspur was at the bottom of ladder (i.e. 76.00 per cent). The rural schools having 2-5 kms average feeding distance was found highest (i.e. 24.00 per cent) in district Gurdaspur and lowest in Bathinda district (i.e. 10.00 per cent). There were very less number of rural schools having 5-10 kms of average feeding distance and had been noticed highest (i.e. 3.45 per cent) in Faridkot and lowest in Amritsar district (i.e. 1.92 per cent). And this could be the reason of highest enrollment in this district.

Rooms-wise Distribution of Schools:

Distribution of Elementary rural schools of Punjab according to rooms has been presented in Table 4.10. It had been observed that in rural Punjab half of the schools were having 5 to 10 rooms (i.e. 50.00 per cent) followed by the schools having 3 to 5 rooms (i.e. 28.68 per cent). Very few numbers of rural schools of Punjab were having 10 and above rooms (i.e. 5.14 per cent). And there were only 16.17 per cent rural schools in Punjab that were having up to 2 rooms.

The rural schools having up to 2 rooms found highest with the percentage of 44.00 per cent in Ropar district and lowest in Amritsar district (i.e. 5.77 per cent). However, the rural schools having 3-5 rooms with highest percentage found in Gurdaspur district (i.e. 52.00 per cent) and with lowest percentage found in Bathinda district (i.e. 17.50 per cent). The rural schools having 5-10 rooms had been observed highest in Bathinda district (i.e. 75.00 per cent) and the lowest percentage observed in Gurdaspur district (i.e. 24.00 per cent). On the other hand, the rural schools having 10 and above rooms had been found highest in Amritsar district (i.e. 11.54 per cent). In Gurdaspur and Ropar district there were not any rural schools having 10 or more than 10 rooms. However, according to RTE norms and standards for school, there should be at least one teacher per class.

Table 1.11: Distribution of Schools according to Rooms

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Up to 2</i>	<i>3-5</i>	<i>5-10</i>	<i>10 & above</i>	<i>Total Schools</i>
<i>Amritsar</i>	3 (5.77)	10 (19.23)	33 (63.46)	6 (11.54)	52
<i>Bathinda</i>	-	7 (17.50)	30 (75.00)	3 (7.50)	40
<i>Faridkot</i>	2 (6.89)	7 (24.14)	19 (65.52)	1 (3.45)	29
<i>Gurdaspur</i>	12 (24.00)	26 (52.00)	12 (24.00)	-	50
<i>Ropar</i>	22 (44.00)	14 (28.00)	14 (28.00)	0 (0.00)	50
<i>Tarn Taran</i>	5 (9.81)	14 (27.45)	28 (54.90)	4 (7.84)	51
<i>Rural Punjab</i>	44 (16.17)	78 (28.68)	136 (50)	14 (5.14)	272

Source: Survey Undertaken

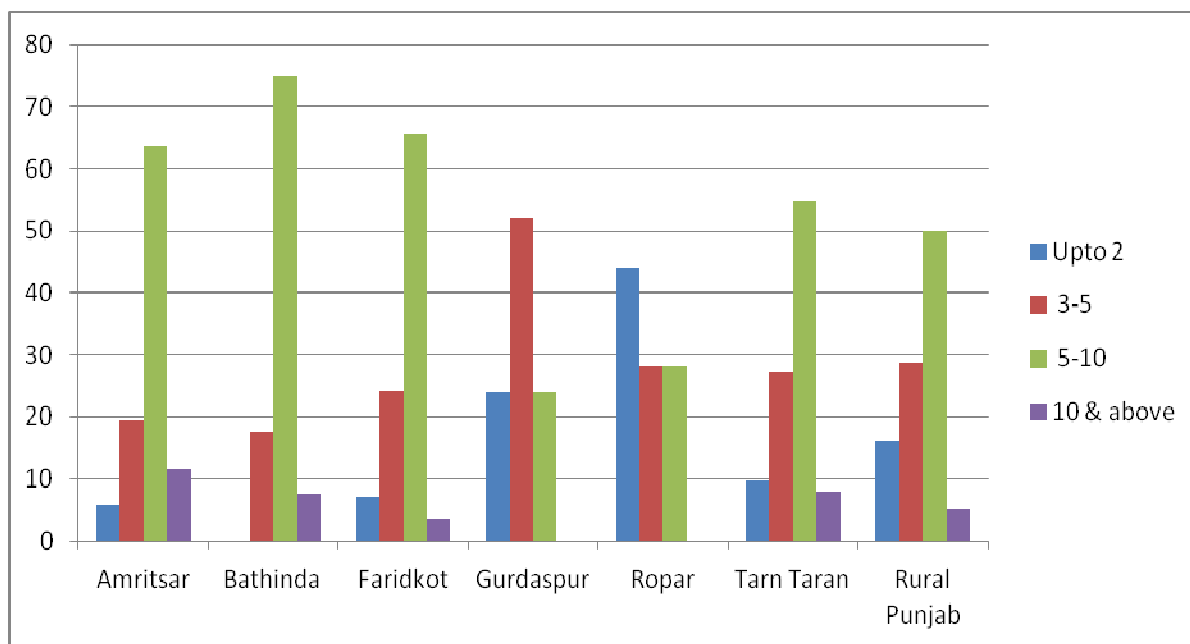


Fig 1.11: Percentage of Schools according to Rooms

Distance-wise Distribution of Schools from City:

Distribution of Elementary rural schools of Punjab according to distance from city has been presented in Table 4.11. It was observed that 40 per cent of rural schools were having 5 to 10 kms distance from the city and nearly 24 per cent of rural schools were having distance of 10 to 15 kms from the city. Different scenario had been noticed in the selected districts of Punjab. The Tarn Taran district showed highest increase in percentage (i.e. 45.09 per cent) and Faridkot district showed lowest percentage (i.e. 17.24 per cent) that were having distance of 5-10 kms from the city. However, the highest percentage estimated was 24.00 per cent in Ropar district, where the distance from city was less than 5 kms and the lowest percentage was recorded in Faridkot district (i.e. 3.45 per cent).

Table 1.12: Distribution of Schools according to Distance from City

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Less than 5 Kms</i>	<i>5-10 Kms</i>	<i>10-15 Kms</i>	<i>15 Kms & above</i>	<i>Total Schools</i>
<i>Amritsar</i>	7 (13.46)	23 (44.23)	17 (32.69)	5 (9.62)	52
<i>Bathinda</i>	3 (7.50)	15 (37.50)	8 (20.00)	14 (35.00)	40
<i>Faridkot</i>	1 (3.45)	5 (17.24)	9 (31.03)	14 (48.28)	29
<i>Gurdaspur</i>	11 (22.00)	21 (42.00)	8 (16.00)	10 (20.00)	50
<i>Ropar</i>	12 (24.00)	22 (44.00)	9 (18.00)	7 (14.00)	50
<i>Tarn Taran</i>	10 (19.61)	23 (45.09)	15 (29.42)	3 (5.88)	51
<i>Rural Punjab</i>	44 (16.18)	109 (40.07)	66 (24.26)	53 (19.49)	272

Source: Survey Undertaken

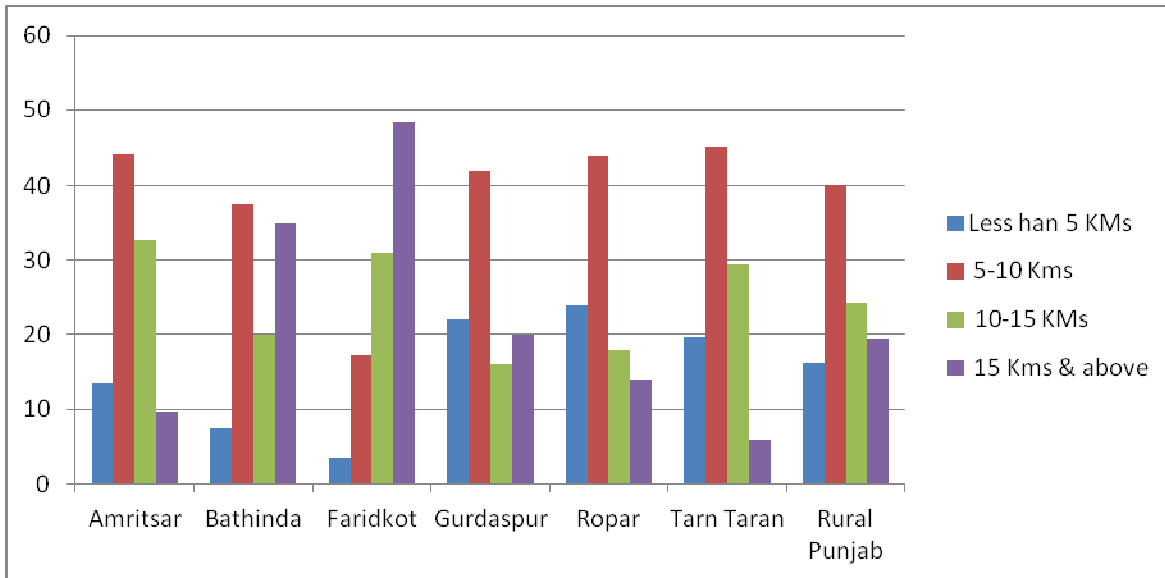


Fig 1.12: Percentage according to Distance from City

The rural schools having 10-15 km distance from city had found highest in Amritsar district (i.e. 32.69 per cent) and lowest in Gurdaspur district (i.e. 16.00 per cent). Moreover, Faridkot district recorded highest percentage; where distance from city was 15 km and above (i.e. 48.28 per cent) and Tarn Taran district recorded the lowest percentage (i.e. 5.88 per cent).

Starting Period of Mid Day Meal:

The period of starting mid day meal in elementary rural schools of rural Punjab and its various districts (Table 4.12) showed that there were nearly 64 per cent of rural schools where mid day meal scheme had been started from 5 to 10 years followed by the rural schools where mid day meal scheme had been started in less than 5 years (i.e. 26.47 per cent). Moreover, it was observed that nearly 8 per cent of rural schools had not records of date of starting the mid day meal schemes in Punjab. In almost all the districts of Punjab, the mid day meal scheme had started either in last five years or in 5-10 years. Different scenario had been noticed in the district of Punjab. Tarn Taran district had highest number of schools (i.e. 52.94 per cent), where mid day meal had been started in last five years and Ropar district recorded the lowest percentage (i.e. 4.00 per cent). On the other hand, Gurdaspur district had highest number of schools (i.e. 90.00 per cent) where mid day meal started in 5-10 years and Tarn Taran district recorded lowest percentage (i.e. 43.14 per cent). Some of the rural schools had not given the information about the period of starting the mid day meal scheme.

Table 1.13: Period of Starting Mid Day Meal

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Less than 5 years</i>	<i>5-10 years</i>	<i>10-15 years</i>	<i>15 years & above</i>	<i>Unspecified</i>	<i>Total Schools</i>
<i>Amritsar</i>	27 (51.93)	24 (46.15)	1 (1.92)	-	-	52
<i>Bathinda</i>	2 (5.00)	28 (70.00)	-	1 (2.5)	9 (22.50)	40
<i>Faridkot</i>	9 (31.03)	13 (44.83)	-	-	7 (24.14)	29
<i>Gurdaspur</i>	5 (10.00)	45 (90.00)	-	-	-	50
<i>Ropar</i>	2 (4.00)	42 (84.00)	-	-	6 (12.00)	50
<i>Tarn Taran</i>	27 (52.94)	22 (43.14)	1 (1.96)	-	1 (1.96)	51
<i>Rural Punjab</i>	72 (26.47)	174 (63.97)	2 (0.74)	1 (0.37)	23 (8.46)	272

Source: Survey Undertaken

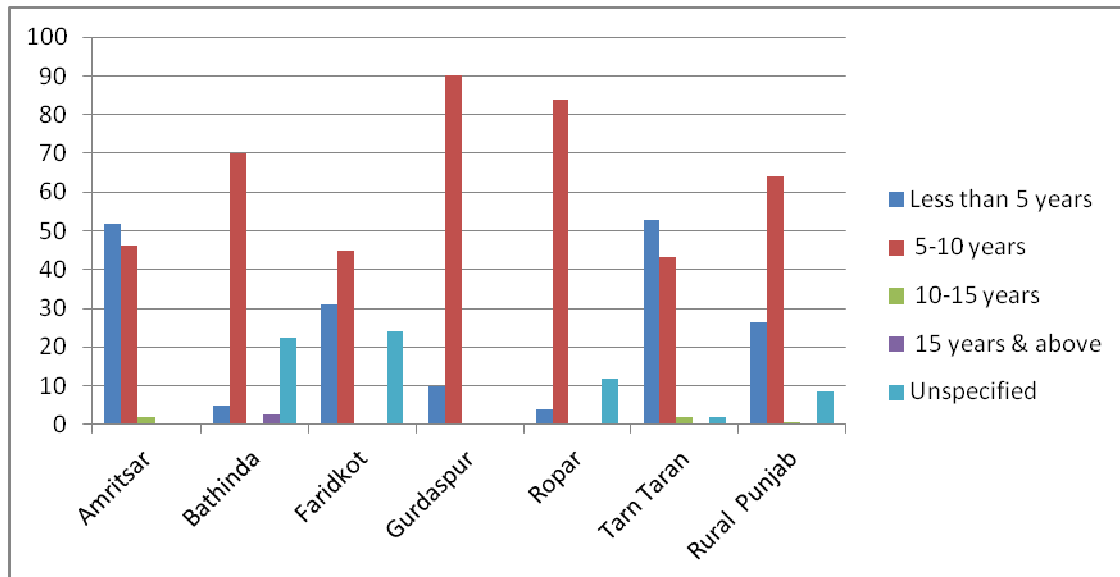


Fig 1.13: Percentage according to Starting Period of Mid Day Meal

Availability of Funds for Mid Day Meal:

The funds availability for mid day meal for rural schools in Punjab is represented in Table 4.13. It is clear from the table that most of rural schools got late funds for mid day meal scheme due to which they had to face many problems. Very less percent of rural schools got either advance or on time funds. Different scenario has been noticed in the selected districts of Punjab. From the below table, we observed that Bathinda district has highest percent of rural schools which got late funds (i.e. 95.00 per cent) followed by the Tarn Taran district (i.e. 90.19 per cent). On the other hand Amritsar district was at the bottom of the ladder with 50.00 per cent because (50.00 per cent) of its rural schools had got either on time funds and advance funds. Moreover it was surprised to note that none of the rural schools of Tarn Taran district were getting advance funds for mid day meal.

