



# An Analytical Study of Parental Awareness Towards National Programme for Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Mid Day Meal Scheme) in Agra District of Uttar Pradesh

## KEYWORDS

Parental Awareness, NP-NSPE, Agra district

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**ABSTRACT** *The purpose of the present study is to assess the awareness of parents towards NP-NSPE. In the execution of present study descriptive survey method has been used. Structured interview schedule was constructed to assess the awareness of parents. 25 government schools from Agra district were selected randomly. Percentage & chi-square test were used for statistical analysis.*

*Findings of the present study showed that parents were not aware about the programme. An intervention programme can be suggested for the teachers and govt. to make parents aware regarding NP-NSPE.*

**Introduction**

Education is important, not only for the complete development of one's personality but also for the sustained growth and development of the Nation. Education plays a vital role in the development of human potential Elementary Education in India means eight years of schooling is provided free & compulsory to all the children of 6-14 years of age. State Governments are spending considerable portion of their limited resources to provide educational facilities all over the country. Mid Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) was launched in Uttar Pradesh in September, 2004 in 70 districts of Uttar Pradesh (Now 71 districts). The scheme covers Government, Local Body and Government aided primary and upper primary schools, EGS & AIE Centres and Madarsaas and Maqtabas supported under Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan. The NP-NSPE is a centralized programme and it takes the help of state govt. also. This programme feeds around 120 million school children and act as a powerful incentive for poor families, increase in enrolment rate, attendance, girls enrolment and decrease in dropout rate. It is a symbol of social cohesion as many children share the common meal provided by the school. The well being of children is everyone's responsibility – not just that of their parents. Indeed, parents alone are not always able to protect their children's interests, especially when they are weighed down by poverty, illiteracy, poor health and social discrimination. This is one reason why the protection of children's rights depends crucially on social arrangements, such as universal schooling. These arrangements are typically initiated by the state, but their effectiveness depends in many ways on the involvement of the parents at large. For instance, the success of a village school depends a great deal on what the teachers, the parents, the Gram Panchayat and the village community actually do for it. Even the physical presence of a school often requires organized demand from the village community and parents in the first place. There is an urgent need to aware parents about NP-NSPE. This programme is proved to be a boon to these children who are going to school with empty stomachs. This programme is to fulfill the drive need of hunger & thirst in school children so that they can pay attention in their studies and for a better and colorful future.

**Objectives of the Study**

The key objectives of the study are as follows:

- To study the Parental awareness towards National Programme for Nutritional Support.
- To compare the parental awareness towards NP-NSPE in five blocks of Agra district.

**Hypotheses**

H0. There is no significant difference in the awareness of parents towards NP-NSPE in five blocks of Agra district.

**Data Source and Methodology**

The primary data has been collected during 2013 from 500 parents, in primary level schools. Descriptive survey method had been used. To assess the Parental Awareness regarding National Programme for Nutritional Support a structured interview schedule was constructed. Item wise percentages were calculated. Item wise chi square test of equal distribution were employed to verify the significance of responses again item wise chi square test of independent hypotheses were employed to obtain the comparison between the awareness of parents in five blocks of Agra district. The multistage random sampling method was used for present study. The samples of 25 schools in Agra District were selected from 5 blocks through systematic random sampling. These 5 blocks were selected from total 15 blocks of Agra District through purposive sampling. The samples of 500 parents were taken through purposive sampling. The selected blocks are Khandoli, Fathehabad, Bichpuri, Etmadpur, Jaitpur Kalan.

**Table No-1: Responses of Parents Selected For the Study**

	ITEMS	YES	NO	NR	$\chi^2$ value	Block wise $\chi^2$ value
A	Do you know the benefits of NP-NSPE?	3	497	0	970.2	N.S 5.43
B	Do you know the weekly menu prescribed by the Govt?	91	409	0	545.7	29.2*
C	Do you know the quantity of MDM prescribed by the Govt?	9	491	0	935.5	N.S 3.83
D	Do you know the aim of NP-NSPE?	1	499	0	982	N.S 4.01
E	Do you have knowledge about nutrient found in food?	0	495	5	970.7	N.S 1.06
F	Is there any MDM committee working for better quality of NP-NSPE?	0	21	479	879.6	N.S 8.71
G	Is there any facility for supervision by any officer in the school?	2	69	429	633.1	N.S 10.61

