EPRA International Journal of Environmental Economics, Commerce and Educational Management
Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra0414 |ISI I.F Value: 0.815|SJIF Impact Factor (2025): 8.57 ISSN: 2348 – 814X
Volume: 12 | Issue:6 |June 2025

# AN INVESTIGATIVE STUDY ON OUTCOMES OF MID-DAY MEAL SCHEME

**G. Thamas[1], Prof. Ch. Swaroopa Rani[2]**
[1]*Research Scholar, Centre for Dr. Ambedkar Chair, Acharya Nagarjuna university*
[2]*Professor, Dept of Mahayana Buddhist Studies, Acharya Nagarjuna university*

**Article DOI:** https://doi.org/10.36713/epra22587
**DOI No: 10.36713/epra22587**

**ABSTRACT**
*There are number of schemes implemented by the central government to ensure welfare of the citizens. But while implementing these scheme administrators are facing number of challenges due to diversity in the country. The diversity inters of geography, weather, culture, religion makes the environment more dynamic. The midday meal is one of those schemes and the beneficiaries of the scheme makes the things too sensitive. The beneficiaries who are the children not able to express their dissatisfaction or discomfort easily. One more major challenge in the implementation of the scheme is ensuring the outcome of the scheme. The outcome of the scheme has four major dimensions includes quality of food, impact on the students, implementation& management and accessibility and inclusivity. In this context this article examines the outcome of the midday scheme in the study area.*
**KEYWORDS:** *Inclusion, Impact on Students, Midday Meal Scheme, Quality of Food, Implementation of Scheme.*

## INTRODUCTION

The Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) is a government initiative in India aimed at enhancing the nutritional status of school-age children nationwide. Launched on August 15, 1995, it is one of the world's largest school meal Scheme, providing free lunches to children in primary and upper primary classes in government and government-aided schools. The scheme is managed by the Ministry of Education and is a key component of India's education and nutrition policy.

**Objectives of the Scheme**

1.Nutritional Support: To improve the nutritional status of children in classes I-VIII.
2.Enrollment and Attendance: To increase school enrollment and attendance, particularly among children from disadvantaged sections.
3.Retention and Learning: To reduce dropout rates and improve children's attention spans and learning outcomes.
4.Social Equity: To promote social equity by eliminating caste, class, and gender distinctions during mealtime.

Early establishment of healthy eating behavior helps prevent or reduce the likelihood of diseases and long-term health issues (**Ergin et al., 2007; Nicklas et al., 2008; Weichselbaum & Buttriss, 2014**). The promotion and provision of a healthy diet during childhood not only contributes to better mental, social, physical, and dental health in early years but also lays the foundation for improved health throughout life, thereby leading to a longer life expectancy and better quality of life (**Abimibayo Adeoya et al., 2022; Ayele et al., 2013; Weisenberger & Klemm, 2022**). In addition, it is the ideal period to shape and reinforce healthy eating and lifestyle behaviors to avoid the risk of nutrition-related problems in adulthood.

Diet quality is an important link between food security and nutrition. The number of people worldwide who could not afford to eat healthy food increased to approximately 3.1 billion in 2022, of which a wholesome diet was out of reach for 27 million additional individuals in sub-Saharan Africa (**FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, & WHO, 2022**). Children in low-and lower-middle- income countries and poorer households bear the burden of stunting, wasting, and anemia (**Abimibayo Adeoya et al., 2022; UNICEF, 2019**). Poor nutrition impedes the well-being of the masses and undermines the prosperity of a nation since malnutrition impairs educational achievement and economic productivity. It costs governments and families enormous sums of money to treat related diseases (**Government of Uganda, 2011; UNOCHA, 2014**).

EPRA International Journal of Environmental Economics, Commerce and Educational Management
Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra0414 |ISI I.F Value: 0.815|SJIF Impact Factor (2025): 8.57 ISSN: 2348 – 814X
Volume: 12 | Issue:6 |June 2025

## OBJECTIVES

- To study the scope and objectives of Mid-Day Meal scheme
- To examine the outcomes of the Mid-Day Meal scheme in the study area.
- To propose suggestions based on the findings.

## SAMPLE AND DATA COLLECTION

The participants selected for this study consisted of students, parents, teachers, and other stakeholders. Convenience sampling technique is deployed in sample selection. 50 samples of each section are considered for the study. Total 195 usable questionnaires are received.

## DATA ANALYSIS

**Factors of Mid-Day Meal Scheme**

**Quality of Food**

**Table-1: Descriptive Statistics of All the Stakeholder's Perception's on Quality of Food in Mid-Day Meal Scheme**

| | Students | Parents | Teachers | Other Stakeholders |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The quality of the food provided in the Mid-Day Meal scheme is satisfactory | 3.4 | 3.3 | 4.1 | 3.6 |
| The food served is nutritious and balanced | 3.8 | 3.6 | 4.3 | 4 |
| The food is cooked and served in a hygienic manner | 3.5 | 3.1 | 4.4 | 3.6 |
| Mean | 3.57 | 3.33 | 4.27 | 3.73 |