Table 1.14: Funds Availability for Mid Day Meal

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Late</i>	<i>On time</i>	<i>Advance</i>	<i>Total Schools</i>
<i>Amritsar</i>	26 (50.00)	18 (34.62)	8 (15.38)	52
<i>Bathinda</i>	38 (95.00)	1 (2.50)	1 (2.50)	40
<i>Faridkot</i>	25 (86.22)	2 (6.89)	2 (6.89)	29
<i>Gurdaspur</i>	42 (84.00)	4 (8.00)	4 (8.00)	50
<i>Ropar</i>	43 (86.00)	7 (14.00)	-	50
<i>Tarn Taran</i>	46 (90.19)	5 (9.81)	-	51
<i>Rural Punjab</i>	220 (80.88)	37 (13.60)	15 (5.51)	272

Source: Survey Undertaken

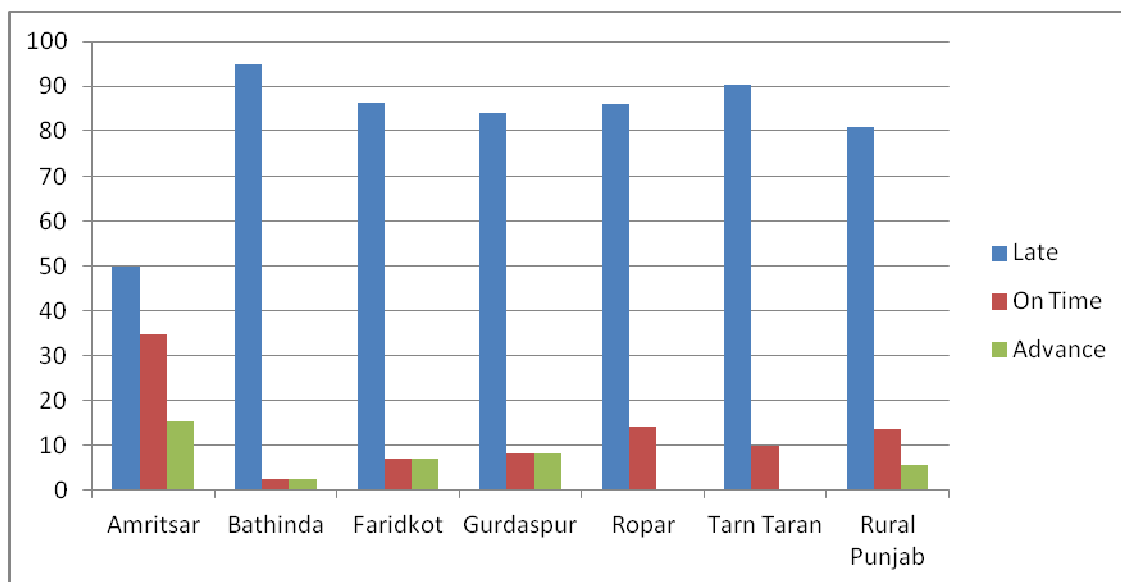


Fig 1.14: Percentage of availability of Funds for Mid Day Meal

Managing Funds for Mid Day Meal:

The management of funds for mid day meal in rural schools of Punjab is a serious problem in the rural Punjab. Funds with the rural schools were not available with them at the right time. There was a time lag for funds availability even up to four to six months and more. Schools had to (Table 4.14) had to use either personal cash or borrow from grocery shop for effectively running

Table 1.15: Management of Funds for Mid Day Meal

Districts	Personal Cash	Borrowings	Others	Total Schools
Amritsar	32 (61.54)	20 (38.46)	-	52
Bathinda	24 (60.00)	16 (40.00)	-	40
Faridkot	19 (65.52)	10 (34.48)	-	29
Gurdaspur	38 (76.00)	12 (24.00)	-	50
Ropar	42 (84.00)	8 (16.00)	-	50
Tarn Taran	26 (50.98)	25 (49.02)	-	51
Rural Punjab	181 (66.54)	91 (33.46)	0 (0)	272

Source: Survey Undertaken

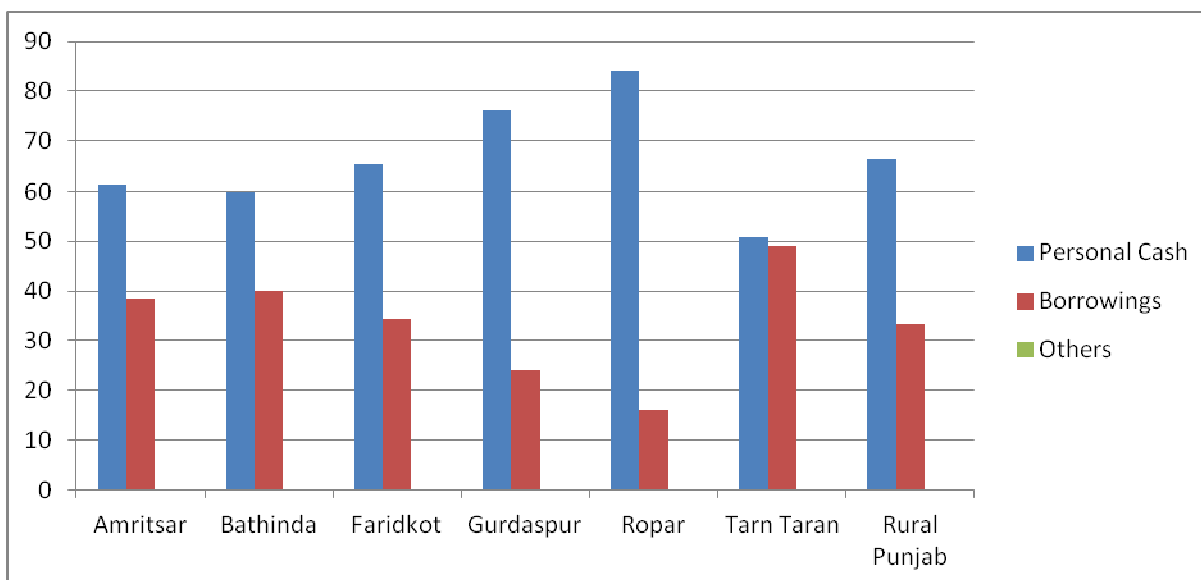


Fig 1.15: Percentage of Management of Funds for Mid Day Meal

mid day meal scheme because most of the schools got late funds for mid day meal scheme. The Ropar district recorded highest number of rural schools (i.e. 84.00 per cent) and Tarn Taran district recorded lowest number of rural schools (i.e. 50.98 per cent) where personal cash had been used. On the other hand Amritsar district recorded highest number of rural schools (i.e. 38.46 per cent) who borrowed from the grocery shop and Ropar district was at lowest in borrowing from the grocery shop (i.e. 16 per cent). The Tarn Taran district had nearly 50.00 per cent rural schools where personal cash was used and nearly equal per cent of rural schools were borrowing grocery shop for mid day meal scheme.

Caste-wise Distribution of Cooks:

Distribution of cooks according to caste wise in elementary rural schools of Punjab has been presented in Table 4.15. In Punjab, most of the cooks belong to SC caste followed by BC and General caste. In Faridkot district, the highest number of cooks belong to SC caste (i.e. 78.48 per cent) and in Ropar district their percentage is lowest (i.e. 56.27 per cent). Whereas the cooks belong to BC caste had been found highest in Gurdaspur district (i.e. 32.09 per cent) and lowest in Faridkot district (i.e. 12.66 per cent). However, In Ropar district highest percentage of cooks was of general caste (i.e. 21.87 per cent) and the lowest percentage found in Tarn Taran district (i.e. 6.84 per cent).

Table 1.16: Distribution of Cooks according to Caste-wise

<i>Districts</i>	<i>SC</i>	<i>BC</i>	<i>General</i>	<i>Total Cooks</i>
<i>Amritsar</i>	81 (71.68)	21 (18.58)	11 (9.74)	113
<i>Bathinda</i>	63 (60.58)	25 (24.04)	16 (15.38)	104
<i>Faridkot</i>	62 (78.48)	10 (12.66)	7 (8.86)	79
<i>Gurdaspur</i>	48 (59.27)	26 (32.09)	7 (8.64)	81
<i>Ropar</i>	36 (56.26)	14 (21.87)	14 (21.87)	64
<i>Tarn Taran</i>	80 (68.38)	29 (24.78)	8 (6.84)	117
<i>Rural Punjab</i>	370 (66.31)	125 (22.40)	63 (11.29)	558

Source: Survey Undertaken

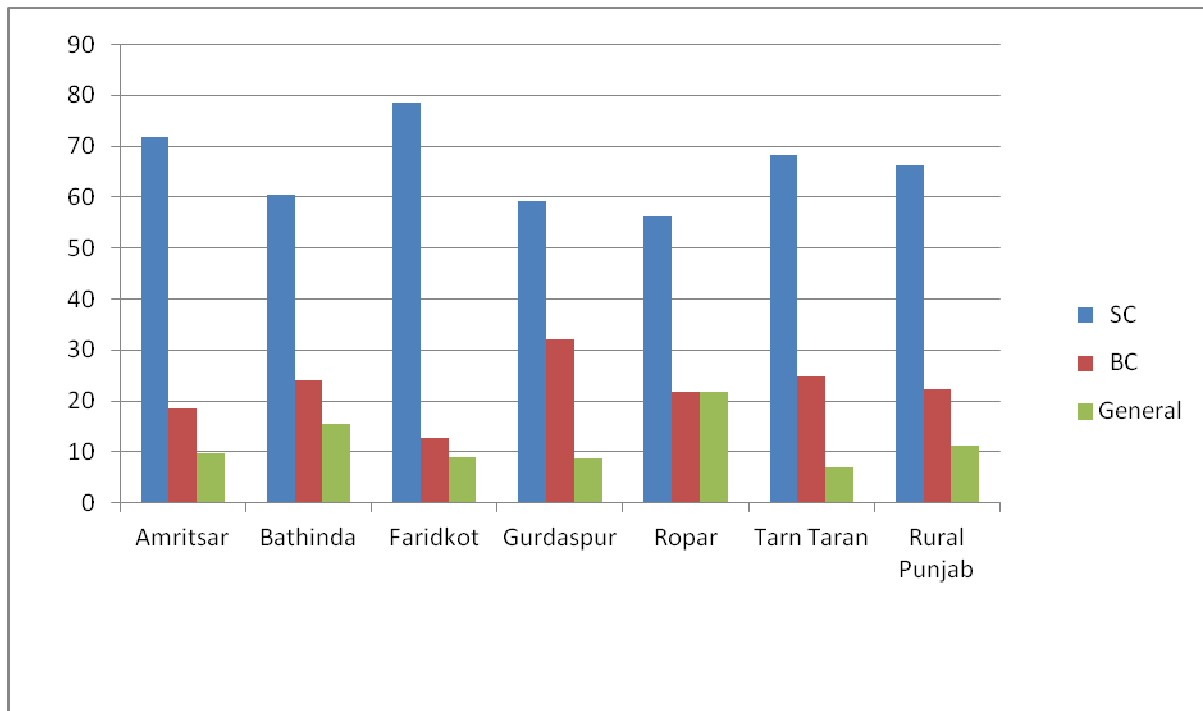


Fig 1.16: Caste-wise Percentage of Distribution of Cooks

Cooks Mode of Appointment:

