



Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman Scheme- Teachers' Perception

Vishal Saini* and Dr D.D Sharma**

*PG Scholar (Agricultural Extension Education), **Professor (Agricultural Extension Education), M.S. Swaminathan School of Agriculture, Shoolini University of Biotechnology and Management Sciences, Solan (H.P.) 173229

Email – Vishal.saini0955@gmail.com, drdds62@gmail.com

Date of Submission: 12-07-2024

Date of Acceptance: 31-07-2024

ABSTRACT

The study was conducted on a random sample of 75 teachers selected from 15 schools' government primary and upper/secondary schools of Balh block of Mandi district in Himachal Pradesh. It was revealed from the study that a significant majority of the respondents had favourable perception towards PM Poshan Shakti Nirman Scheme. All the respondents responded affirmatively that proper drinking water facility and clean toilet facility was available for both male and female students in the school, the students made aware about the menu it advances, the students were provided micro nutrients in the form of tablets and deworming medicines off & on with proper sitting arrangement for students while taking meals and proper monitoring/check on the quality of food been served to them. A positive and significant correlation was observed between the respondents Scientific Orientation, Management Orientation, Leadership Skills and their Perception towards PM Poshan Shakti Nirman Scheme. There was a marginal increase of 2.23 percent in the student's enrolment in the primary schools w.e.f. 2018-2024. However, there was a decrease of 15.20 percent in the enrolment of students among the upper primary schools during the same period because of migration of the students in the private/convent/English medium schools.

Key Words: Perception, Scientific Orientation, Management Orientation, Leadership Skills, PM Poshan Shakti Nirman Scheme etc.

Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman Scheme which was earlier known as Mid-Day Meal Scheme significantly improved the nutrition and education of children in government and government aided schools. The scheme stands as one of the Indian government's most successful initiatives in promoting education. It was observed that during the year 2016-17, 9.78 crores children

from 11.40 lakh schools had benefited from the scheme and thus, the scheme has become the world's largest school meal programme covering nearly 12 crores children in government and government aided elementary schools satisfying the hunger of millions of children per day throughout the country.

Though the scheme has been operating in the state of Himachal Pradesh for nearly 30 years i.e. starting from August 15,1995, yet no systematic study was conducted to know the teacher's perception regarding the scheme. Keeping this in view the percent study was undertaken with the following specific objectives: -

- To determine teachers' perception on Pradhan Mantri Poshan Scheme.
- To find out the change in enrolment, retention and attendance of the students.
- To seek respondents' opinion on quality and quantity of the food being served to the students, infrastructure facilities available in the school.
- To find out the correlation between the respondents' selected psychological traits and their perception on PM Poshan Shakti Nirman Scheme.

I. Methodology

The study was conducted in Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh. Out of the total fourteen development blocks, one block namely Balh was randomly selected. From the selected block, 15 villages were randomly selected. It was ensured that each selected village must have at least one government or government aided school and thus, accordingly fifteen schools (Both Primary and Upper Primary/Secondary) were selected. A list of all the teachers working in the selected schools was obtained from the office of the Block Education Officer located at Balh block. Out of this list, a proportionate sample of 75 teachers (From 1st to 8th class) was taken for the purpose of the present study. The perception was operationalised as the extent to which the respondents understood and formed



opinions about the Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman Scheme (formerly known as the Mid-Day Meal Scheme). To measure teacher perception, a modified version of Jalal's (2018) scale was used, consisting of 20 Statements/Items. The respondents were asked to provide their feedback on a 3-point scale: Agreed, Undecided/Can't say and Disagreed, with corresponding scores of 3, 2 and 1 for positive statements. To determine the overall score for each statement, the frequency of responses for each category on the scale was multiplied by its respective score. Thus, the total score for each

respondent across all the 20 statements was calculated. Based on the Mean Score and Standard Deviation, the respondents were then grouped into the following three categories:-

- Favourable ($> \text{Mean} + \text{SD}$)
- Neutral ($\text{Mean} \pm \text{SD}$)
- Unfavourable ($< \text{Mean} - \text{SD}$)

The data were collected with the help of well-structured and pre-tested interview schedule by personally interviewing the respondents.

