



## **ASSESSMENT OF PRIMARY SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAM ON ENROLMENT ATTENDANCE AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES IN KANO STATE NIGERIA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The aim of this study was to examine the Assessment of Primary School Pupil's Feeding Program in Kano State Nigeria. The study was conducted with aim to assess the extent to which school feeding program promote health nutrition, enrolment and retention among school aged children in Kano state. Descriptive survey research design was employed for this study. The population of the study area are forty one thousand eight hundred and seventy two (41 872) teachers. Three hundred and eighty four (384) teachers are selected to form the sample of the study which were randomly selected using research advisor (2006) out of which three hundred and sixteen (316) were male and eighteen (18) were female. Hat and draw sampling procedure was used to select 6 local governments for the study. Cluster sampling and simple random sampling technique were used to select the sample size of the study which include teachers, Head teachers, Parents SBMC and members of the neighboring schools. The instruments used to collect data were self-developed questionnaire and an adopted check list. The questionnaire was validated by experts in test and measurement and staff of State Basic Education Board (SUBEB). The questionnaire was pilot tested using test retest method and the reliability index of 0.78 was obtained using Croanbach Alpha respectively. The validity index of 0 .866 was obtained. Frequency count and descriptive statistics was used to analysed the data. The result of the survey obtained revealed that there is need by government and education stakeholders in Kano State to improve quality of food given to school children. There is need for members of the immediate community to ensure hygienic preparation of food to avoid contaminations among others. Based on the findings, it is recommended that government should continue to step up quality feeing program and include Non-governmental organisations to promote public awareness and education on the importance of feeding children at basic education levels.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

School feeding programs have been defined by the World Bank as “targeted social safety nets that provide both educational and health benefits to the most vulnerable children, thereby increasing enrollment rates, reducing absenteeism, and improving food security at the household level.” WFP, (2012). Beyond improvements in access to food, school feeding programs also have a positive impact on nutritional status, gender equity, and educational status, each of which contributes to improving overall levels of country and human development.

School feeding in low-income countries often starts through funding by international organizations such as the United Nations World Food Program , the World Bank , national governments through programs such as the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program. However, some governments have first started school-feeding programs and then requested the help of these organizations and programs. Additionally, many countries have “graduated” from their dependency on foreign assistance by reshaping their school feeding programs to be country-led and self-supported.

## **Need for school feeding programs**

According to the United Nations World Food Program, 66 million primary school age children go hungry every day, with 23 million hungry children in Africa alone, WFP (2019). Furthermore, 80% of these 66 million children were concentrated within just 20 countries. Additionally, 75 million school-age children (55% of them girls) do not attend school, with 47% of them living in sub-Saharan Africa. World Bank (2018). Thus, the need to reduce hunger while increasing school enrollment in these children is evident, and school feeding programs have been developed to target this multifaceted problem.

Schools have become a natural and convenient setting for the implementation of health and education interventions. School feeding is just one facet of school health initiatives, as other programs may include de-worming, HIV/AIDS prevention and education, life and health skills education. Overall, school feeding programs have been shown to directly increase the educational and nutritional status of recipient children, and indirectly impact the economic and social lives of themselves and their family. Additionally, school feeding directly addresses the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of reducing hunger by one-half, achieving universal primary education, and achieving gender parity in education by 2015, UN (2015).

## **Benefits of School Feeding**

School meals have been shown to increase the nutritional status of school-age children in a variety of ways. For example, there is a notable reduction in malnutrition via diet diversification and an increased absorption of micronutrients. Overall, the amount of kilocalories in a child's diet is expanded when they were given nutritional resources that they would otherwise have little to no access to in their daily meals. By increasing the amount of nutrition a child receives at school, that child's family's nutrition status also increases as their familial demand and requirement for food is decreased Lawson, (2022). Targeted take-home rations therefore increase the nutrition of the family as a whole, and not just the members of a given family that were of primary-school age. However, criticisms of school meals' impacts on nutrition stem from the idea that increased nutrition through school meals is only a temporary fix and does not target the underlying causes of malnutrition, such as high food prices and poor food distribution systems that prevent food security Tomlinson, (2017). Nigeria's school feeding program, the National Home Grown School Feeding Program (NHGSFP), provides nutritious meals to public primary school children. The program is designed to improve health and educational outcome