Mode of appointment of cooks in elementary rural schools in Punjab is presented in Table 4.16. And it had been observed that most of the cooks were appointed by the Headmaster. Different scenario had been noticed in the selected districts of Punjab. Furthermore, it was noticed that in Amritsar, highest number of cooks was appointed by Headmaster (i.e. 35.39 per cent) and the lowest percentage was recorded in Gurdaspur district (i.e. 2.47 per cent). Whereas in Bathinda district, the highest percentage of cooks were appointed by PASWAK (i.e. 34.62 per cent) and the lowest percentage found in Tarn Taran district (i.e. 16.24 per cent). However, in Gurdaspur district, the highest percentage of cooks was appointed by the Panchayats (i.e. 95.07 per cent) and in Ropar district the lowest percentage of cooks was appointed by Panchayat (i.e. 10.94 per cent). However, the mode of appointment of cooks by SHG (self help group) had been found

Table 1.17: Mode of Appointment of Cooks

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Headmaster</i>	<i>Paswak</i>	<i>Panchayat</i>	<i>Self help group</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>Total Schools</i>
<i>Amritsar</i>	40 (35.39)	26 (23.02)	16 (14.16)	2 (1.77)	29 (25.66)	113
<i>Bathinda</i>	15 (14.42)	36 (34.62)	28 (26.92)	12 (11.54)	13 (12.50)	104
<i>Faridkot</i>	24 (30.38)	16 (20.25)	10 (12.66)	25 (31.65)	4 (5.06)	79
<i>Gurdaspur</i>	2 (2.47)	-	77 (95.07)	1 (1.23)	1 (1.23)	81
<i>Ropar</i>	8 (12.50)	13 (20.31)	7 (10.94)	29 (45.31)	7 (10.94)	64
<i>Tarn Taran</i>	23 (19.66)	19 (16.24)	27 (23.07)	-	48 (41.03)	117
<i>Rural Punjab</i>	112 (20.07)	110 (19.71)	165 (29.57)	69 (12.37)	102 (18.28)	558

Source: Survey Undertaken

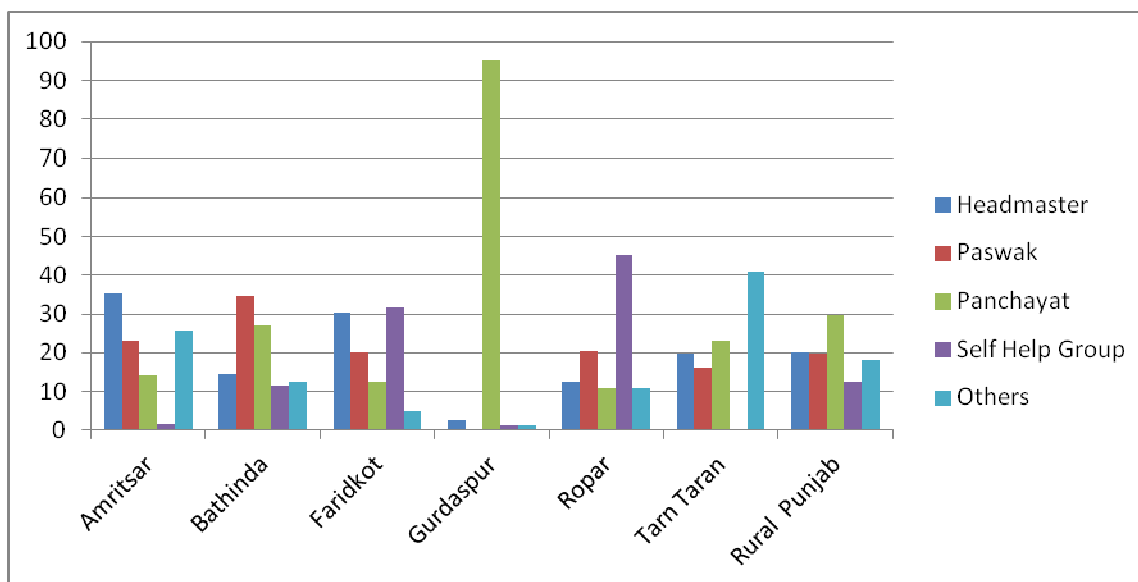


Fig 1 17: Percentage of Mode of Appointment of Cooks

highest in Ropar district (i.e. 45.31 per cent) and on the other hand found lowest in Gurdaspur district (i.e. 1.23 per cent respectively). Self Help Group’s highest percentage had been found in Ropar district and next highest percentage found in Faridkot district (i.e. 45.31 and 31.65 per cent respectively).

Storage of Grains:

The method of grains in elementary rural schools of Punjab has been depicted in Table 4.17. It had been noticed that one of the frequently used method of storage of grains was bins. In Ropar district the highest percentage usage of dustbin (i.e. 84.00 per cent) had been found as a method of storing grains. Where in Tarn Taran district the lowest percentage of usage of bins as a method of storing grains (i.e. 27.45 per cent) was found. The highest percentage of gunny bags as a method of storage grains used in Tarn Taran district (i.e. 60.78 per cent) and in Ropar district the usage of gunny bags as a method of storage grains was lowest (i.e. 4.00 per cent). Bathinda district used drums as a method of storing grains (i.e. 12.5 per cent) and lowest use of drums as a storage method had been observed in Gurdaspur district (i.e. 10.00 per cent).

Table 1.18: Method of Storage of Grains

Districts	Drums	Gunny Bags	Bins	Others	Total Schools
Amritsar	6 (11.54)	7 (13.46)	39 (75.00)	-	52
Bathinda	5 (12.50)	4 (10.00)	29 (72.50)	2 (5.00)	40
Faridkot	7 (24.14)	1 (3.45)	21 (72.41)	-	29
Gurdaspur	5 (10.00)	14 (28.00)	31 (62.00)	-	50
Ropar	6 (12.00)	2 (4.00)	42 (84.00)	-	50
Tarn Taran	6 (11.78)	31 (60.78)	14 (27.45)	-	51
Rural Punjab	35 (12.87)	59 (21.69)	176 (64.70)	2 (0.74)	272

Source: Survey Undertaken

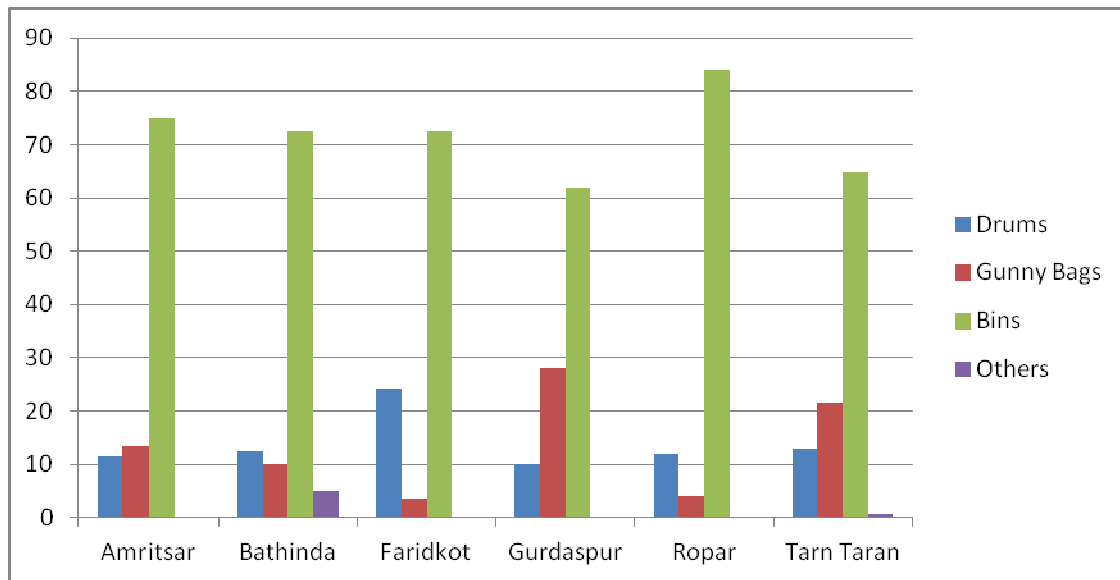


Fig 1.18: Percentage of Storage of Grains



Place Storage of Grains:

Foodgrains were stored in different places in Elementary rural schools of Punjab as has been reported in Table 4.18. It has been noticed that the highest percentage of rural schools used kitchen as a place of storing grains. Different scenario has been noticed in the selected districts of Punjab. In Ropar district the highest per cent (i.e. 84.00 per cent) of rural schools used kitchen as a place of storing grains and the lowest percentage (i.e. 37.50 per cent) has been found in Bathinda district. Whereas in Bathinda district the highest number of grains has been stored in classrooms (i.e. 25.00 per cent) and the lowest percentage (i.e. 2.00 per cent) has been found in Ropar district where less number of class rooms has been used for storing grains. However, the highest percentage (i.e. 38.46 per cent) has been noticed in Amritsar district where the stores as a place used for storing grains and in Ropar district the lowest percentage (i.e. 14.00 per cent) has been observed where the stores as a place of storing grains used.

Table 1.19: Place of Storage of Grains

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Store</i>	<i>Kitchen</i>	<i>Class Rooms</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>Total Schools</i>
<i>Amritsar</i>	20 (38.46)	29 (55.77)	3 (5.77)	-	52
<i>Bathinda</i>	14 (35.00)	15 (37.50)	10 (25.00)	1 (2.50)	40
<i>Faridkot</i>	11 (37.93)	15 (51.73)	3 (10.34)	-	29
<i>Gurdaspur</i>	9 (18.00)	32 (64.00)	5 (10.00)	4 (8.00)	50
<i>Ropar</i>	7 (14.00)	42 (84.00)	1 (2.00)	0	50
<i>Tarn Taran</i>	12 (23.54)	36 (70.58)	3 (5.88)	-	51
<i>Rural Punjab</i>	72 (26.47)	169 (62.13)	25 (9.19)	6 (2.205)	272

Source: Survey Undertaken

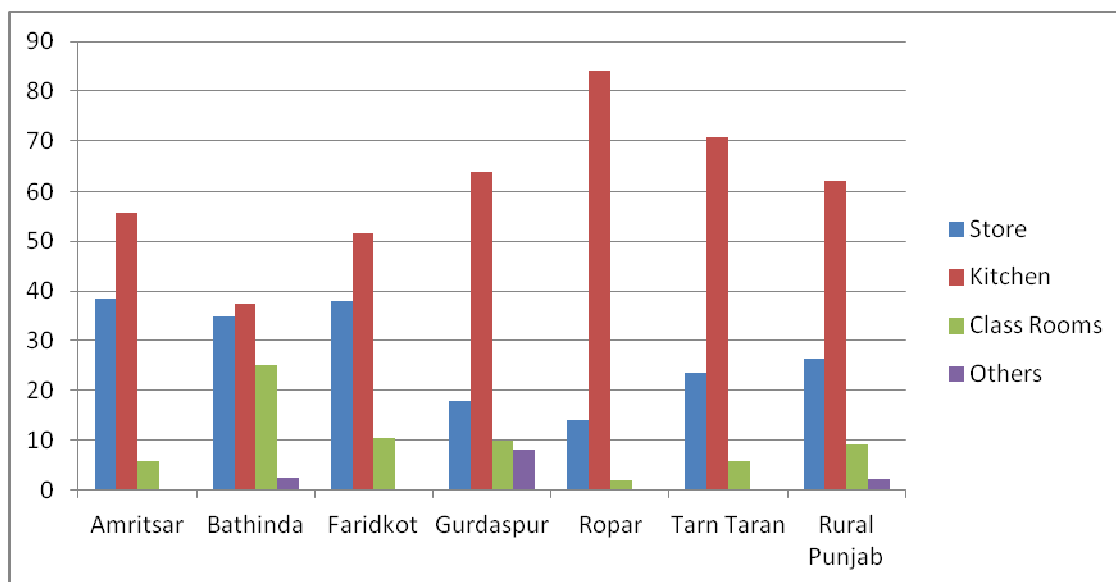


Fig 1.19: Percentage of Place of Storage of Grains

Table 1.20: Number of Schools having Health Cards

<i>Districts</i>	<i>2007-2008</i>	<i>2008-2009</i>	<i>2009-2010</i>	<i>2010-2011</i>	<i>2011-2012</i>	<i>Total Schools</i>
<i>Amritsar</i>	12 (23.07)	17 (32.69)	19 (36.54)	22 (42.31)	19 (36.54)	52
<i>Bathinda</i>	15 (37.50)	19 (47.50)	24 (60.00)	27 (67.50)	28 (70.00)	40
<i>Faridkot</i>	21 (72.41)	23 (79.31)	24 (82.76)	26 (89.65)	26 (89.65)	29
<i>Gurdaspur</i>	-	-	-	-	-	50
<i>Ropar</i>	36 (72.00)	42 (81.00)	43 (86.00)	44 (88.00)	48 (96.00)	50
<i>Tarn Taran</i>	1 (1.96)	2 (3.92)	9 (17.64)	14 (27.45)	17 (33.34)	51
<i>Rural Punjab</i>	85 (31.25)	103 (37.87)	119 (43.75)	133 (48.90)	138 (50.73)	272

Source: Survey Undertaken

Schools Having Health Cards:

Number of elementary rural schools in Punjab having health cards has been presented in Table 4.19. The highest number of rural schools having health cards has been noticed in the year 2010-2011 where the Faridkot district has health cards of 89.65 per cent and the lowest percentage has been found in Tarn Taran district (i.e. 27.45 per cent). In the period of 2009-2010 and 2011-2012

the highest number of rural schools having health card has been found in Ropar district and the lowest number of health cards found in Tarn Taran district.