II. Results and Discussions

The main findings of the study have been presented and discussed as under: -

Respondents' Demographic Profile: -

The respondents' socio-personal profile has been given Table-1.

Table 1 Demographic Profile (n=75)

Sr No.	Socio-Personal Traits	Frequency	Percentage
1	Educational Status		
	Diploma Holders	16	21.33
	Graduates	12	16.00
	Post-Graduates	47	62.67
2	Family Background		
	Rural	60	80.00
	Semi-urban	8	10.67
	Urban	7	9.33
3	Service Experience (years)		
	1 to 10	34	45.33
	11 to 21	17	22.67
	22 to 29	24	32.00
4	Schools Selected: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Primary = 5• Secondary (6th to 10th) =10		
5	Total number of teachers in the selected schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Primary School Teachers=19• Teachers Selected for the sample=15• Secondary School Teachers=81• Teachers Selected for the sample=60		

The data collected from 75 teachers (15 from primary schools & 60 from secondary schools) indicated that most of the respondents (63%) held postgraduate degrees and came from rural backgrounds (80%). Those who belonged to semi urban and urban family background were 20 percent. About half of the respondents (45%) had teaching experience up to 10 years. Those who had teaching service experience of 11 to 21 years and 22 to 29 years were found to be 22.67 and 32 percent

respectively. Therefore, it can be concluded from the data that a majority of the respondents were from the rural areas were graduates/post-graduates and possessed a service experience up to 10 years.

Respondents' response on the facilities available in the school: -

The respondents were asked what facilities were available in the school as per the norms of PM Poshan Scheme. The response has been depicted in Table 2.



Table 2: Respondents' response on facilities available in the school

Sr. No.	Facility available/aspects	Response (%)	
		Yes	No
1	Menu of the meal is periodically changed.	98.66	1.33
2	Proper drinking water facility is available in the school.	100	NIL
3	Facility of clean toilet is separately available for male and female students.	100	NIL
4	Timely supply of food grains in the school.	97.33	2.66
5	Problem of utensil to serve the meal.	NIL	100
6	Fund provided timely under the scheme.	18	82
7	Fund provided under the scheme is sufficient.	16	84
8	Students made aware about the menu in advance.	100	NIL
9	Dropout rate of the students has decreased due to PM Poshan Scheme.	68	32
10	Provision of proper monitoring/check on the quality of food served.	100	NIL
11	Proper sitting arrangement for the students while taking meals.	100	NIL
12	Provision of regular cook for cooking the food is there.	100	NIL
13	Students are provided deworming medicine off & on.	100	NIL
14	Micronutrients in the form of tablets are also provided to the students.	100	NIL

It is clear from the data that all the respondents replied in affirmative that proper drinking water and clean toilet facilities (both for male and female students existed in the school). Similarly, all the respondent teachers accepted that there was proper sitting arrangement for the students while taking meals with provision of cook and proper monitoring/check on the quality of food served to the children. All the respondents replied in "Yes" that the students are also provided micronutrients in the form of tablets and deworming medicine off & on. A significant majority of the respondents (97 to 98%) also stated that the menu of the meal was periodically changed and there is timely supply of food grains in the school. A little more than two-third of them (68%) were also of the opinion that the students' dropout has also decreased due to PM Poshan Scheme. These findings were in agreement with those of Jain and Shah (2005) who observed that a majority of the parents (60%) had expressed satisfaction with the quality of the meal and a significant percentage of the parents and teachers (more than 90%) had advocated that the

mid-day meal scheme should be continued. Similarly, Kumar (2008) in a study conducted on the perspectives of educators regarding the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (often known as the Mid-Day Meal Scheme) also found that a majority of primary school teachers (87.14%) perceived that a mid-day meal had provided nourishing and well-balanced food which can effectively prevent malnutrition and other illnesses in children. The author further reported that seventy percent of teachers believed that the mid-day meal was effectively contributing to the goal of universalizing elementary education and thus they had expressed satisfaction with the meal's quality.