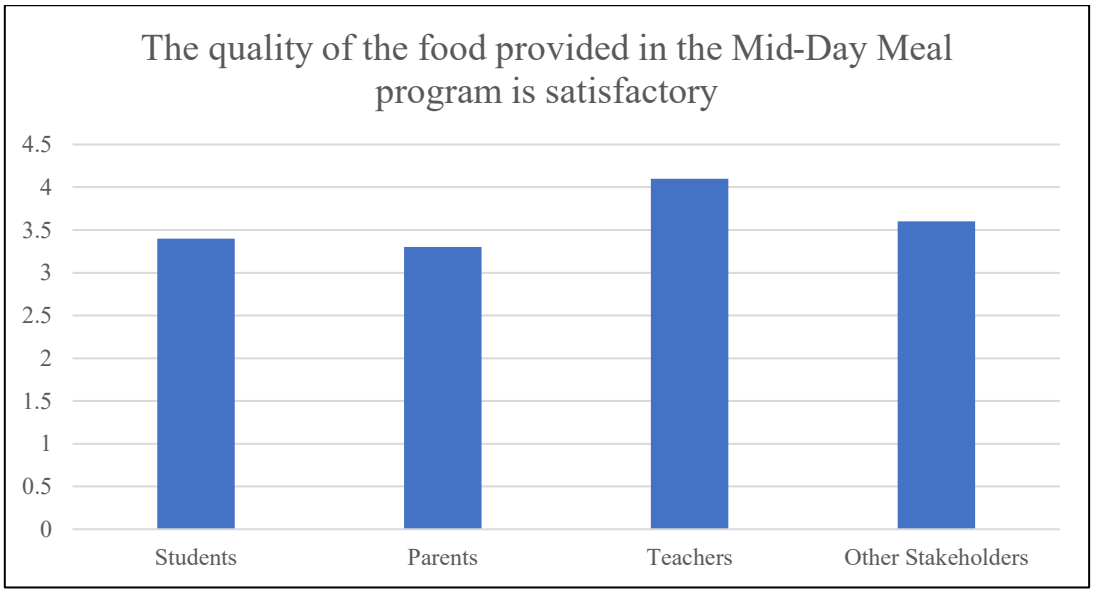



**Figure- 1: Stakeholder's perception on "The quality of the food provided in the Mid-Day Meal scheme is satisfactory"**

From the analysis it is observed that for "The quality of the food provided in the Mid-Day Meal scheme is satisfactory" students perception mean value is 3.4, according to parents it is 3.3, from teacher's perspective it is 4.1 and other stakeholders felt it is 3.6. overall mean value is observed as 3.6.

EPRA International Journal of Environmental Economics, Commerce and Educational Management
Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra0414 |ISI I.F Value: 0.815|SJIF Impact Factor (2025): 8.57 ISSN: 2348 – 814X
Volume: 12 | Issue:6 |June 2025

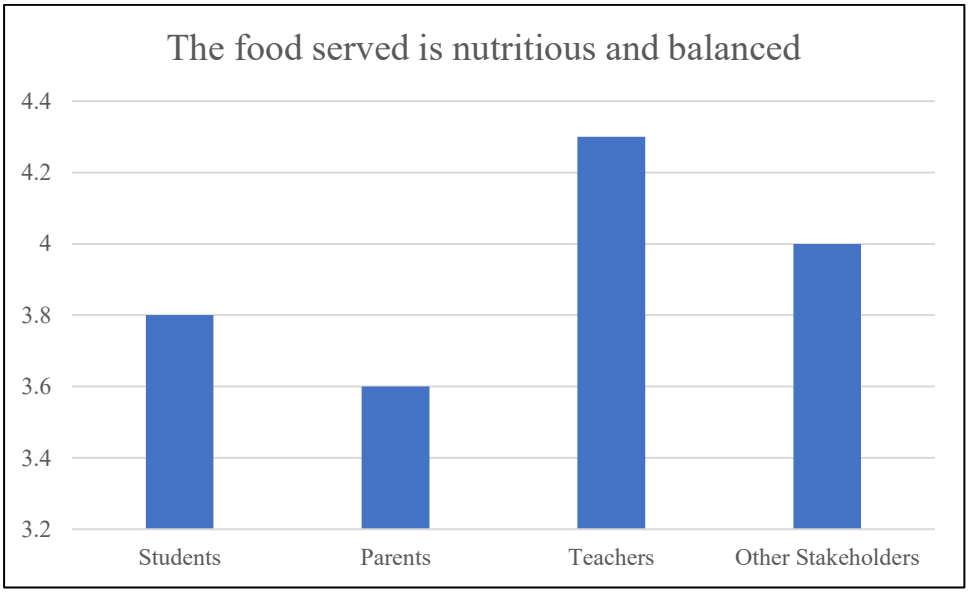



**Figure-2: Stakeholder's perception on "The food served is nutritious and balanced"**

From the analysis it is observed that for "The food served is nutritious and balanced" students perception mean value is 3.8, according to parents it is 3.6, from teacher's perspective it is 4.3 and other stakeholders felt it is 4.0. overall mean value is observed as 3.92.

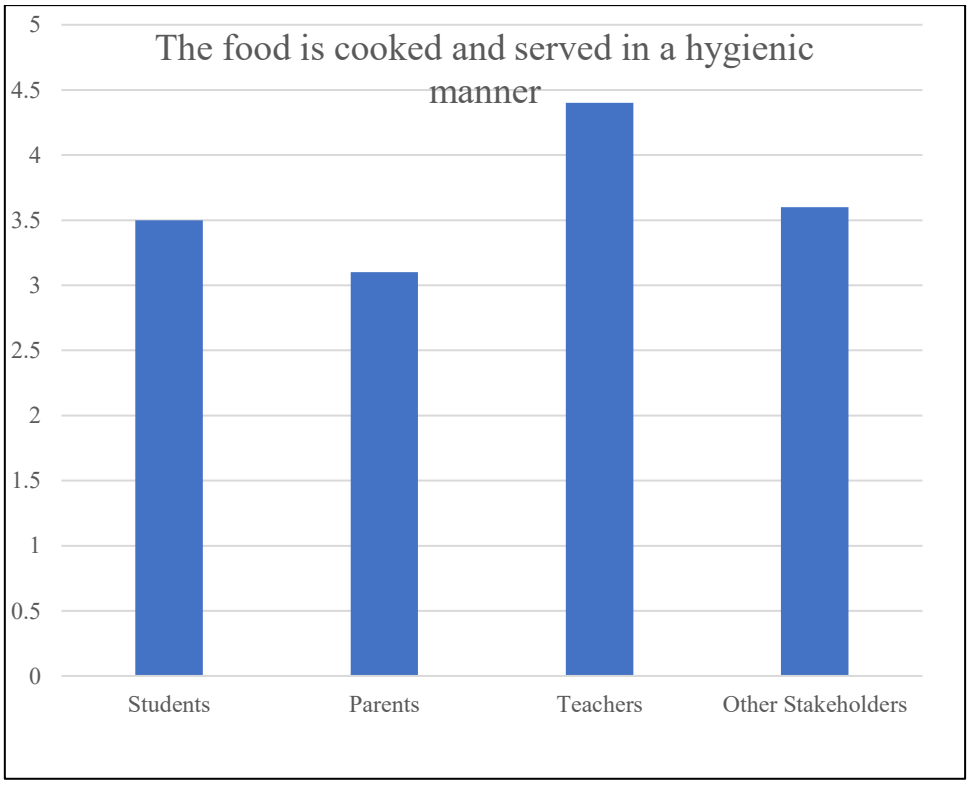



**Figure-3: Stakeholder's perception on "The food is cooked and served in a hygienic manner"**

From the analysis it is observed that for "The food is cooked and served in a hygienic manner" students perception mean value is 3.5, according to parents it is 3.1, from teacher's perspective it is 4.4 and other stakeholders felt it is 3.6. overall mean value is observed as 3.65.