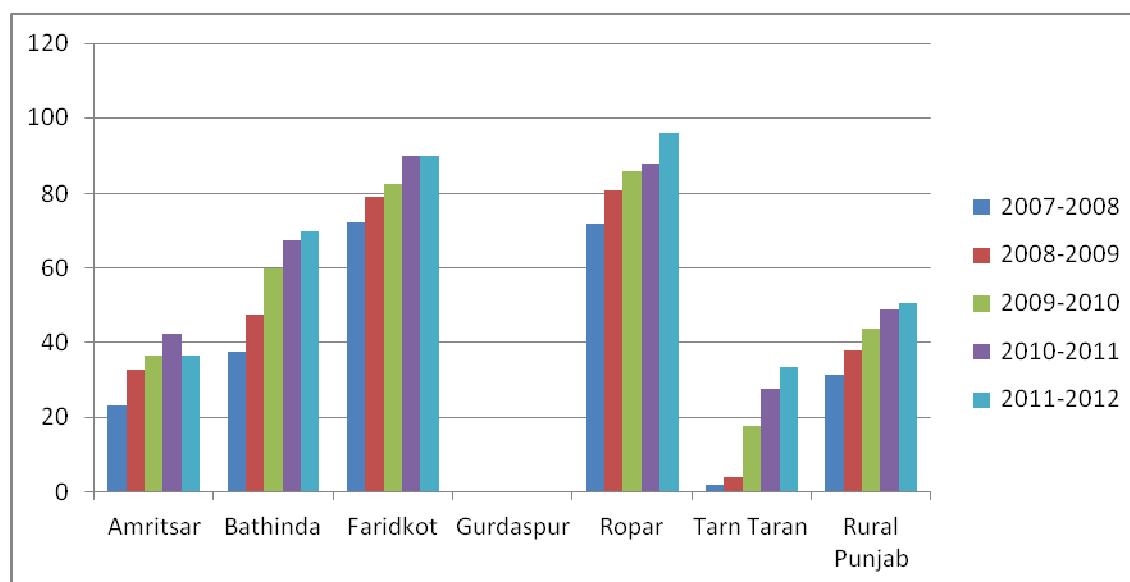


Fig 1.20: Percentage of Schools having Health Cards

Time Period of Students for Health Check up:

The distribution of time period of health checkup on elementary rural schools of Punjab is presented in Table 4.20. As per the estimations, it has been observed that 6 months time period of health checkup is mostly followed in rural schools. Different scenario has been noticed in the selected districts of Punjab. In Faridkot highest percentage (i.e. 65.52 per cent) has been found where 6 months time period of health checkup followed and in Bathinda district 17.5 per cent has been observed where 6 months time period of health checkup followed. Whereas, if we consider 1 year time period; highest percentage is observed in Bathinda district (i.e. 82.50 per cent) and lowest in Gurdaspur district (i.e. 6.00 per cent); whereas, very less number of rural schools followed 3 months time period of health checkup. The highest percentage was recorded in Gurdaspur district (i.e. 58.00 per cent) and the lowest percentage has been estimated in Amritsar district (i.e. 17.31 per cent).

Table 1.21: Time Period of Students for Health Check up

<i>Districts</i>	<i>3 Months</i>	<i>6 Months</i>	<i>1 Year</i>	<i>Total Schools</i>
<i>Amritsar</i>	9 (17.31)	29 (55.77)	14 (26.92)	52
<i>Bathinda</i>	-	7 (17.50)	33 (82.50)	40
<i>Faridkot</i>	-	19 (65.52)	10 (34.48)	29
<i>Gurdaspur</i>	29 (58.00)	18 (36.00)	3 (6.00)	50
<i>Ropar</i>	-	29 (58.00)	21 (42.00)	50
<i>Tarn Taran</i>	12 (23.53)	28 (54.90)	11 (21.57)	51
<i>Rural Punjab</i>	50 (18.38)	130 (47.79)	92 (33.82)	272

Source: Survey Undertaken

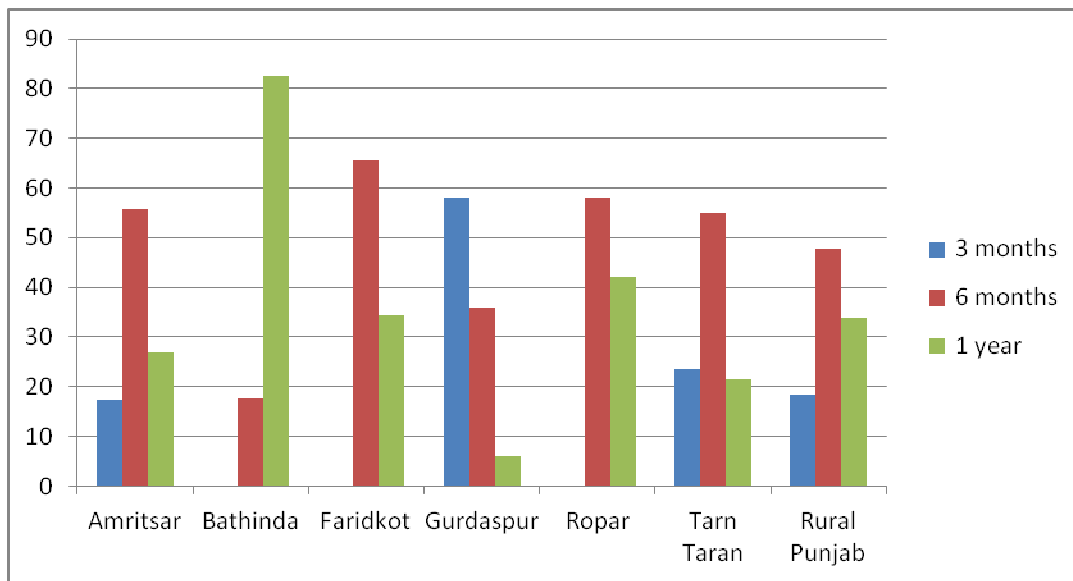


Fig 1.21: Percentage according to Time Period of Health Check up

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE:

The result of the *Talent Search Test* of 5th standard students of government run schools from rural Punjab were indeed very shocking. Average marks obtained by 5th standard students were merely 31 per cent. Nearly one- fourth of the students were not able to open up their score

Table 1.22: Per cent Distribution of Primary Students according to Grade

Percentage of marks	Languages	Science	Math	Overall
Score less	33.04	37.72	35.35	23.76
Less than 10	35.65	38.16	35.67	31.07
10-20	11.01	9.65	1.91	10.44
20-30	20.00	8.33	7.64	14.88
30-50	17.68	13.60	11.46	20.89
50-70	8.70	15.79	24.52	13.58
70 & above	6.96	14.47	18.79	9.14
Average Score	26.29	31.93	38.31	30.65

Source: Survey Undertaken

accounts, i.e. got zero marks. Furthermore, nearly 33 per cent of the students didn't have even a single mark in the languages Punjabi, Hindi and English. Scenario was worst in case of Mathematics where the percentage was 36 per cent, which further worsen to 38 per cent in case of Environmental science/ General knowledge. Furthermore, it was in the vicinity of the city or adjoining the cities but comes under the preview of the rural areas. On the other hand nearly two-fifth of the students failed even to secure up to 20 per cent marks. Fortunately, the performance of the topper i.e. students scoring more than 50 per cent marks were significantly better in the subjects of Mathematics as well as Environmental sciences/General knowledge as compared to other languages.

Furthermore, the comparison of **Talent Search Test** result with the result of the **SCERT** conducted Class V school examination of November 2012 were dismal as students who had secured 70 per cent or more in their SCERT examination managed to secure on average i.e. 4.7 per cent in Punjabi, 2.3 per cent in Hindi, 5 per cent in Mathematics, 8 per cent in Social science and as low as 2-3 per cent in General knowledge. The so-called public schools having adequate infra-structure were excluded from this experiment. Apparently, the study exposed the unreliability of the SCERT conducted Class V examinations.

Likewise, the academic performance of middle standard students (i.e. 8th standard) of government runs schools in rural Punjab was more dismal. It was surprising to note that none of



students had got A, B or C grade in *Talent Search Test* though final examinations were on the cards. The majority of students were falling in grade E (i.e. 97.72 per cent), that is, less than 35 per cent of marks. Only 2.28 per cent students were placed in D grade. Against this, as per SCERT schools test, nearly 8 per cent of students had got grade A and nearly one fourth of students were having B grade. However, the majority of students got grade C (40.43 per cent) and the remaining 23.32 per cent students got grade D. However there were only 4.50 per cent students who had got E grade.

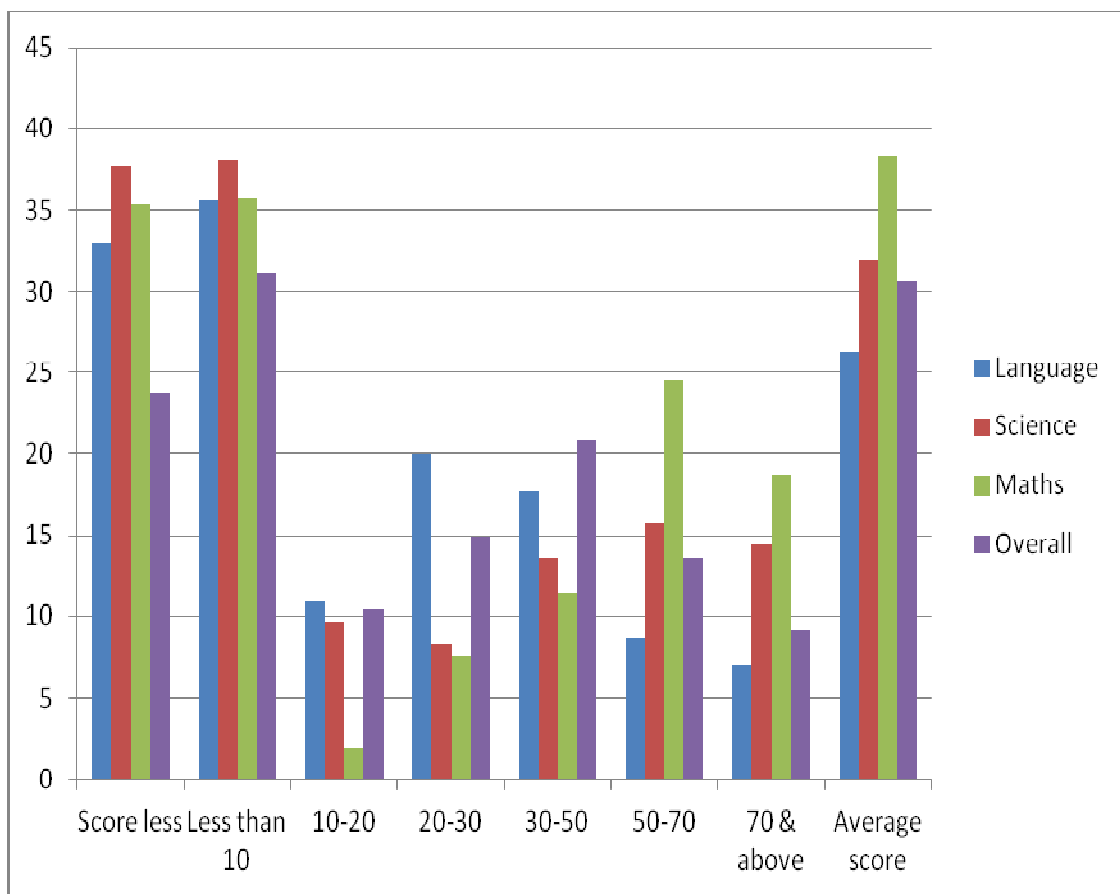


Fig 1.22: Per cent Distribution of Primary Students according to Grade

Performance of students in different subject of English, Mathematics and Science was also examined separately (in Table 4.22). Similar scenario has been observed in the English language. The performance of students was very poor in *Talent Search Test* because cent per cent students got E grade (i.e. with 0 or 1 mark). But according to SCERT school records only 9.80 per cent students had got E grade. Most of the students were falling in the grade-C with 41.17 per cent. Surprisingly, there were 3.93 per cent students who got A-grade in English.

Likewise, in *Mathematics*, none of the students get through *Talent Search Test* and all the students were placed in E grade. But *SCERT* school exam records show a different picture where 10.23 per cent students had got A grade and 25.15 per cent students had got B grade. Most of the students i.e. 40.06 per cent were having C grade. Others were placed in D (i.e. 20.18 per cent) or E grade (i.e. 4.38 per cent).