Respondents' Perception of Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman Scheme: -

The perception of respondent teachers on PM Poshan Scheme was obtained on a 3-point continuum scale i.e. **Agreed, Undecided/Can't say** and **Disagreed** and has been presented in Table 3: -

Table 3: Respondents' Perception on PM Poshan Scheme

Sr. No.	Statements	Response		
		Agreed	Undecided/Can't say	Disagreed
1	Student's/Children health has been improved due to PM Poshan Scheme.	75 (100%)	NIL	NIL
2	The quantity of the meal per child per day provided under the Scheme is sufficient.	64 (85.33%)	NIL	11 (14.66%)
3	The Scheme has prevented the students from buying eatables from hawkers.	68 (90.66%)	5 (6.6%)	2 (2.6%)



4	The quality of meal served to the students is good in terms of quality of food grains and vegetables.	75 (100%)	NIL	NIL
5	The attendance of the students has improved due to PM Poshan scheme.	57 (76%)	9 (12%)	9 (12%)
6	The scheme has been useful in preventing the feeling of casteism among the students.	58 (77.33%)	17 (22.66%)	NIL
7	The scheme acts as incentive for parents to send their wards to the school.	56 (74.66%)	13 (17.33%)	6 (8%)
8	The scheme has improved social equity among the beneficiary students.	57 (76%)	9 (12%)	9 (12%)
9	The scheme has improved the retention of the students in the school.	61 (81.33%)	14 (18.66%)	NIL
10	The academic performance of students has improved because of PM Poshan Scheme.	59 (78.66%)	14 (18.66%)	2 (2.6%)
11	Quality of cooked meal is based on the number of beneficiary students.	50 (66.66%)	19 (24%)	6 (8%)
12	The student's attention span has improved because of PM Poshan Scheme	55 (73.33%)	18 (24%)	2 (2.6%)
13	The scheme is quite helpful in improving the problem of malnutrition among the students.	74 (98.66%)	NIL	1 (1.3%)
14	The dropout rates of students have reduced/minimized due to PM Poshan scheme.	60 (80%)	12 (16%)	3 (4%)
15	The students' enrolment in the school has increased after the implementing the scheme.	50 (66.66%)	23 (30.66%)	2 (2.6%)
16	The school has adequate facility for the storage of groceries including food material and cooked food	64 (85.33%)	9 (12%)	2 (2.6%)
17	The students are provided the required quantity of food as per norms in the scheme.	75 (100%)	NIL	NIL
18	The time of serving meals is convenient to the students.	75 (100%)	NIL	NIL
19	The scheme has helped in fostering good habits/manners among the students.	75 (100%)	NIL	NIL
20	Micronutrients in the form of tablets are also provided to the students under the scheme.	75 (100%)	NIL	NIL
Overall Mean Score: 2.81				

It has been observed from the table that all the respondents were agreed that quality of the meal served to the students was good in terms of quality of food grains and the scheme has improved the students/children health. Similarly, all the respondents responded favourably that the students are provided required quantity of food as per the norms of the scheme, time of serving meal was convenient to the students, micronutrients in the form of tablet were also provided to the students; and the scheme has helped in fostering good habits/manners among the students. Those who were disagreed that the attendance of the students has improved due to the PM Poshan Scheme and the quantity of the meal per child provided under the scheme is sufficient were found to be 12 percent and

14.66 percent respectively. The who reported that student's attendance has improved and the scheme has been useful in preventing the feeling of casteism were more or less the same i.e. (76% & 77%). Similarly, a majority of respondents reported that the scheme has improved the retention of students in schools (81%), the dropout rates of the students had reduced or minimized due to the PM Poshan Scheme (80%), the scheme has improved social equity among the beneficiary students (76%) and students' enrolment in the school has increased after implementing the scheme (67%). Similarly, a significant majority of respondents also reported that the scheme was quite helpful in improving the problem of malnutrition among the students (98.66%) and the school has adequate facility for the