EPRA International Journal of Environmental Economics, Commerce and Educational Management
Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra0414 |ISI I.F Value: 0.815|SJIF Impact Factor (2025): 8.57 ISSN: 2348 – 814X
Volume: 12 | Issue:6 |June 2025

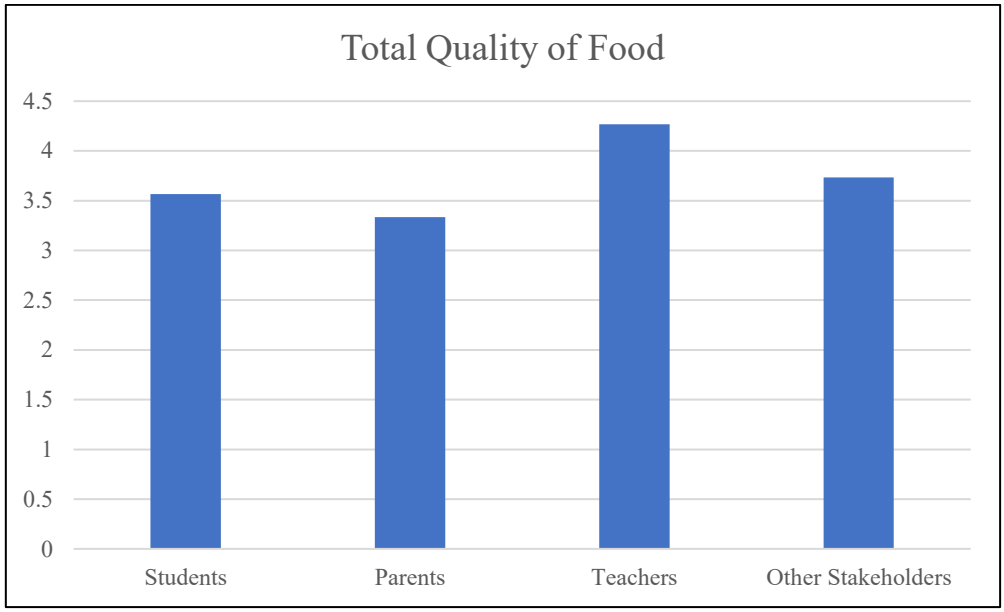



**Figure-4: Stakeholder's perception on "Total Quality of Food"**

From the analysis it is observed that for "Total Quality of Food" students perception mean value is 3.57, according to parents it is 3.33, from teacher's perspective it is 4.27 and other stakeholders felt it is 3.73.

**Impact on Students**

**Table- 2: Descriptive Statistics of All the Stakeholder's Perception's on Impact on Students in Mid-Day Meal Scheme**

| | Students | Parents | Teachers | Other Stakeholders |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The Mid-Day Meal scheme has improved students' attendance at school | 3.7 | 3.9 | 3.8 | 4.2 |
| The scheme has positively impacted students' academic performance | 3.8 | 3.6 | 4.1 | 3.4 |
| Students' health and nutritional status have improved due to the Mid-Day Meal scheme | 3.4 | 3.3 | 3.5 | 3.2 |
| Mean | 3.63 | 3.60 | 3.80 | 3.60 |

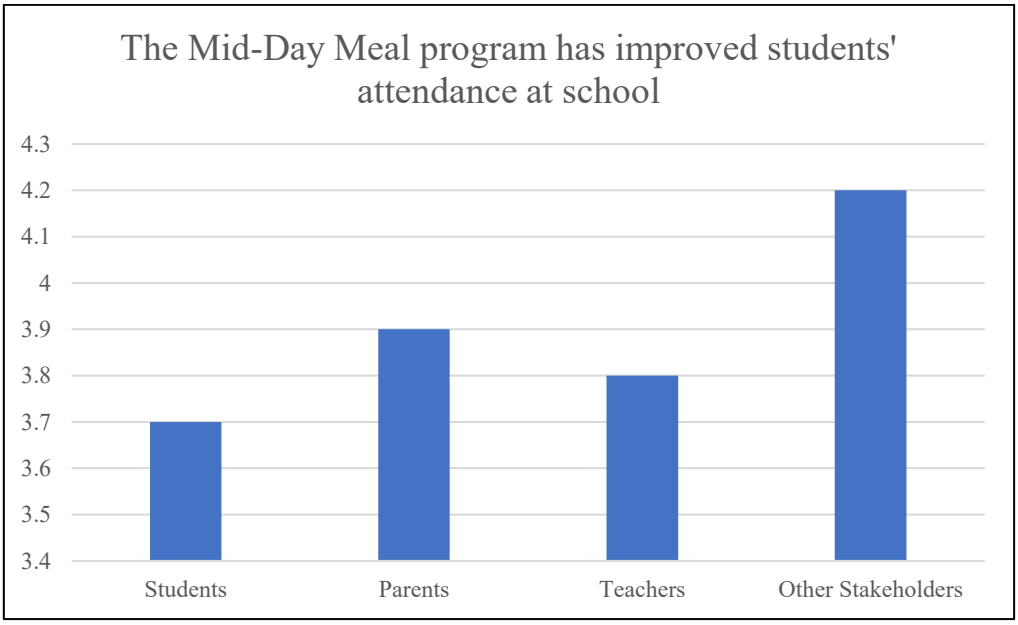



**Figure-5: Stakeholder's perception on "The Mid-Day Meal scheme has improved students' attendance at school"**

EPRA International Journal of Environmental Economics, Commerce and Educational Management
Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra0414 |ISI I.F Value: 0.815|SJIF Impact Factor (2025): 8.57 ISSN: 2348 – 814X
Volume: 12 | Issue:6 |June 2025

From the research it is understood that among the impact on students questions, for "The Mid-Day Meal scheme has improved students' attendance at school" students perception mean value is 3.7, according to parents it is 3.9, from teacher's perspective it is 3.8 and other stakeholders felt it is 4.2.