However, there was slight improvement in *Science* subject where 5.84 per cent students passed the *Talent Search Test* but with less than 50 per cent marks and were placed in D grade and the remaining 94.16 per cent students again failed to get through the *Talent Search Test* and were placed in E grade. But according to *SCERT* school records 8.19 per cent of students had more than 80 per cent marks (A grade) in science subject and 26.02 per cent had B grade. The highest number of students (40.36 per cent) had C grade and 23.97 per cent students had D grade. The school had given E grade to only 1.46 per cent of students.

Percentage distribution of students who were placed in grade D or grade E in the *Talent Search Test* was further probed (Table 4.23). Nearly one fifth (i.e. 19.53 per cent) of students had not opened up their score accounts where as 68.05 per cent students scored up to 20 per cent marks. Moreover marks of students (i.e. 12.42 per cent) varied from 21 and up to 40 per cent. Performance of girls' student was slightly better than boys' counterpart. In case of boys, 29.91 per cent boys got zero marks in all the subjects and 57.63 per cent boys scored up to 20 per cent marks. 12.46 per cent boys had 21 per cent to 40 per cent marks. In case of girls students only 9.26 per cent girls had zero marks in all the subjects and 69.39 per cent girls scored up to 20 per cent marks. There were 21.35 per cent girls who scored more than 21 but up to 40 per cent marks.

Table 1.23: Per cent Distribution of Middle Standard Students according to Grade

Grade	English		Maths		Science		Overall	
	School Tests	TST	School Tests	TST	School Tests	TST	School Tests	TST
A	3.93	-	10.23	-	8.19	-	7.99	-
B	17.65	-	25.15	-	26.02	-	23.76	-
C	41.17	-	40.06	-	40.36	-	40.43	-
D	27.45	-	20.18	-	23.97	5.84	23.32	2.28
E	9.80	100.00	4.38	100.00	1.46	94.16	4.50	97.72

Source: Survey Undertaken

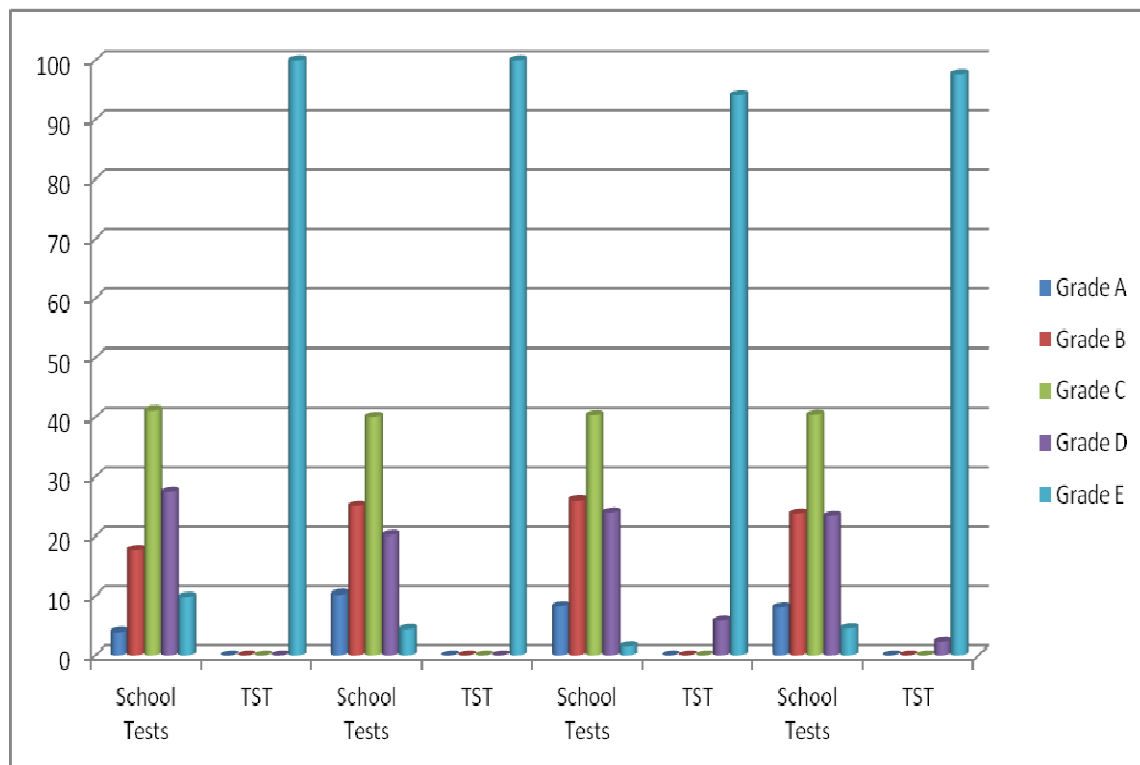


Fig 1.23: Per cent Distribution of Middle Standard Students according to Grade

Table 1.24: Per cent distribution of Middle Standard Students attaining D or E Grade

Grade	Eng			Math			Science			Overall		
	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls
No Marks	44.09	50.00	37.70	58.60	59.81	57.41	22.33	35.51	9.26	19.53	29.91	9.26
Up to 20 per cent	50.56	48.29	55.17	38.84	39.07	39.95	55.14	52.02	58.36	68.05	57.63	69.39
21 and up to 40 per cent	5.35	1.71	7.13	2.56	1.12	2.64	22.53	12.47	32.38	12.42	12.46	21.35

Source: Survey Undertaken

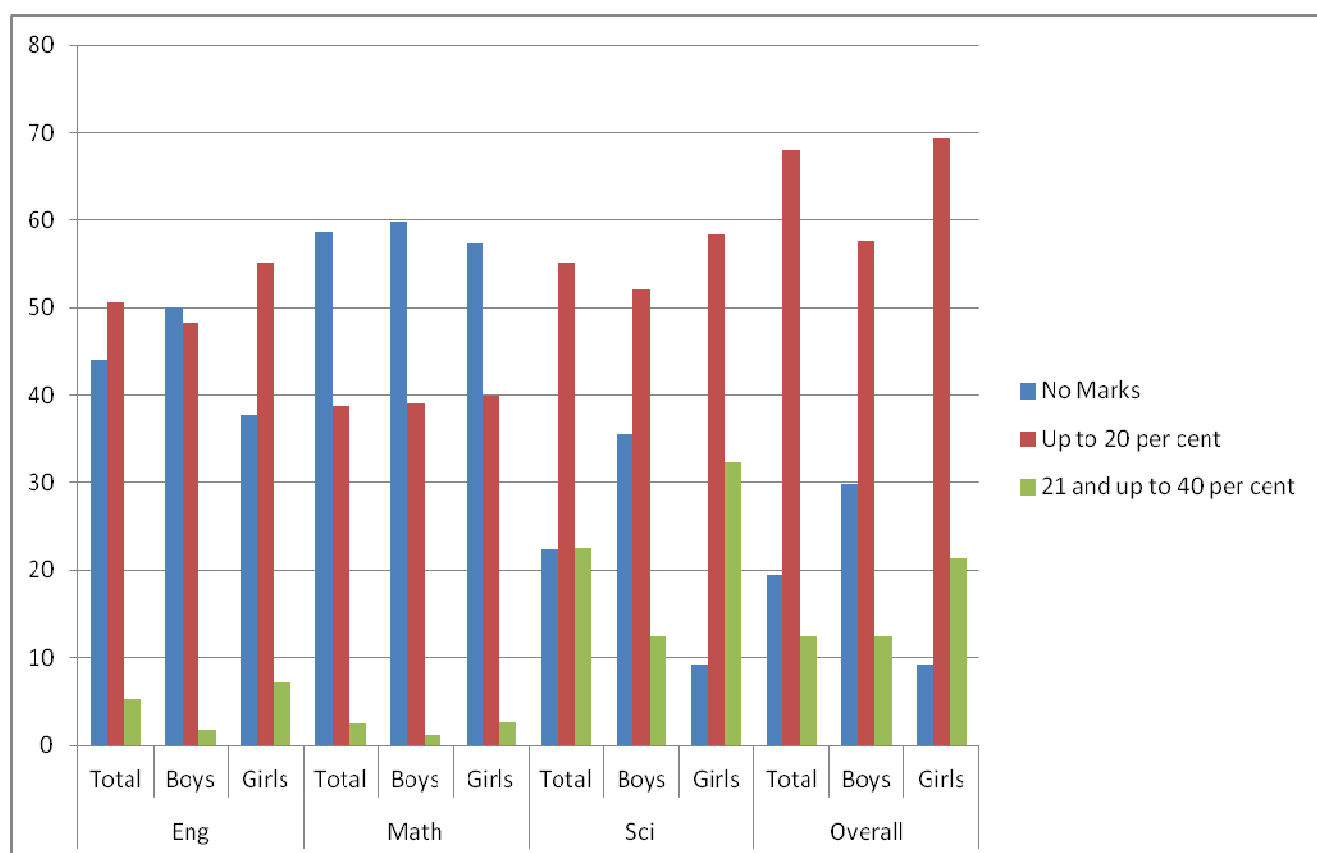


Fig 1.24: Per cent Distribution of Middle Standard Students attaining D or E Grade

Similar scenario was noticed for different individual subjects also. In *English Talent Search Test*, the performance of students was very poor. It was surprising to note that 44.09 per cent students had zero mark in English but the percentage of boys was much higher than their girl's

counterparts; percentage was 50.00 per cent and 37.70 per cent respectively. Nearly 50 per cent of students had up to only 20 per cent marks in English subject. Same picture was noticed in case of boys and girls. Moreover 5.35 per cent students got 21 to 40 per cent marks. This percentage was 1.71 and 7.13 for boys and girls respectively.

In case of *Mathematics Talent Search Test*, nearly 58 per cent of students scored zero marks, 38 per cent students had got up to 20 per cent marks and nearly 2 per cent students got 21 to 40 per cent marks. In case of *Science Talent Search Test*, 22.33 per cent students scored zero marks. This percentage was 35.51 per cent and 9.26 per cent respectively for boys and girls. More than 50 per cent of students had up to 20 per cent marks. However 22.53 per cent students had 21 to 40 per cent marks. However, girls outperformed their boy's counterparts; percentage was 12.47 per cent and 32.38 per cent respectively.

Gender wise performance of middle standard was also probed (Table 4.24). Performance of boy's students of government run schools was very striking. *Talent Search Test* revealed that all the boys had failed and placed in E grade. Against this, *SCERT* School tests shows that 2.40 per cent boys had got grade A (i.e. 80 per cent and above) and 13.00 per cent boys scored B grade. Majority of the boys students were placed in C grade (i.e. 47.20 per cent) and D grade (i.e. 33.20 per cent). However as per *SCERT* school examination records there were only 4.20 per cent boys who failed with less than 35 per cent marks and placed at grade E.

Subject wise performance of the *Talent Search Test* was also very dismal. English Language test revealed that the entire cent per cent of boys were placed in grade E. Majority had obtained zero marks and others few scored only single mark. The *SCERT* school examination records also showed that none of students had grade A in English subject and nearly 5 per cent boys had grade B. The percentage of boys getting grade C or grade D in English test as per *SCERT* school records was highest (i.e. 48.25 and 37.72 per cent respectively). Only 9.65 per cent of students had got grade E.

The performance of boy's students in *Mathematics Talent Search Test* was very disheartening as where all boys were placed in grade E. On the other hand, surprisingly the school had given grade A to 2.07 per cent boys and B grade to 17.09 per cent boys. The percentage of boys getting C and D grade were 47.16 and 29.02 per cent respectively. However, only 4.66 per cent boys got grade E as per *SCERT* school records.