storage of groceries including food material and cooked food (85.33%). Those who reported that the students' attention span has improved and their academic performance have improved because of PM Poshan Scheme were found to be 73 percent and about 79 percent respectively. Those who were undecided on the statements like that the scheme was useful in preventing the feeling of casteism among the students and the scheme acts as incentive for parents to send their wards to the school were found to be about 23 percent and 17 percent respectively. Similarly, those who were neutral in their response that the scheme has improved the retention of the students in the school and academic performance of students has improved because of PM Poshan Scheme were 18.66 percent each, those who reported that the students' attention span has improved due to PM Poshan Scheme was 24 percent and the students' enrolment in the school has increased after the implementing the scheme (30.66%). However, a little more than 10 percent also could not say that the school had adequate facility for the storage of groceries including food material and cooked food. There were still 12 to 15 percent

of the respondents were disagreed that the students' attendance has improved due to PM Poshan Scheme, that it has improved social equity among the beneficiary students and that the quantity of the meal provided to the students was sufficient thus, showing their unfavourable perception towards the scheme. The overall average score of 2.81 strongly suggests that most of the respondents had viewed the Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman Scheme positively. These findings were found in consonance with those of Devi (2009) who study found that most of the middle school teachers believed the Mid-Day Meal Scheme was effectively meeting its goals. The majority felt the food was appropriate for all students and parents and guardians had a positive view of the programme. The author further observed that a majority of teachers (86%) reported that children were satisfied with both the equality and quantity of the food provided to them.

Respondents' Overall Perception of PM Poshan Shakti Nirman Scheme: -

The overall perception of respondent teachers on PM Poshan Scheme has been depicted in Table 4: -

Table 4: Respondents' Overall Perception on PM Poshan Shakti Nirman Scheme

Perception	Frequency	Percentage
Favourable	64	85.33
Neutral	11	14.66
Unfavourable	NIL	NIL

The data clearly revealed that overall, a significant majority of respondents (85%) had **favourable perception** towards PM Poshan Scheme and the remaining 15 percent of respondents were found to have **neutral perception** towards the scheme i.e. their perception was neither favourable or nor unfavourable towards the PM Poshan Scheme. It was pleasing to note that none was found to have unfavourable perception towards the scheme. Similar findings were also reported by Singh (2016) who in a study revealed that a majority of the elementary school instructors (81%) were

found to have moderate level of attitude towards the Mid-day Meal scheme. As per the author only 17 per cent of the teachers had exhibited a high level of attitude.

Effect of PM Poshan Scheme on the students' enrolment/retention in the schools: -

The data pertaining to enrolment and retention of the students in the schools were obtained from the Block Education Office and have been presented in Table 5 (a): -

Table 5 (a) Students' enrolment/retention in the schools

School Nomenclature	Year of enrolment/retention							Change (%)
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
A. Primary Schools*								
School-□	45	45	47	54	73	68	60	2.23% increase
School-□	10	11	15	16	15	11	18	
School-□	68	77	90	86	80	71	68	



School-□	34	30	37	38	35	30	29	from the base year 2018
School-□	67	63	63	71	70	74	54	
Total	224	226	252	265	273	254	229	
Projected Enrolment of students								
Schools	□	□	□	□	□			
Year 2025	73	17	74	31	65			
Year 2030	94	21	70	28	63			
Year 2030	94	21	70	28	63			

A. Upper Primary Schools*								
Years	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Change (%)
School-□	44	33	27	29	37	28	34	15.20 % decrease from the base year 2018
School-□	49	55	38	49	43	47	32	
School-□	20	15	21	15	22	17	15	
School-□	70	71	54	54	51	53	47	
School-□	38	43	47	49	48	39	37	
School-□	40	42	32	26	18	31	38	
School-□	89	101	96	81	66	55	56	
School-□	59	57	58	63	80	71	75	
Total	409	417	373	366	365	341	334	
Projected Enrolment of students								
Schools	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Year 2025	29	36	16	42	42	26	46	80
Year 2030	24	25	15	25	40	19	07	98

Note - *The schools' names have been kept confidential and the data on students' enrolment could be available from only eight Upper Primary/Secondary schools, despite repeated visits by the researcher.