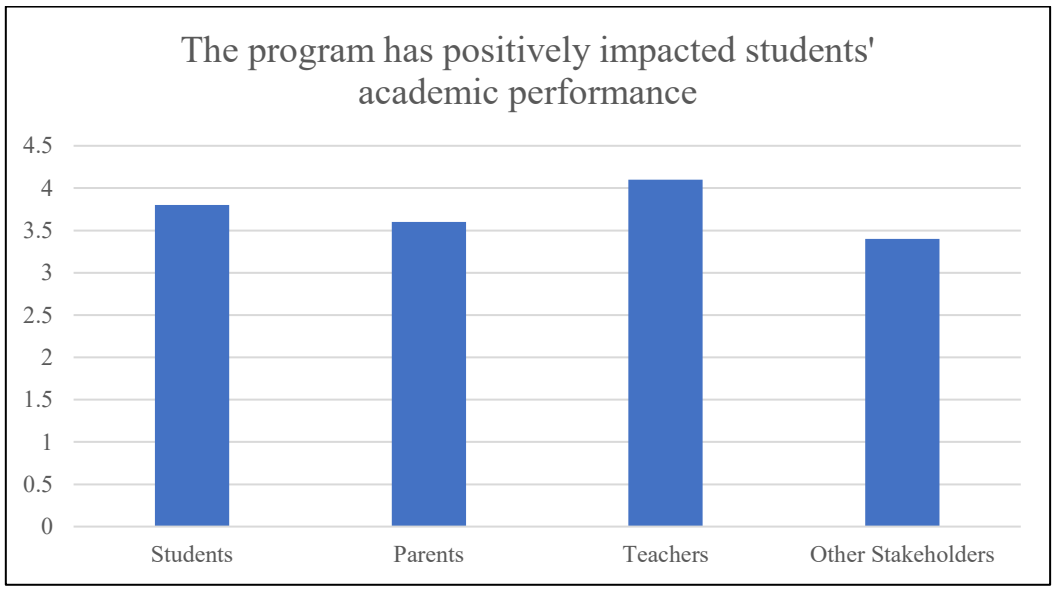



**Figure-6: Stakeholder's perception on "The scheme has positively impacted students' academic performance"**

From the research it is understood that among the impact on students questions, for "The scheme has positively impacted students' academic performance" students perception mean value is 3.8, according to parents it is 3.6, from teacher's perspective it is 4.1 and other stakeholders felt it is 3.4.

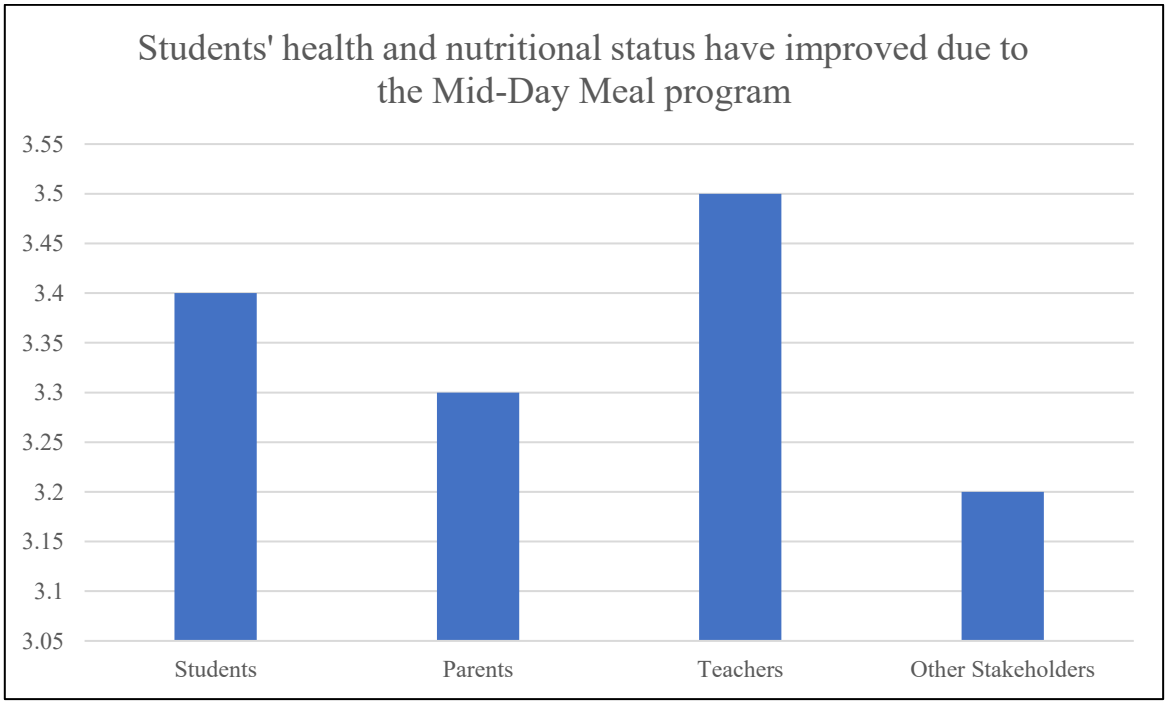



**Figure-7: Stakeholder's perception on "Students' health and nutritional status have improved due to the Mid-Day Meal scheme"**

From the research it is understood that among the impact on students questions, for "Students' health and nutritional status have improved due to the Mid-Day Meal scheme" students perception mean value is 3.4, according to parents it is 3.3, from teacher's perspective it is 3.5 and other stakeholders felt it is 3.2.

EPRA International Journal of Environmental Economics, Commerce and Educational Management
Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra0414 |ISI I.F Value: 0.815|SJIF Impact Factor (2025): 8.57 ISSN: 2348 – 814X
Volume: 12 | Issue:6 |June 2025

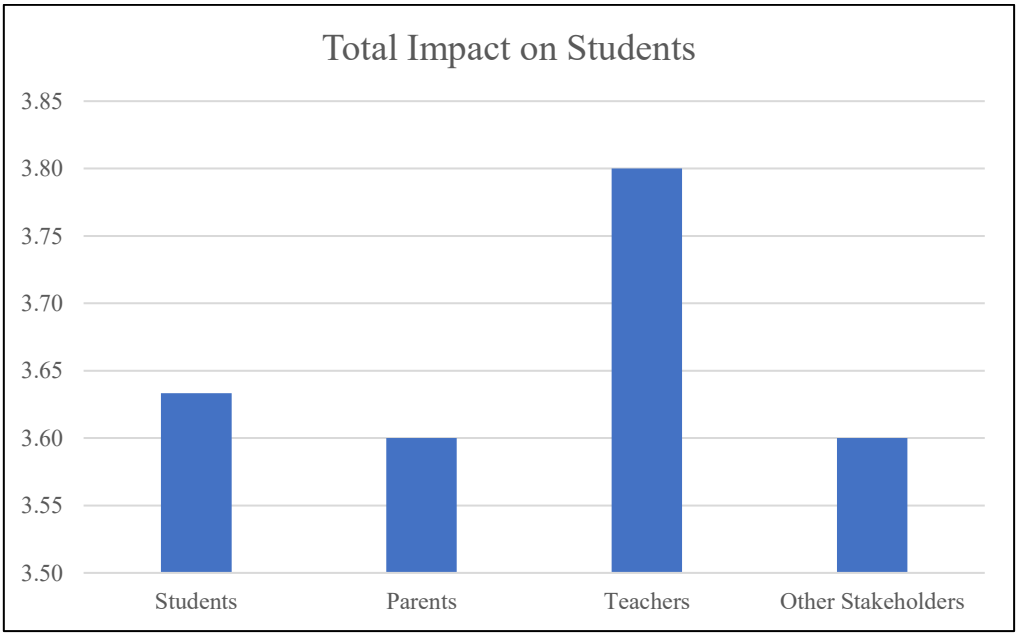



**Figure-8: Stakeholder's perception on "Total impact on students"**

From the research it is understood that for "Total impact on students" students perception mean value is 3.63, according to parents it is 3.60, from teacher's perspective it is 3.80 and other stakeholders felt it is 3.60.