Table 1.25: Per cent Distribution of Middle Standard Boys according to Grade

Grade	English		Maths		Science		Overall	
	School Tests	TST	School Tests	TST	School Tests	TST	School Tests	TST
A	-	-	2.07	-	4.15	-	2.40	-
B	4.38	-	17.09	-	13.99	-	13.00	-
C	48.25	-	47.16	-	46.63	-	47.20	-
D	37.72	-	29.02	-	34.72	-	33.20	-
E	9.65	100.00	4.66	100.00	0.51	100.00	4.20	100.00

Source: Survey Undertaken

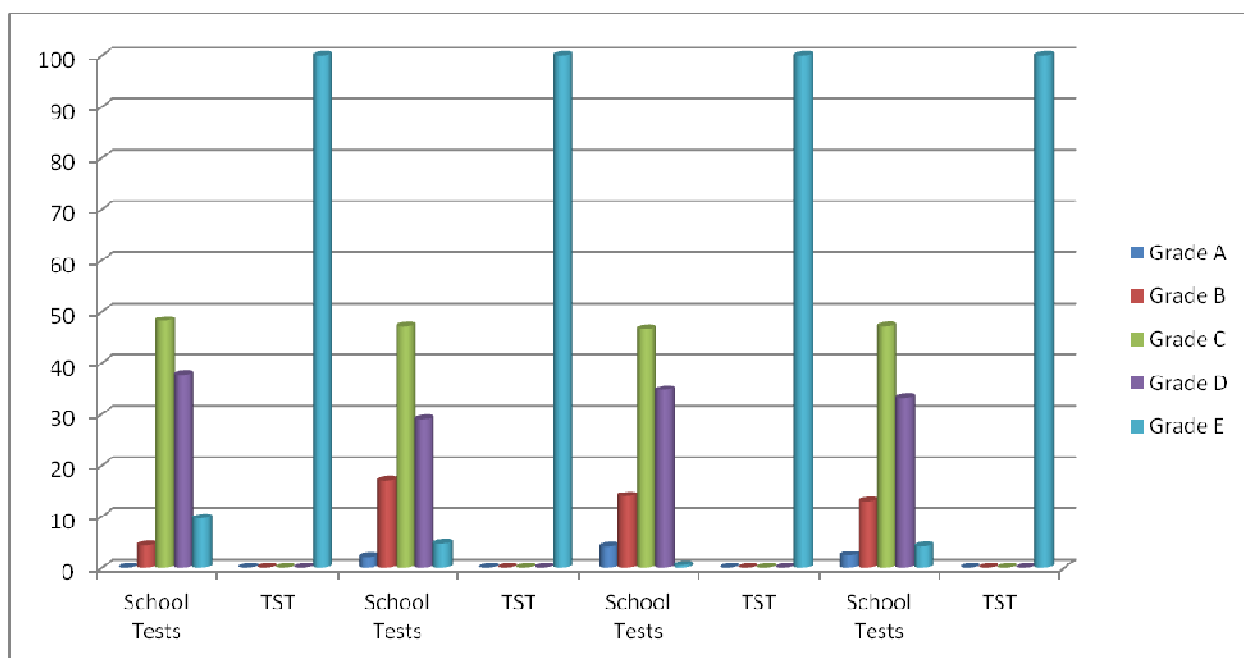


Fig 1.25: Per cent distribution of Middle Standard Boys according to Grade

Likewise, all the boys failed to qualify and got grade E according to *Talent Search Test* in Science subject. However, according to SCERT school exam, only 0.51 per cent boys got grade E. Most of the boys had C grade (i.e. 46.63 per cent) and D grade (i.e., 34.72 per cent). Very less per cent of boys had got grade A (i.e. 4.15 per cent) and B grade (i.e. 13.99 per cent) in school test of Science.

The performance of middle standard girl's students of government run schools was somewhat better (Table 4.25). According to the *Talent Search Test*, all the girls were placed in grade E except a very few girls who had got grade D (i.e. passed with less than 50 per cent marks). Only 4.11 per cent girls had D grade and rest 95.89 per cent girls had E grade. But as per *SCERT* school records 15.21 per cent girls got grade A. The percentage of girls having B or C grade was 37.63 per cent and 31.70 per cent respectively. Girls who got D or E grade were very low (i.e. 10.56 per cent and 4.90 per cent respectively).

In the test of English language, same trend was noticed i.e. cent per cent girls had grade E in the *Talent Search Test* but as per *SCERT* school records only one-tenth of the girls had grade E. Most of the girls had B or C grade (i.e. 34.44 and 32.22 per cent respectively).

However, in the Mathematics *Talent Search Test* results; cent per cent of girls were placed in E grade. But school records showed that nearly 1/5th of girls had got grade A. Moreover the percentage of girls who had got B or C grade was 35.57 and 30.87 per cent respectively. And 8.72 per cent girls had D grade and only 4.03 girls got grade E.

In the Science *Talent Search Test*, same picture was noticed. The percentage of girls having D (i.e. 10.07 per cent) or E (i.e. 2.69 per cent) grade was very less in *SCERT* school tests but as per *Talent Search Test* 10.58 per cent girls had D grade and remaining 89.42 per cent girls had E grade. None of the girl students had got A, B or C grade in *Talent Search Test* in science subject.

The above results pertain to government-run schools only as the bright children, by and large, shifted to the non-government/public schools because of shortage of teachers and inadequacy of the desired infrastructure in the rural State-run schools. Much reliance cannot, therefore, be reposed on *SCERT* held examinations. For nearly 100 days in a year, 80 to 85 per cent teachers are assigned non-academic duties, for which they have to absent themselves from the schools. This accounts for poor performance of children. Further, in the *SCERT* test system, the answer

books are marked internally and the entire exercise of evaluation is completed in 3 to 4 days and markings are not coordinated by different examiners and there does not exist uniformity of scoring procedure.

In setting the question papers for the *Talent Search Test*, care was taken to include only such questions which were within the reach of average or even below average grade of students and were very similar to the standards of *SCERT* examinations. As the *Talent Search Test* was neither too tough, nor outside the prescribed syllabus, the only conclusion that may be arrived is that in the *SCERT* examination, the marking could have been very liberal and casual. Copying on a large scale and the use of unfair means was also reported. The *SCERT* test was mostly on the pattern of Yes/No, Right/Wrong, True/False and did not involve recall, reasoning or written expression. Resultantly, guessing or thoughtful ticking could easily earn a score of 50 per cent marks.

To improve the present unsatisfactory conditions of elementary education in Punjab, the need of the hour is: that the sanctity of the system of examination must be maintained, by strengthening the relative evaluation and teaching, so that the teaching-learning process becomes meaningful by giving training to teachers for setting objectives of teaching different subjects in the syllabus.

Table 1.26: Per cent Distribution of Middle Standard Girls according to Grade

<i>Grade</i>	<i>English</i>		<i>Maths</i>		<i>Science</i>		<i>Overall</i>	
	<i>School Tests</i>	<i>TST</i>	<i>School Tests</i>	<i>TST</i>	<i>School Tests</i>	<i>TST</i>	<i>School Tests</i>	<i>TST</i>
<i>A</i>	8.89	-	20.81	-	13.42	-	15.21	-
<i>B</i>	34.44	-	35.57	-	41.61	-	37.63	-
<i>C</i>	32.22	-	30.87	-	32.21	-	31.70	-
<i>D</i>	14.45	-	8.72	-	10.07	10.58	10.56	4.11
<i>E</i>	10.00	100.00	4.03	100.00	2.69	89.42	4.90	95.89

Source: Survey Undertaken

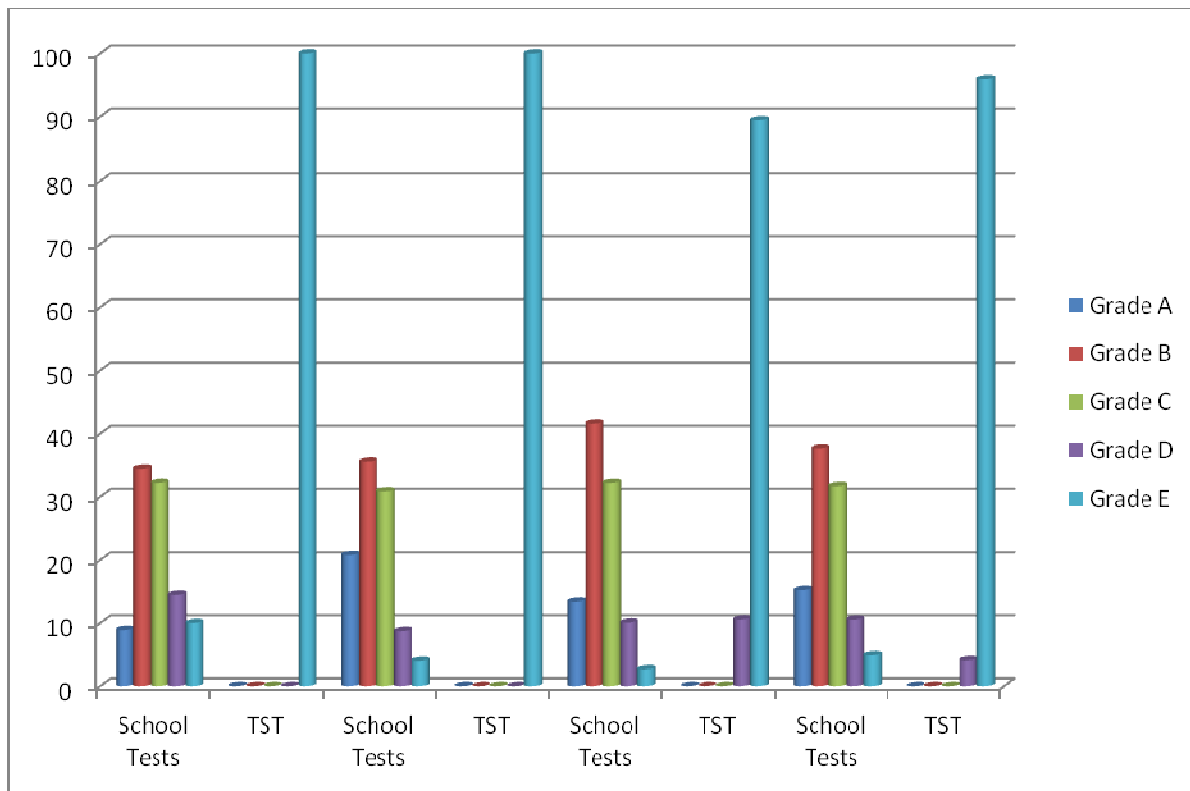


Fig 1.26: Per cent Distribution of Middle Standard Girls according to Grade

It is admitted that at the primary level, internal assessment is the only answer. The present ‘Yes-No’ type of question papers must be discouraged which leads to cramming and guessing on one hand, and retard development of reasoning or creative ability, on the other. Apparently, this is rendering the children unfit to write 3 to 4 lines coherently and express themselves freely in public examinations. This is the biggest snag in the *SCERT* test format.

The inflated marking of the *SCERT* conducted examinations cannot dilute the charge that educational standards are deteriorating. 97-98 per cent marks awarded is a deception, a trick which failed. An important step is to appoint more teachers so that thousands of understaffed schools work properly. The teachers’ training must be given priority for which an infrastructure at state level must be created. Sick schools have to be identified and steps taken to stem the rot.

It has been observed in the present system of teaching that average and decimal fractions in mathematics had not been attempted in the tests held showing a resistance to change or improvement. Union Ministry for Human Resources suggested that before matriculation examination, the external tests of children should be replaced by internal tests and their scope enhanced. The public examinations frighten the students and create anxiety and tension in juvenile minds leading to possible sense of hatred and aversion for studies leading to cheating,

copying and other unfair means. Till such time the amended systems are introduced, internal examinations must be made accountable.

They should be given academic freedom for experimentation, and innovations must be encouraged by instituting awards and incentives to enable teachers to use new strategies to motivate the children to become innovative and creative. Good pedagogical practices largely depend upon the emotional relationship between the teacher and the taught. For effective communication with the students, teachers must be given a free hand to decide the syllabus and in organizing the schedule of teaching.

Under regimentation, the academic achievements of the bright students also suffer and the standards of education are declining fast. Some apparent causes are (a) inadequate inputs, including teachers, (b) defective syllabus, (c) lack of supervision and guidance, (d) absence of clear-cut education policy, (e) centralization of authority in the minister, sidelining the education officers, (t) uneven distribution of resources, and (g) a parallel system of completely independent public schools. All these causes and prevalent lethargy, de-motivation, lack of will and personal interests, tuitions, absence from duty impinge on the progress of education. It is very serious matter and state must find solution to the problem otherwise state will be *Educated Illiterates* in reality.

The Right to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 has laid down stringent norms that all schools must adhere to in order to ensure that children get not just education but also quality education. Paradoxically, RTE resulted in less learning among the school goers. Even this year's report (ASER) based on survey done by *Pratham* in 2012 has made a similar striking and disturbing claim. Even though RTE has resulted in improved infrastructure, better pupil-teacher ratio etc there has been a sharp drop in the learning levels of the students. There is need for serious investigation into this as in a way this means that RTE is on the wrong track. If the children are learning less as a consequence of the provisions under the Act, surely the provisions under the Act need re-thinking.

Punjab is shying away from increasing the number of working hours for government school teachers, as stipulated in the Right to Education (RTE) Act. The RTE Act puts down the working hours of government schools teachers to a minimum of 45 hours a week. The working hours in the states are 36 hours a week at present. While the Act proposes to increase the working hours for teachers, the number of school hours for students remain the same. Teachers are expected to

do their paperwork or prepare for the next day's classes during the extra hours in school. In compliance with the RTE Act, primary school teachers are expected to be in schools from 8 am to 3 pm in summers and from 9 am to 4 pm in winters. For upper primary teachers, the proposed working hours in summers are 8 am to 3.30 pm, and 9 am to 4.30 pm in winters. Punjab's Education department prepared a draft of the notification that proposed to increase the working hours of primary school teachers by an hour per day and by one-and-half hours per day for upper primary school teachers. The proposal was then returned to the top political brass for a final nod, but the issue seems to be hanging fire at the level of the political leadership. But the increase in timings is inevitable as it is part of the implementation of the RTE Act, which was adopted by the state government

Why is RTE, in spite of so much public investment, having this paradoxical negative impact? This is quite literally a million-dollar question. This is most probably because of the controversial decision of doing away with traditional examination system in favour of Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation or CCE. The idea of Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation is a good one and this is what it should be under ideal circumstances as this eliminates the fear factor from the class-room that examination brings. But in rural India, are teachers capable of doing CCE and ensuring that the child is learning regularly even when the fear of examination is not there? CCE is yet to be properly installed but the old exam system has been done away with, children are therefore learning less. Nonetheless, given the serious implication, it is important for all agencies working on RTE to do an independent checking on their own and RTE needs re-thinking. There is no point in wasting public money. One thing is clear - Government, Civil Society Organizations and international agencies working on basic education in India cannot afford to sit idle.