As is clear from the data that there has been marginal increase of 2.23 percent in the year 2024 among the student's enrolment in the primary schools when compared with the base year 2018. However, there was a decrease of 15.20 percent in the enrolment of students among the upper primary schools during the same period. This might be due to the fact that the students in the upper primary schools might have sought admission in English medium private schools. This was also practically experienced by the researcher while interacting with the teachers and parents of the students.

Baskran (1995) in a study conducted in Tamil Nadu found that the MDM scheme had increased enrolment, reduced dropout rates to below 10 percent and improved students' ability to learn due to better nutrition.

Association between the respondents' selected psychological variables and their perception on PM Poshan Shakti Nirman Scheme: -

In order to determine whether or not there existed any relationship between the respondents' selected psychological traits and their perception on PM Poshan Scheme, the correlation coefficients were computed and the results are displayed in Table 6: -

Table 6: Correlation of independent variables with Perception

Variables	Perception
Service Experience	.203
Self Confidence	.113
Scientific Orientation	.350*
Management Orientation	.474*
Decision-Making Ability	.208
Leadership skills	.362*



As is clear from the data Scientific Orientation, Management Orientation and Leadership Skills were positively and significantly correlated with the respondents' perception on PM Poshan Shakti Nirman Scheme. In other words, higher the Scientific Orientation, Management Orientation and Leadership Skills among the respondents, more favourable was their perception towards the PM Poshan Shakti Scheme. Service Experience, Self Confidence and their Decision-Making Ability were found to have no significant correlation with their perception on PM Poshan Scheme indicating thereby that these variables were independent of their perception on PM Poshan Scheme i.e. having no significant effect on the respondent's perception towards PM Poshan Shakti Nirman Scheme. These findings were more or less similar to those of Paul and Mondal (2012) who in a study conducted on the impact of the mid-day meal programme on the academic performance of kids reported that there was a favourable correlation between the mid-day meal programme and students' academic achievement, taking into account parameters such as enrolment, attendance, retention, and dropout rates. Similarly, Mann (2019) also found significant correlation between the Mid-Day Meal Scheme and increased student enrolment in the schools and effectively reduced hunger among the students besides improving their attendance in the classroom.

III. Conclusion: -

It has been concluded from the study that a significant majority of the teachers had favourable perception on PM Poshan Shakti Nirman Scheme and perceived that the dropout rate of the students had decreased, there was proper monitoring/check on the quality of the food served and proper sitting arrangement for the students while taking meals. There was proper drinking facility and clean toilet facility both for male and female students. There was positive and significant correlation between the respondents Scientific Orientation, Management Orientation, Leadership Skills and their perception of PM Poshan Shakti Nirman Scheme.

References: -

- [1]. Baskaran J, 1995. The impact of mid-day meal programme among Scheduled Caste students of Primary Schools in Thiruvalluvar Taluka, Tamil Nadu. Research Study; DEPA. New Delhi.
- [2]. Devi, 2009. quoted from Ph.D. Thesis submitted by Bimalendu Santra, to the YBN University, Ranchi (Jharkhand) march, 2023.
- [3]. Jain J, and Shah M. Antyodaya anna yojana and mid-day meals in M.P. Economic political weekly. 2005; 11:pp.5076-5088.
- [4]. KUMAR A. Teachers' perceptions towards national programme of nutritional support to primary education (mid-day meal scheme). 2008; 33(1):63-67.
- [5]. Mann D. Awareness, effectiveness and implementation of mid-day meal scheme-perspective of stakeholders, New Delhi. 2019; 7(4):234-244.
- [6]. Paul PK, and Mondal NK. Impact of mid-day meal programme on academic performance of students: evidence from few upper primary schools of Burdwan district in West Bengal. International Journal of Research in Social Sciences. 2012; 2(3):391-406.
- [7]. Priyanka Jalal, 2018. Master of Science (Home Science) Thesis on Performance of Mid-Day Meal Scheme in Bikaner District of Rajasthan submitted to Department of Extension Education and Communication Management College of Home Science, Bikaner Swami Keshwanand Rajasthan Agricultural University, Bikaner.
- [8]. Singh M. Mid-Day Meal Scheme: As Perceived by the School Teachers in Bihar. International Journal of Novel Research in Humanity and Social Sciences. 2016; 3(3):53-59.