

GETA Young Scientist

Samsya Khoj Contest 2025

31.05.2025

<i>Result</i>	Second
<i>Problem Title</i>	Improving Quality of Mid-Day Meals to Enhance Nutrition and Attendance
<i>Problem Description</i>	<p>While the Mid-Day Meal Scheme provides free meals to millions of students in government schools, issues with food quality, hygiene, and irregular supply persist. Poor quality meals reduce student attendance and affect their health and concentration in class. Why this matters: Poor Nutrition: Low-quality or stale food leads to malnutrition and illness. Attendance Impact: Students skip school if meals are inadequate or unsafe. Health Risks: Contaminated food causes diseases and affects learning ability. Wastage and Corruption: Inefficient supply chains cause food wastage and reduce program effectiveness. Studies show that about 30% of students do not benefit fully due to meal quality issues. NFHS data links improved nutrition with better educational outcomes. Mid-Day Meal Scheme covers over 120 million children, making it the world's largest school feeding program. Importance of Nutritional Quality:</p> <p>Children in their growing years require a balanced diet that includes adequate proteins, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals. Improving the quality of mid-day meals by incorporating diverse food items such as pulses, green leafy vegetables, fruits, eggs (where culturally acceptable), and fortified staples can significantly improve the health and cognitive abilities of students. This helps in reducing malnutrition, stunted growth, and anemia, which are common among school-age children in many regions.</p> <p>Impact on Attendance and Academic Performance:</p> <p>Well-prepared and nutritious meals act as a strong incentive for children, especially from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, to attend school regularly. When children are assured of receiving a healthy meal at school, it eases the financial burden on families and ensures children are more likely to remain in school. Additionally, improved nutrition leads to better concentration, reduced fatigue, and enhanced academic performance.</p>
<i>Affected Audiences</i>	<p>Students: Primary beneficiaries. They will receive more nutritious food, leading to better health, improved concentration, and higher school attendance. Reduced rates of malnutrition, anemia, and growth disorders.</p> <p>Parents and Families: Relieved from the financial burden of providing one meal a day. Encouraged to send their children to school regularly, especially in low-income households.</p> <p>Teachers and School Staff: Benefit from better student attentiveness and performance in the classroom.</p>
<i>Impact Size</i>	Hundreds and more
<i>Location</i>	Universal
<i>Scope</i>	National
<i>Place</i>	Universal
<i>Occurrence</i>	Frequently

<i>Result</i>	Second
<i>Life risk involved?</i>	Yes
<i>Financial loss or Saving potential</i>	Lakhs or more
<i>Student</i>	J.M. THANISHKAA , 8th Class
<i>School</i>	BHAVAN'S NTPC VIDYA MANDIR , Nagpur District, Maharashtra
<i>Guide Teacher</i>	MISS. KARTIKI KAWALE

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