ISSUES AND SUGGESTIONS

ISSUES:

(I) FOODGRAINS-

- 1. Supply of Foodgrains:*** - Under MDM-scheme the government provide foodgrains like wheat, rice etc. to the schools. But in reality schools were not getting foodgrains on time. In most of schools, they had negative balance of foodgrains due to which they were unable to provide food to children as per menu specified by the government under MDM- scheme.
- 2. Quantity of Foodgrains:*** - The government provides foodgrains in gunny bags to all government schools. The government has also specified the total quantity of these gunny bags. But generally the schools got less quantity of foodgrains. There were many holes on the gunny bags of foodgrains and the quantity was also generally less. School authorities had to accept those gunny bags due to the shortage of supply.
- 3. Quality of Foodgrains:*** - From the past few years there were some improvements in the quality of foodgrains. Earlier the quality of foodgrains was not of good/average/fair quality. As a result, the cooks had to do less labour and their time was saved.

(II) FINANCE

- 1. Availability of Funds:*** Under MDM-scheme, rural schools were facing the scarcity of funds. They did not have enough funds to provide meals to children according to the menu. Their funds were showing negative balances from last many years. Negative balances continued for months even extended to six months. Moreover, schools with less strength were easily getting funds whereas schools with more strength were not getting proper funds which had resulted into negative balances.

2. ***Use of Personal Cash:*** - For proper functioning of MDM-scheme, the schools authorities were investing their personal cash so that they could provide meals to the children because usually funds were provided late to the schools.
3. ***Borrowings from Grocers:*** - To provide regular meal to the students, schools had to borrow from the grocers on loans who used to charge much at higher rates than the usual rates.

(III) FUELS

1. ***Use of Cow dungs, Firewood etc:*** - Although government had banned the use of cow dungs, firewood etc. due to their ill-effects but still majority of schools were using these firewood for cooking food because these were easily available to them. Less cost was involved in their procurement. The main disadvantage of using firewood is health problems to cooks and children.
2. ***Availability of Gas Cylinders:*** - Schools were facing the problem of shortage of gas cylinders and their refilling. Moreover, in most of villages the delivery of gas cylinders was not easily available. They had to cover long distance and pay more freight for getting gas cylinders refilled. Moreover, gas cylinder had been stolen in majority of schools. Fresh gas cylinder was not issued in spite of lodging of FIR.

(IV) UTENSILS

1. ***Lack of Utensils:*** - In majority of schools utensils were not provided to children for eating the food. Children bring their own utensils from their home.
The government should provide utensils to schools authorities for serving food to the children. Very less number of schools provides utensils to the children for eating the food which were mainly donated by the nearby Gurdwaras etc. Recently, Punjab government has sanctioned Rs.50 per student to buy such utensils.
2. ***Lack of Cooking Utensils:*** - Cooking utensils were also inadequate in many schools. Due to the lack of cooking utensils, there was difficulty in the preparation of meal in time because it required more time to prepare a meal.
3. ***Lack of Drums:*** - For storing foodgrains, drums were not available in some of the schools. Shortage of drums resulted into wastage of foodgrains. Moreover, foodgrains also get exhausted when they were not properly stored.

(V) INFRASTRUCTURE

1. **Shortage of Benches:** - Most of the Schools are also facing the problem of shortage of benches. In majority of the rural government schools, students set on mats while studying.
2. **Lack of Rooms:** - Lack of rooms was another problem which is being faced by the several schools. In many schools, one room was used for more than one class.
3. **Lack of Teaching Aids:** - Most of schools did not have proper teaching aids. There was lack of teaching material in schools. Moreover, the blackboards were also not in proper conditions.

(VI) OTHERS

1. **Negative Impact on Studies:** - Some schools think that due to MDM-scheme study of students suffers. Half an hour is not sufficient for distribution of food to the children. More time is involved which results into negative impact on studies.
2. **Shortage of Health Cards:** - There is shortage of health cards in the schools. Complete health cards have not been provided to the schools. Moreover, weighing machines are not properly working.
3. **Preference of Cooked Meal:** - Most of the schools prefer cooked meals as it involved less burden on school authorities. Moreover the study of students will not suffer when cooked meal will be provided to them.
4. **Remuneration of Cooks:** - Cooks demand that their remuneration should be increased and provided to them on time. Remuneration for the vacation period may also be given to them.
5. **Alteration in Food Menu:** - Children insist that there must be some alteration in food menu. According to them rajma-chawal, cheese, dalia, fruits, green vegetables, salty rice, curd etc should be added in the menu and sweet rice should not be included in the menu.
6. **Providing Raw Food:** - Some schools prefer that raw food should be provided to students instead of cooked food. If raw food will be provided to students then there will be a less burden on school authorities.
7. **Permanent Appointment of Cooks:** - Cooks should be appointed in schools on permanent basis. According to schools, only those cooks should be appointed in the schools that have some degree in cooking. They must be fully trained in cooking.

8. ***Providing Medicines:*** - In some schools, medicines like tablets of vitamins, folic acid, deworming etc. are not provided to the children. These tablets should be regularly provided to school authorities and children should be asked to eat the tablets before the teachers otherwise they will throw it away.
9. ***Decrease in Percentage of Girls in Total Enrollment-*** In most of the schools, the percentage of girls in total enrollment has been declined from past few years. Although their number has been increased but there is a continuous decline in their percentage in total enrollment and that is the matter of worry.
10. ***Menu not Followed:*** - In some schools menu of the food decided by government is not followed. The reason is negative balance of cash food. They provide either those items which are already available to them or the items which are available at cheap rates. Due to shortage of cash, they have to spend their personal cash.
11. ***Insufficient Food for Satisfying Hunger:*** - Some schools do not provide sufficient food to students for satisfying hunger. They provide insufficient food to the children. In some schools, they deny for the food if children ask for food for the second time. The other important issue is highest percentage of SC in total enrollment. If we consider category of students then we will notice that SC children are having highest percentage in total enrollment. BC children are on second number and General students are having lowest percentage in total enrollment.
12. ***Wastage of Food grains:*** - Wastage of food grain is another issue of mid day meal scheme. The reasons for wastage of food grains include lack of drums, insufficient space for storage, no proper caring of food grains etc. Due to these reasons, food grains get exhausted and could not be used for preparation of food.
13. ***Major Family Occupation of Students:*** - In almost all the schools, major family occupation of students are labour and agriculture. The reason can be less income of labour class.

II

SUGGESTIONS OF MID DAY MEAL SCHEME

In Punjab, the role of VECs/ Ward Committees and Self-help group is not significant in the implementation of mid day meal scheme. Majority of the parents of the children who are studying in government schools belong to the poor socio-economic background and in most of the cases both of them were working. Therefore they were not able to contribute much in the school activities. An effort should be made to involve the women who are not employed. They may be advised that it is like the *Seva* –free service in which they help in the cooking and serving the food to the pilgrims; that they used to do in *Gurdwaras*. In few cases, the parents come to supervise the quality of the food served to their children. They ask their wards as to what was given to them in the school and if they find that the children did not like the food; few of them visit the school and talk to the teacher.

It was pointed out by most of the schools that the cooking should take place at cluster level and then the food should be distributed to all schools situated within the cluster level. It was suggested that the common cooking needed to be done for schools within 3 to 5 kms of radius so that the food may be distributed on cycle or scooter. Teachers may visit on rotation basis to supervise the cooking of food. It was pointed out that the funds did not reach to school on time. In order to avoid delay, advance payment for two months may be given to the head teacher. Some nodal agency or NGO may be identified to take charge of the mid day meal scheme, and to monitor the quality of food. The head teachers on rotation basis should visit the place where the cooking is being done. In Punjab, the average number of teachers in elementary schools is 3.6. Therefore it becomes difficult to take additional responsibility of supervising the meal and managing the financial accounts. Volunteers or Para teachers may be appointed till the full time teachers are appointed. Additional staff like peon may be provided to help in the smooth implementation of the mid day meal scheme.

Majority of the teachers are in favour of continuation of the mid day meal scheme, but needs radical improvement in the smooth functioning of the scheme. Based upon the survey undertaken, following suggestions are made for the improvement in the functioning of MDM scheme: -

1. Timely Availability of Funding: - Clearance of pending bill is one of the main hurdles in the smooth running of the MDM-scheme. Some schools have reported negative balance/non payments of bills from the last many years which should be cleared without any further delay. Government should make finance available to schools well in time for MDM-scheme; so that they should be able to run the Mid Day Meal Scheme smoothly. Advance payment of cash should be adjusted from the monthly bill and balance; if any be cleared on the spot. Moreover, the funds should be provided according to strength of students and not haphazardly. In fact, Government should make available some advance to the school administration like contingencies for day to day use of school authorities.

2. Timely Availability of Grains: - Foodgrains should also be provided well in advance to school authorities so that they can serve the food to students properly. Moreover prescribed quantity of foodgrains should be available to schools. Hampered bags should not be accepted being less than prescribed quantity.

3. Providing Cooking Utensils: - In some of the schools, cooking utensils are inadequate. Government should make necessary provision to provide required cooking utensils to the school. Lack of cooking utensils delayed the cooking process and hence delayed serving meal to the students on time.

4. Providing Drums for Storage: - Food grains supplied to the schools are not properly stored. Grains are generally stored in the gunny bags and were lying in the open, hence epidemic to various insect pests attack rendering grains unfit for human consumption. For scientific storage, government should make provision to supply storage drum to school authorities so that their wastage can also be reduced. Lack of drums is also another problem which is being faced by most of the schools. Balance of payment is pending where drums are provided.

5. Training of MDM Staff: - Majority of schools did not maintain the records properly. Proper in-service training, regarding maintenance of records, storage of grains etc should also be provided to staff dealing with MDM-scheme.

6. Alteration in Food Menu: - To make the MDM-scheme more effective, government should alter food menu from time to time according to season and taste of the students. For altering food menu, various factors should be considered such as nutrition, taste, liking etc.

7. Providing Good quality of grains: - Food grains supplied to the schools were found to be not up to the mark/ of good quality. In many cases, grains were found to be infected with termites and other foreign matters. Moreover, there is much more delay from the issue of the grains from the godowns to the supply of the grains to the school. Government should provide good quality of food grains to reduce the cooking time. Moreover the suppliers/contractors of grains should satisfy the school authority about the quantity of grains. Shortage of grains (even up to 10 to 12 kgs) was noticed in majority of the cases

8. Supply of Gas cylinder: - Schools are facing the problem of shortage of gas cylinder. Moreover, in most of the villages the delivery of gas cylinders is not easily available. School authority has to cover even more than 10 to 15 kms to get their cylinder refilled. Moreover, they have to face harassment at the hands of public especially during the shortage of period. Government should make provision to supply gas cylinder well in time and at the destinations-school premises.

Many of the schools reported that their gas cylinders have been stolen. But no action has been taken to resupply the cylinders. Under these circumstances, they are making use of cow-dung as well as wooden stalks to cook the food. This creates pollution in the school premises.

9. Remuneration of Cooks: - Remuneration to cooks was not made well in time; rather it was delayed for months, even extended to four-six months. Delayed payments dampen their moto and interest. Instead of uniform rates, strata remuneration should be adopted, that is, according to strength of the school. In case of very small strength say, about 20 students; cooks will get free within hours while with large strengths cooks have to work for the whole day. Alternately, cook cum helper remain within the school premises for the whole day and look after cleanliness and other work of the school. Moreover, cooks demand that their remuneration should be increased and provided on time.

10. **Hygienic Cooking:** - There were some problems in the cooking of food, mainly due to the hasty appointment of untrained cooks. They should be trained in cooking as well as in hygiene and cleanliness. District level training camps of three to five days duration should be conducted in all district headquarters to train kitchen staff.

10. **Provision of Cooked Meal:** - Many schools prefer cooked meal, due to least burden on teacher. Moreover, the study of students will not suffer when cooked meal will be provided to them.

11. **Provided Utensils to Children:** - In most of the schools utensils are not provided to children for eating the food. The Government should provide utensils to school authorities for serving food to Children. Very less number of Schools provides utensils to the Children.

12. **Proper Maintenance of Health Cards:** - Government provides health card to all schools and school's duty is to properly maintain health cards. Schools Teachers check health cards after doctor visits.

Though lack of budgets and financial resources are the standard excuse of recalcitrant state administration; the consensus of informed opinion is that it is the lack of political, bureaucratic and societal will which has delayed and hamstrung the proper implementation of the free mid-day meal for school children.

Apart from boosting school attendance and child nutrition, mid-day meals have an important socialization value and foster gender equity.