**Implementation and Management**

**Table-3: Descriptive Statistics of All the Stakeholder's Perception's on Implementation and Management in Mid-Day Meal Scheme**

| | Students | Parents | Teachers | Other Stakeholders |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The scheme is well-managed and efficiently run | 3.40 | 3.60 | 4.30 | 2.90 |
| There is adequate monitoring to ensure the quality and effectiveness of the scheme | 3.60 | 3.50 | 4.20 | 3.20 |
| The scheme receives sufficient funding and resources to operate effectively | 3.80 | 4.00 | 3.10 | 3.70 |
| Mean | 3.60 | 3.70 | 3.87 | 3.27 |

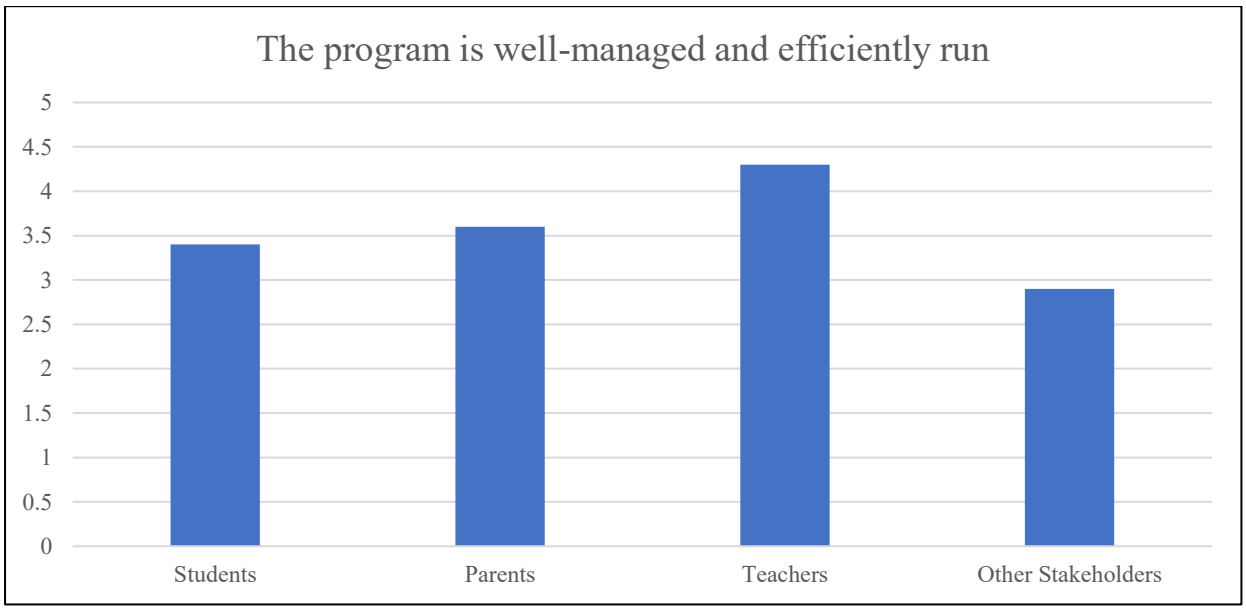



**Figure-9: Stakeholder's perception on "The scheme is well-managed and efficiently run"**

EPRA International Journal of Environmental Economics, Commerce and Educational Management
Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra0414 |ISI I.F Value: 0.815|SJIF Impact Factor (2025): 8.57 ISSN: 2348 – 814X
Volume: 12 | Issue:6 |June 2025

From the research it is understood that among the Implementation and Management, for "The scheme is well-managed and efficiently run" students perception mean value is 3.4, according to parents it is 3.6, from teacher's perspective it is 4.3 and other stakeholders felt it is 2.9.

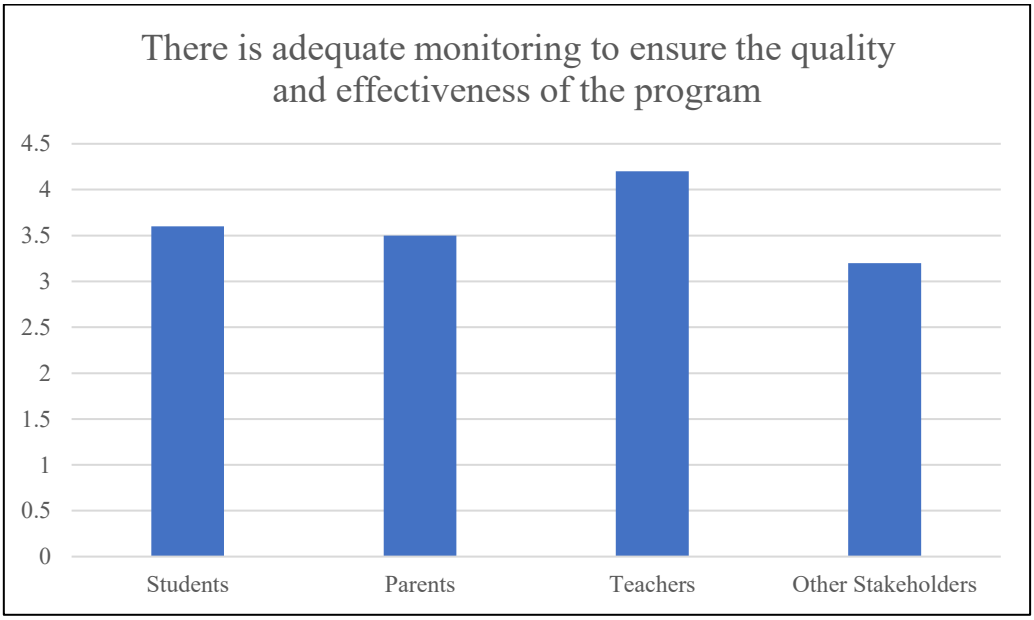



**Figure-10: Stakeholder's perception on "There is adequate monitoring to ensure the quality and effectiveness of the scheme"**

From the research it is understood that among the Implementation and Management, for "There is adequate monitoring to ensure the quality and effectiveness of the scheme" students perception mean value is 3.6, according to parents it is 3.5, from teacher's perspective it is 4.2 and other stakeholders felt it is 3.2.