H	Is there any action taken by higher authority on complaints regarding NP-NSPE?	3	30	467	814.3	N.S 15.23
I	Same type of meal provided daily	57	49	394	465.5	N.S 7.23
J	Children involve in cooking process	81	17	402	510.9	72.82*
K	Proper seating arrangement in school for children	24	25	451	732.5	N.S 17.26
L	Use of fresh vegetables for MDM	0	13	487	929.7	N.S 5.19
M	Children pay attention on studies due to NP-NSPE	7	4	489	938.9	N.S 7.78
N	Improvement in your child educational attainment due to NP-NSPE	8	0	492	958.6	N.S 4.25
O	Your child take interest to go to school due to MDM	25	10	465	807	*24.08
P	Have you ever feel the need to check/taste the meal	20	478	2	873.7	*16.93
Q	Your child ever complained not to get meal any day	223	36	241	203.6	N.S 11.00
R	Your child fall ill due to MDM	0	21	479	884.8	N.S 8.71
S	Children get sufficient quantity of MDM prescribed by the govt.	0	19	481	630.9	N.S 7.9
T	Good Quality of ration is used for MDM	24	27	449	692.5	*20.05
U	Children complain for bad quality meal.	92	10	398	502	N.S 11.88

\*Significant at .05 level

N.S- Not significant

Source: Author's calculation based on field survey, 2013  
Findings on the basis of Parents Responses towards NP-NSPE

- Majority of the parents doesn't have basic knowledge regarding NP-NSPE.
- The study also revealed that most of the parents are not aware about basic aim and benefits of NP-NSPE.
- Majority of parents had no awareness regarding weekly menu, quantity and nutrients prescribed by the govt. Illiteracy is the biggest reason for lack of awareness.
- A large number of parents did not responded regarding information related to school management committee as they have no idea about the term school management committee.

- Majority of the parents were not aware about any supervision conducted in the school. They had only one concern which is whether their children got the meal daily or not.
- Majority of parents had no awareness regarding action taken by higher authorities for the complained on NP-NSPE.
- A large number of parents responded that they have no idea whether the same type of meal provided daily or not. In contrast some parents were aware about it parents partially responded about the repetition of the same meal in the schools.
- Parents were not alert about children involvement in cleaning process as majority of parents do not respond about it. But on the other hand very little number of parents showed their attentiveness towards it.
- Most of the parent's exhibited unawareness regarding the use of fresh vegetables for MDM.
- Majority of parents were not attentive about proper seating arrangement for their children in the school.
- Almost all the parents were not conscious about their children's academic achievement as majority of parents had no awareness about whether their children took interest to go to school due to MDM or not and whether this programme enhanced their educational achievement.
- Parents never felt the need to check/ taste the MDM as they have no time to think about it.
- Surprisingly nearly half numbers of parents were aware about their child ever complained not to get meal any day. On the other hand rest of the parents doesn't respond towards it.
- When the researcher asked about your child fell ill due to MDM majority of parents answered that they never noticed towards it.
- Majority of parents were not attentive towards the quality of ration used for MDM.

The significance of all the responses also verified by the calculated  $\chi^2$  value, as the  $\chi^2$  value of all items was found to be above the tabular value. All values are significant at .05 levels.

#### Findings on the basis of comparison of the parental awareness towards NP-NSPE in five blocks of Agra district

The findings showed that on some particular items there was no significant difference between the parental awareness but on the other items there exists a significant difference in parental awareness towards NP-NSPE in five blocks of Agra district (see table No-1) So the hypothesis "There is no significant difference in the awareness of parents towards NP-NSPE in five blocks of Agra district" is partially accepted.

#### Conclusion

Parents need to be aware of these concerns related to effective implementation of NP-NSPE without which any endeavour of teachers, administrators or policy makers utterly fail as the subjects for NP-NSPE are form the society itself. Parents will be motivated by the teachers about the right incentive of the government policy with an inclusive strategy. They can better equip about what the mid day meal is supposed to provide. Parents will be motivated to participate more in process of MDM. They can actually understand the importance of being aware for MDM programme in terms of their children academic achievement and their children future.

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