Some research findings on Mid Day Meal Scheme conducted by independent agencies reported that MDM programme is a visible programme and has helped in increase in attendance and enrolment of children particularly girls. They also reported that there is an increase in retention, learning ability and achievement as well as greater social equity among caste, creed, sex and gender groups in the schools. The main research findings are As children learn to sit together and share a common meal, one can expect some erosion of caste prejudices and class inequality. They also reduce the gender gap in education, since they boost female school attendance more than male attendance. With dramatic impact on the enrollment and retention of girl children in

particular; additionally it has provided employment to destitute mothers who work as cooks in the various schools.

The general lack of establishment enthusiasm is influenced by the widely held belief that the provision of cooked meals disrupts classroom processes. Majority of teachers spend too much time supervising culinary operations to the detriment of academic time tables. Sensitization of teachers about the positive aspects of the scheme is very important. The majority of teachers fear classroom disruption and worry that it will take up too much of their time. Greater awareness of the benefits of mid-day meals would help to overcome such fears.

But while there are pockets of resistance and skepticism about the cost-benefits of the free mid-day meals within the teachers' community, somewhat belatedly a groundswell of societal pressure is building up in favour of the scheme. However, scheme can be run very smoothly with the involvement of local level SMDCs (school development monitoring committees) comprising parents and Panchayats; governments and academicians of the area. Decentralization is the vital prerequisite of the success of this scheme but requires a very strong *Political Will*.

The critical importance of decentralizing the free mid-day meal to the maximum possible degree has impacted itself upon educates of the Union HRD ministry in New Delhi. The ministry is currently proposing the constitution and involvement of independent self-help groups in the form of mothers' groups in every school offering the scheme. "The main work is at the micro level. The more we involve government machinery, the more difficult it becomes to supervise because this is a programme which needs micro-management at the grassroots level. Village Education Committees and Village Panchayats have to assume responsibility of ensuring that the mid-day meal scheme works in their local schools.

State government also needs to co-opt and involve India's massive number of NGOs (non-government organizations) which are ever-ready to lend a helping hand to education causes. For instance in Karnataka 20 NGOs provide free mid-day meals to 100,000 children in 670 schools while the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) in Bangalore offers a daily mid-day meal to 50,000 children. Likewise in Hyderabad, the Nandi Foundation manages a central kitchen which provides mid-day meals to approximately 200,000 children. Quite clearly

the introduction of nutritious and quality free mid-day meals for children in all government schools — primary and secondary — is a long overdue and urgent necessity. The Supreme Court believes it; the over-whelming majority of academics and NGOs agree, and a growing number of hitherto apathetic parents at the base of the social pyramid has emerged as a pressure group for this programme whose vital connection with the spread of literacy and education is painfully self-evident.

The only pockets of resistance to the scheme are to be found within the warrens of the powerful bureaucracies of the central and state governments which have to finance and action the scheme. But as discussed, their usual argument of paucity of resources to universalize the programme on a national scale is unwarranted. Likewise the arguments related to waste of teacher time and disruption of the academic calendar is unsustainable, if not specious. The bottom line is that the politician-bureaucracy combine is less driven by moral exhortations than by public pressure. Therefore there is a great onus on the academic community and the nation's educated middle class in particular to intensify pressure on the political establishment to extend coverage of the provably beneficial free mid-day meal to all government schools across the country. The national interest plainly demands it



Summary

Education plays a vital and important role in fulfilling the basic needs of a common man viz. food, shelter and clothing. The main aim of education is to prepare and develop the child physically, mentally and spiritually to lead a quality life. Education is a process through which a child is made capable to attain the necessary competencies and skills to face the challenges in life to survive, and to make struggle for existence. The socio-economic development of the country hinges on the health status of its children. Poor enrollment and high school dropout rate are attributed to the poor nutritional status of the children compounded by poor socio-economic conditions, child labour and lack of motivation. Nutrition support to primary education is considered as a means to achieve the objective of providing free and compulsory universal primary education of satisfactory quality to all the children below the of 14. According to government estimates, there are nearly 220 million children in the age group of 6-14 in India, of which 4.6 per cent, or nearly 9.2 million, are out of school (Right to Education, 2011). At the time of Independence, India was not self-sufficient in food production and regional food shortage was common. Poverty was rampant; three-fourth of Indians were poor, spent 3/4th of their income on food but 3/4th of the children were underweight; child mortality rates were very high. The country recognized the importance of the health and nutritional status of children in nation building and initiated steps to improve access to nutrition and health services with special effort to reach to poor and marginalized segments of the population. In India under nutrition is still the major problem; about 18 per cent of preschool children and about a quarter of school children are undernourished.

Health status has a significant impact on the development of children and on their education prospects. Malnourished children or children with poor health often have more limited capacity to pay attention in school and perform poorer as a result, have higher than- average absenteeism rates, often fall behind at school, and ultimately may be at greater risk of dropping out of school. India, acknowledging that the problem of malnutrition is multidimensional, multi-sectoral and inter-generational in nature, so Government of India(GOI) has introduced a number of schemes to improve nutrition needs of the children. Mid-day Meal scheme is one of the programs under the Ministry of Human Resource Development. Mid Day Meal scheme is an effort to achieve and facilitate all the four above said objectives. These are Access to Education, Enrolment of children, and Retention of the enrolled children and Achievement. The speed and success of implementation has varied greatly in different states of India.

Enrollment in Government Schools:

Total enrollment in elementary rural schools in Punjab has increased marginally (2.13 per cent) as compared to the previous years. In Rural Punjab, the enrollment of boys and girls had increased with the percent change of nearly 102.21 percent and 102.05 per cent respectively.

Due to the Mid Day Meal scheme the effect also come on the standard wise enrollment of the students those in primary and upper primary schools. In Rural Punjab enrollment of primary rural schools had decreased with the percentage change of 97.49 per cent whereas enrollment of upper primary rural schools had increased and the percentage change was 127.23 per cent.

Caste-wise Distribution of Students:

Caste wise distribution of the students was shown with reference to the year 2011-12. Most of the students of rural elementary schools belong to SC category (i.e. 68.25 per cent). Rest of the percentage of students had almost equally divide among OBC and General category. The number of general category students mainly preferred to go for private schools due to various constraints prevalent in the government schools. They considered private schools as a better option than the government schools.

Gender-wise Distribution of Students in Rural Punjab:

Sex wise enrollment of the students was shown in the year of 2011-12 that in Rural Punjab the percentage of boys (i.e. 51.71 per cent) was more than that of the percentage of girls (i.e. 48.29 per cent). In Rural Punjab mainly the girls, preferred to stay at home and did the household work that is why the percentage of girls was low as compared to the boys. In all districts of Punjab the percentage of boys had been observed more as compare to the girls.

Pupil-Teacher ratio:

Pupil-teacher ratio in schools of Punjab has been improved in last some of the years. In rural Punjab the pupil-teacher ratio was recorded as 33:1; which showed an improvement as compared to the last year. In some districts of Punjab like Gurdaspur and Ropar, pupil-teacher ratio had been improved (i.e. 27:1) which shows a healthy sign of development of Punjab.

Meal Preference of Students in Rural Punjab:

A meal preference of students in selected schools of Rural Punjab shows somehow the better result. 99.66 per cent of total sample students eat mid day meal in school because most of the students do not take breakfast or tea in the early morning. Most of the students in districts of Punjab take lunch after mid day meal. Mainly in all districts of Punjab students take evening tea and dinner at night.

Availability of Teachers:

There is a lack of availability of teachers in some of the rural government schools of Punjab. Some schools have one or two teachers in spite of five classes in the school which resulted into negative impact on the student's education. To face this problem, teachers generally combine classes for handling the students, where some government schools are over staffed.

Average distance of Rural Schools:

Average distance of rural schools in Punjab is quite good. 82 per cent of rural schools have the distance of less than 2 kms which was comfortable for the students who go to school in a daily routine. There are very less number of schools whose average distance is above 5-10 kms.

Infrastructure:

After analysis, we observed that the schools in Punjab have not good infrastructure. In Rural Punjab half of the schools were having 5-10 rooms followed by the schools having 3 to 5 rooms. Few numbers of school were having 10 and above rooms. Quantity of schools having only 2 rooms was more. So, it becomes difficult for the teacher and students to adjust in 2 rooms and because of this infrastructure lacuna teachers take classes in an open area or in a veranda.

Distance from City:

From the city rural schools of Punjab is quite far away. Rural students face many problems to reach the school. Number of students finds schools near their villages.

Starting Period of Mid Day Meal:

In Rural Punjab, there were nearly 64 per cent of rural schools where mid day meal scheme had been started from 5 to 10 years. Moreover, 8 per cent of the schools have not records of date starting the mid day meal scheme in Punjab. Some of the rural schools have not given the information about the period of starting mid day meal scheme.

Availability of Funds for Mid Day Meal Scheme:

Most of the rural schools of Punjab get late funds for mid day meal scheme due to which they had to face many problems. Very less percent of schools got either advance or on time funds. Some schools either use personal cash or borrow from grocery shop for effectively running mid day meal scheme because they get late fund from the government.

Distribution of Cooks:

For the mid day meal scheme, the cooks are required. In Punjab most of the cooks belong to SC caste. BC caste cooks and General caste cooks are quite low as compared to the SC caste. Most of the cooks are appointed by the Headmaster. PASWAK and Panchayats also appointed the

cooks but mostly the cooks are appointed by Headmasters in many districts. SHG (self help groups) also take some part in the appointment of the cooks but in the recent districts.

Storage of Grains:

The grains came for the mid day meal scheme mostly kept in bins. Gunny bags and drums rarely used in some districts. 84.00 per cent bins are used for the storage of grains in rural schools of Punjab. Mostly rural schools of Punjab used kitchen for storing of the grains. Nearly about (84.00 per cent) rural schools used kitchen for storing the grains. The proper place for storing of grains is stores but in rural schools they are found in a less number. Only in few districts the stores are found for kept grains.

Health Cards Facilities:

Health is more important for the children. A healthy child can only achieve his goals in life. In year 2011-12, the highest number of Health cards has been noticed. In the period of 2007-2008 and 2008-2009, the percentage of Health cards is low as compared with the year 2011-12. As per the estimations, it has been observed that 6 months time period of health check up is mostly followed in rural schools. Whereas, less numbers of rural school followed 3 months of time period of health check up.

Mid day Meal Scheme is a strategic program to address two of the most pressing problems of India: Hunger and Education. To many of our children, the MID DAY MEAL is the only complete meal that they have access to during the entire day. Together we can make a World of Difference, Children of today are our promising hope of Tomorrow, let us make our tomorrow bright by working on our today. However, the goal of Universal Elementary Education remains elusive and far a distant dream. Some apparent causes are (a) inadequate inputs, including teachers, (b) defective syllabus, (c) lack of supervision and guidance, (d) absence of clear-cut education policy, (e) centralization of authority with the ministry, sidelining the education officers, (f) uneven distribution of resources, and (g) a parallel system of completely independent public schools. Rigorous efforts are needed to bring and retain them under the umbrella of education system. Disaggregated planning with block as its unit may help to identify disadvantage groups and areas. It is the total neglect of the government schools by the successive governments by not providing adequate number of teachers as well as infrastructural facilities which has led to the collapse of the elementary education in the rural area of Punjab. It is a very serious matter and state must find solution to the problem otherwise state will be Educated Illiterates in reality.

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American Biographical Institute USA bestowed Man of the Year Honour upon him.

ABOUT THE REPORT:

*Education empowers a child to explore his potentials and earn a decent living and live a respectable life in our society. Lack of education curtails opportunity for development and leads to the vicious cycle of poverty and hunger. The Government of India has made education for children in the age group of 6 to 14 years compulsory but poverty prevents the underprivileged from getting full value of their educational experience. Hunger obstructs education as children are forced to leave schools and take up menial jobs. Mid day Meal Scheme is a strategic program to address two of the most pressing problems of India: Hunger and Education. To many of our children, the MID DAY MEAL is the only complete meal that they have access to during the entire day. This has produced dramatic results in terms of enrollment, attendance and attention spans. Together we can make a World of Difference, Children of today are our promising hope of Tomorrow, let us make our tomorrow bright by working on our today. Despite all these significant achievements, the goal of Universal Elementary Education remains elusive and far a distant dream. Some apparent causes are (a) inadequate inputs, including teachers, (b) defective syllabus, (c) lack of supervision and guidance, (d) absence of clear-cut education policy, (e) centralization of authority with the ministry, sidelining the education officers, (f) uneven distribution of resources, and (g) a parallel system of completely independent public schools. The children are taking more years to become primary graduates than ideally required. Rigorous efforts are needed to bring and retain them under the umbrella of education system. Disaggregated planning with block as its unit may help to identify disadvantage groups and areas. It is the total neglect of the government schools by the successive governments by not providing adequate number of teachers as well as infrastructural facilities which has led to the collapse of the elementary education in the rural area of Punjab. It is a very serious matter and state must find solution to the problem otherwise state will be **Educated Illiterates** in reality.*