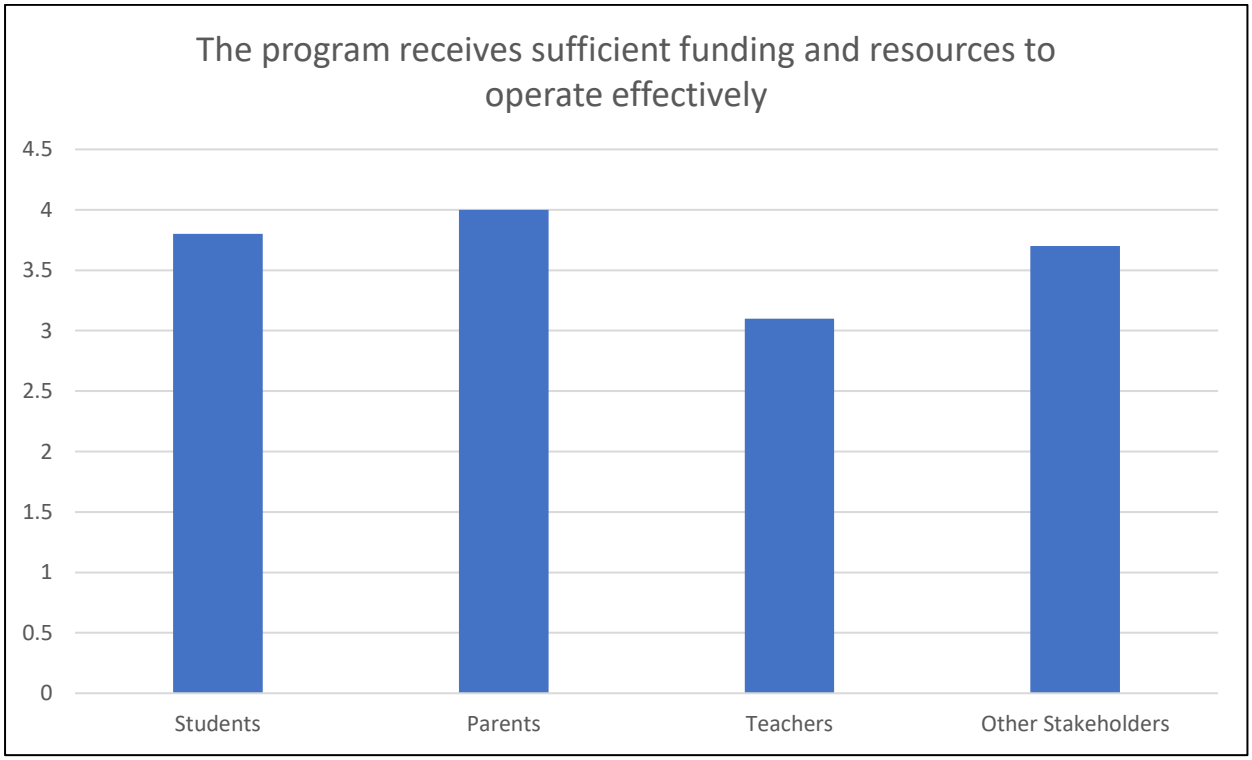



**Figure-11: Stakeholder's perception on "The scheme receives sufficient funding and resources to operate effectively"**

From the research it is understood that among the Implementation and Management, for "The scheme receives sufficient funding and resources to operate effectively" students perception mean value is 3.8, according to parents it is 4.0, from teacher's perspective it is 3.1 and other stakeholders felt it is 3.7.

EPRA International Journal of Environmental Economics, Commerce and Educational Management
Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra0414 |ISI I.F Value: 0.815|SJIF Impact Factor (2025): 8.57 ISSN: 2348 – 814X
Volume: 12 | Issue:6 |June 2025

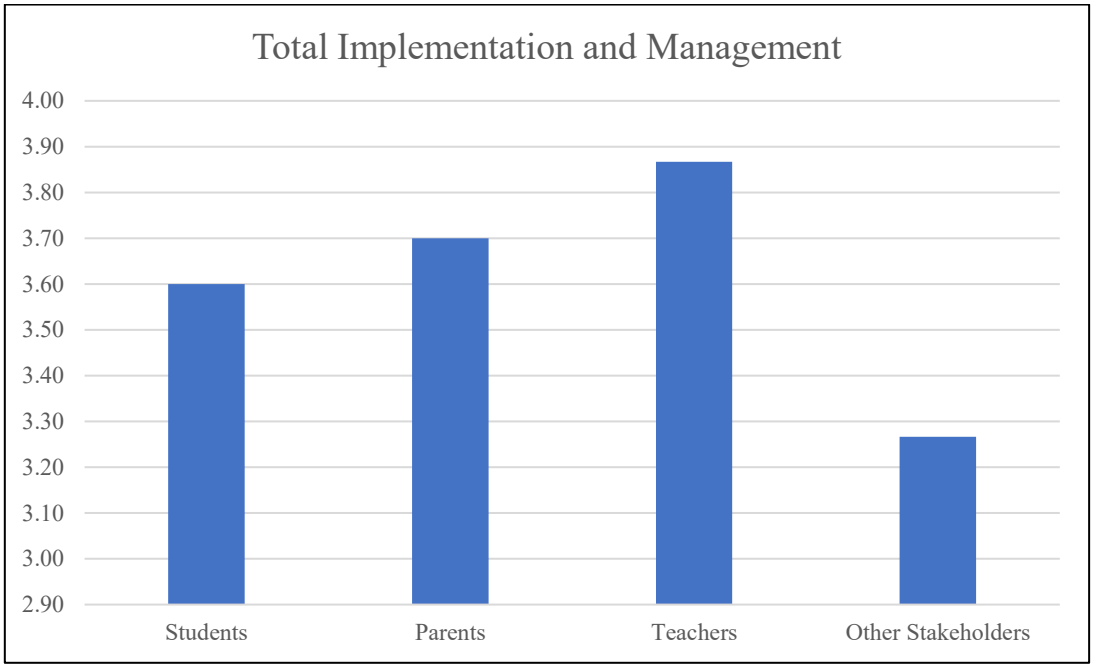



**Figure-12: Stakeholder's perception on "Implementation and Management"**

From the research it is understood that for "Implementation and Management" students perception mean value is 3.60, according to parents it is 3.70, from teacher's perspective it is 3.87 and other stakeholders felt it is 3.27.

**Accessibility and Inclusivity**

**Table-4: Descriptive Statistics of All the Stakeholder's Perception's on Accessibility and Inclusivity in Mid-Day Meal Scheme**

| | Students | Parents | Teachers | Other Stakeholders |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| All eligible students have easy access to the Mid-Day Meal scheme | 4.2 | 4.3 | 4.4 | 4.2 |
| The scheme is inclusive and serves the needs of all students, regardless of background | 4.1 | 4.1 | 4.3 | 4 |
| Overall, I am satisfied with the Mid-Day Meal scheme | 3.9 | 3.8 | 4 | 3.6 |
| Mean | 4.07 | 4.07 | 4.23 | 3.93 |

EPRA International Journal of Environmental Economics, Commerce and Educational Management
Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra0414 |ISI I.F Value: 0.815|SJIF Impact Factor (2025): 8.57 ISSN: 2348 – 814X
Volume: 12 | Issue:6 |June 2025

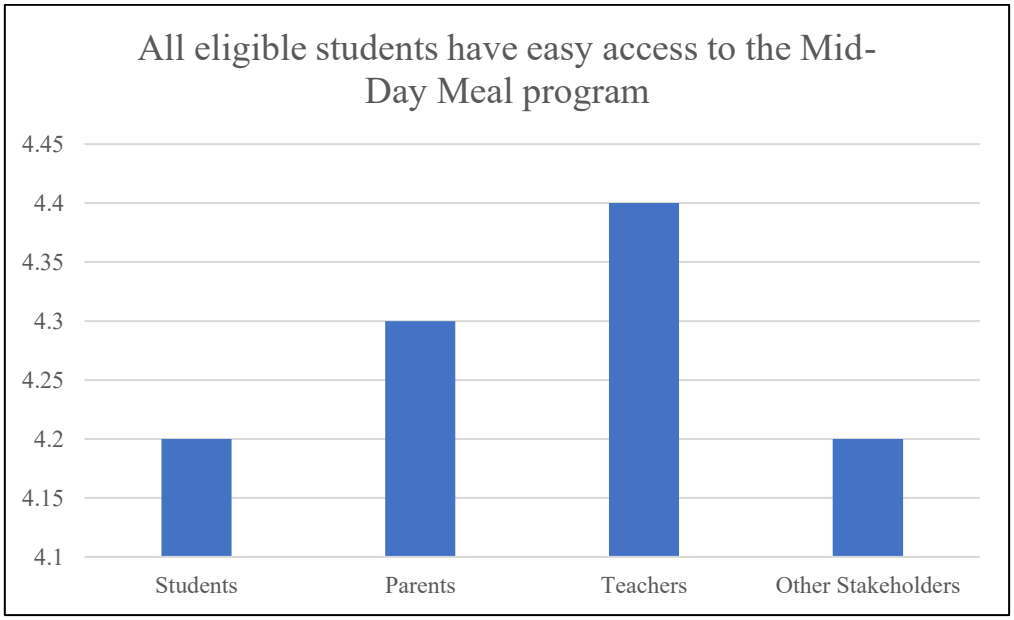



**Figure-13: Stakeholder's perception on "All eligible students have easy access to the Mid-Day Meal scheme"**

From the research it is understood that among the Accessibility and Inclusivity, for "All eligible students have easy access to the Mid-Day Meal scheme" students perception mean value is 4.2, according to parents it is 4.3, from teacher's perspective it is 4.4 and other stakeholders felt it is 4.2.

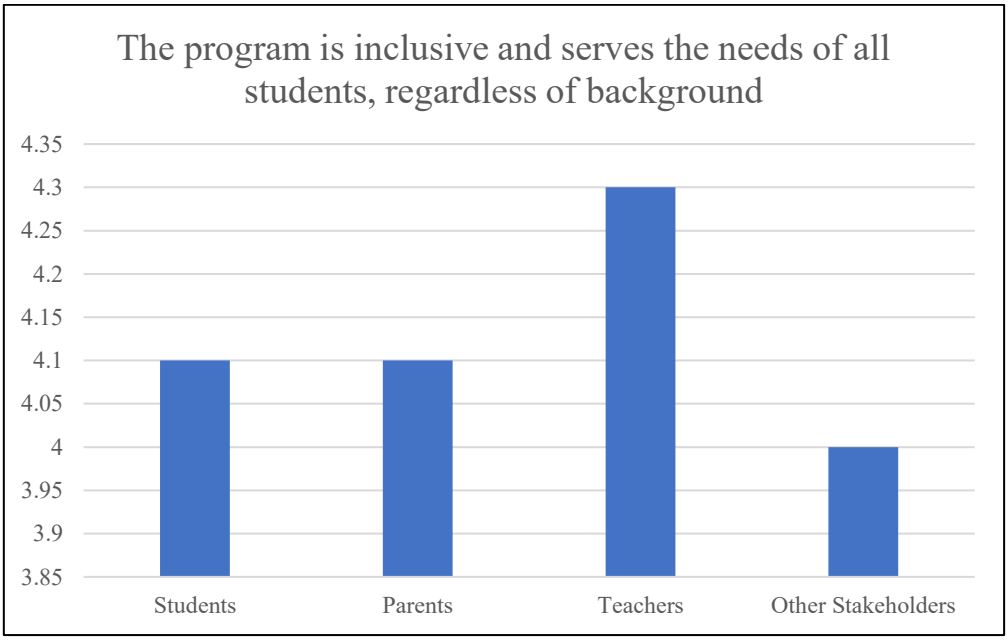



**Figure-14: Stakeholder's perception on "The scheme is inclusive and serves the needs of all students, regardless of background"**

From the research it is understood that among the Accessibility and Inclusivity, for "The scheme is inclusive and serves the needs of all students, regardless of background" students perception mean value is 4.1, according to parents it is 4.1, from teacher's perspective it is 4.3 and other stakeholders felt it is 4.0.

EPRA International Journal of Environmental Economics, Commerce and Educational Management
Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra0414 |ISI I.F Value: 0.815|SJIF Impact Factor (2025): 8.57 ISSN: 2348 – 814X
Volume: 12 | Issue:6 |June 2025

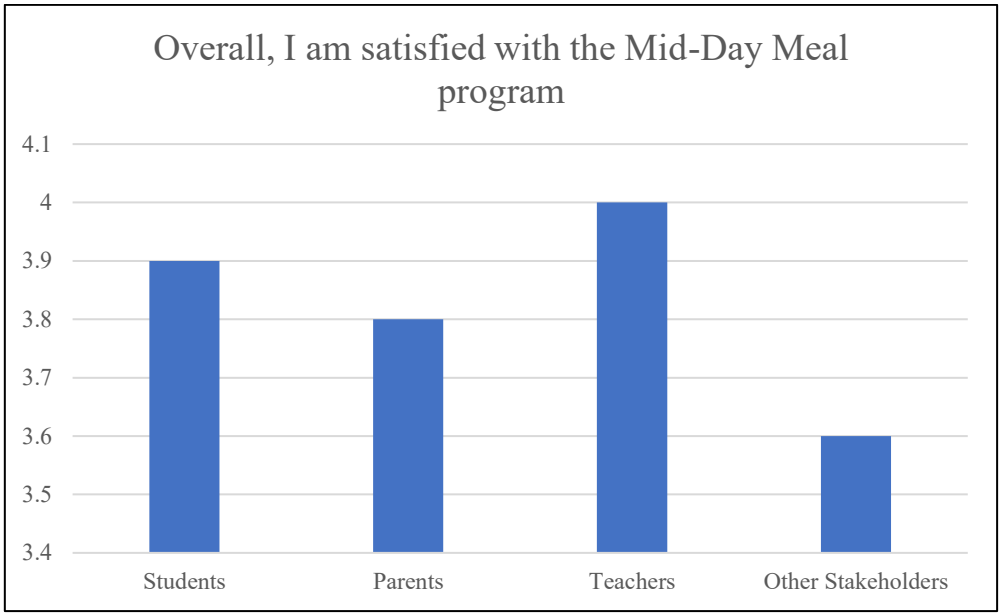



**Figure-15: Stakeholder's perception on "Overall, I am satisfied with the Mid-Day Meal scheme"**

From the research it is understood that for "Overall, I am satisfied with the Mid-Day Meal scheme" students perception mean value is 3.9, according to parents it is 3.8, from teacher's perspective it is 4.0 and other stakeholders felt it is 3.6.

## FINDINGS

- Students and their parents are less satisfied with the quality of the food and teachers and other stakeholders are more satisfied with the quality of the food served.
- From the analysis it is observed that other stakeholders are not ready to agree that mid-day meal has improved students' health and nutrition status.
- Some of the teachers felt the fund and resources provided for the implementation of the scheme is not sufficient.

## SUGGESTIONS

- Students and their parents are less satisfied with the quality of the food, while comparing with teachers and other stakeholders. The reason could be that students and parents are more concerned of food taste, while teachers and other stakeholders are focused on the nutrition of the food. Even food is nutritious, if it is not tasty students are not able to have it completely. Therefore, menu planers and cooks should try to balance both nutrients and taste to meet the interests of all the parties.
- From the analysis it is observed that other stakeholders are not ready to agree that mid-day meal has improved students' health and nutrition status. When it is observed in the ground level it is understood that the significance of the nutrition of the food is not explained to students but food is simply distributed among the students. For instance, chikki (peanuts with jaggery) is distributed to children and children do not know its significance and carry the same to home and it is consumed by relatives, siblings etc., and rarely by the students. Therefore, apart from distributing the food, the nutritional significance of the food should be explained to students to enhance the consumption level.
- Some of the teachers felt the fund and resources provided for the implementation of the scheme is not sufficient. Each school has their own strengths and weaknesses, some schools may not have sufficient space for managing kitchens, some schools are remotely located and finding the suitable cooks may be costly, some schools have very little number of students and maintaining staff may not be viable. Therefore, in these dynamic conditions budget for each school should be dynamic and proper utilization of budget should be ensured with proper monitoring.

## CONCLUSION

The research is conducted to understand the scope and objectives of the Mid-Day Meal scheme and research is also conducted to examine the outcomes of the scheme. For the study the four major dimensions are considered, those includes quality of food, impact on the students, implementation& management and accessibility and inclusivity. From the analysis it is found that students and patents are less satisfied with the quality of the food,

other stakeholders are not satisfied with improvement of health and nutritional level of students and some of the teachers are not satisfied with the budget and other resource allocated for the implementation of Mid-Day meal scheme. Though the sustainability of the scheme has huge impact on the future generations, government should come-up with standard monitoring system and ensure sustainability of the scheme by updating resources requirement of each and every school.

## REFERENCES


- *Abimibayo Adeoya, A., Sasaki, H., Fuda, M., Okamoto, T., & Egawa, S. (2022). Child nutrition in disaster: A scoping review. The Tohoku Journal of Experimental Medicine, 256(2), 103–118.*
- *Ayele, F. A., Taye, B. W., Ayele, T. A., & Gelaye, K. A. (2013). Predictors of dental caries among children 7-14 years old in Northwest Ethiopia: A community based cross-sectional study. BMC Oral Health, 13, 7.*
- *Ergin, F., Okyay, P., Atasoylu, G., & Beşer, E. (2007). Nutritional status and risk factors of chronic malnutrition in children under five years of age in Aydin, a western city of Turkey. The Turkish Journal of Pediatrics, 49(3), 283–289.*
- *FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP & WHO. (2022). The state of food security and nutrition in the world 2022. Repurposing food and agricultural policies to make healthy diets more affordable. FAO. https://doi.org/10.4060/ cc0639en*
- *Government of Uganda. (2011). Uganda nutrition action plan 2011–2016: Scaling up multi-sectoral efforts to establish a strong nutrition foundation for Uganda's development. Government of Uganda. Retrieved from https://scali ngupn utrit ion.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Uganda_Nutri tionA ction Plan_Nov20 11.pdf*
- *Nicklas, T. A., Hayes, D., & American Dietetic Association. (2008). Position of the American Dietetic Association: Nutrition guidance for healthy children ages 2 to 11 years. Journal of the American Dietetic Association, 108(6), 1038–1047.*
- *UNICEF. (2019). The state of the world's children: Children, food and nutrition. Growing Well in a Changing World. Retrieved from https:// www.unicef.org/media/ 60811/ file/SOWC-2019- Exec- summary.pdf*
- *UNOCHA. (2014). Strategic response plan for Nigeria 2014–2016. Retrieved from https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/programme-cycle/space/ docum ent/strat egic-response-plan-nigeria-2014-2016*
- *Weichselbaum, E., & Buttriss, J. L. (2014). Diet, nutrition and schoolchildren. Nutrition Bulletin, 39, 9–73.*
- *Weisenberger, J., & Klemm, S. (2022). Kids eat right: Eat right for a healthy mouth and teeth. Retrieved from https://www.eatri ght. org/healt h/welln ess/preve nting -illne ss/eat-right -for- a- healt hy-mouth -and- teeth.*