## **Education**

Education is a key component in school feeding programs and global development because overall, a more educated person has an increased amount of opportunities in life, earns more money, and has a higher standard of living than an uneducated individual, MDG (2013). School meals greatly impact recipient children's education status by increasing school enrollment and attendance, decreasing drop-out rates, and improving cognitive abilities and learning achievements, Masset and Aulo (2015). Generally, sending children to a school in which school-meals were served offsets the financial and opportunity costs of schooling, and thus families were incentivized to send their children to school, Lawson (2022). Additionally, school feeding programs may serve as an incentive for students to go to school to receive food rather than missing out on food by staying home, Ahmed (2017). The increased nutrition status of children, as a result of school feeding programs, also enhances students' cognitive abilities and performance in school.

## Gender equity in Basic education

School feeding programs have the capacity to increase gender equity in access to education, which allows for gender equity across all spheres of social and economic life. There were a variety of reasons that girls' education is impacted by factors on both the supply and demand side of schooling. These include gender-stereotyped curriculum and teaching practices, increased risks for girls' safety outside of the house, socio-cultural practices that cause girls' education to hold a very low value, and school infrastructure that is not suitable for girls, Ahmed (2017). Due to the combination of such barriers, girls were disproportionately affected by the direct and opportunity cost of schooling, which prevents girls from very poor households from attending school, Ahmed (2017). Opportunity costs for girls' education include lost time that would otherwise be spent doing household chores and care giving work. School feeding programs reduce the costs of sending girls to school and allow for an increased number of girls to be sent to school by their families. Furthermore, improvements in female literacy that come from increased education have been linked to declining rates of fertility, increased economic opportunities, and other markers of female empowerment.

While school feeding programs have a variety of positive impacts, there were some possible negative impacts these programs can cause. For example, school feeding programs can increase the cost of schooling by requiring that communities provide fire-wood for cooking as well as other items such as fresh-fruit, vegetables, and condiments. Additionally, communities were also expected to provide people who can cook these meals and maintain stores of all of the required food products, as well as kitchens and other fundamentals of meal provision. Masset and Aulo (2015). By causing a variety of needs and requirements to increase in a given community, the net benefit to a community from school feeding programs may be reduced.

School feeding programs are very context-specific, and each community's program must be altered based on the demographics, geography, and other patterns within and outside of schools. For this reason, there are a variety of challenges that emerge in the creation and implementation of school feeding programs, WFP (2018).

- Determine if school feeding is the most effective program to target needy children
- Define program goals and outcomes
- Select the type of food to serve
- Determine a food procurement method
- Plan for management, implementation, and monitoring within schools—and a variety of other concerns.

Because school feeding programs were community-specific and require a great deal of planning, the sustainability of school feeding programs is a main point of concern for many countries. Countries were very limited on the demands placed on the staff, resources, and infrastructure required for school-feeding programs, and often has to rely on outside financial and personnel help to continue programs for a significant amount of time.

Though school feeding produces a variety of anticipated impacts, as mentioned above, a lot of researches have been done to determine the results of school feeding programs in low-income countries. School feeding program results were often context-specific, but lessons from a variety of communities can help evaluate school feeding program effectiveness. Researchers at the International Food Policy Research Institute have critically assessed evidence from developing countries to define preliminary results of these programs, Adelman, Daniel and Kim (2018). These assessments found that the timing of meals is not a critical factor in the positive effects on learning and cognition, and thus take-home rations can perform as

well as in-school meals, and that in-school meals may even disrupt learning, Gillian (2019). In some settings, take-home rations were more cost-effective than in-school meals, and the study argued that some country programs may be optimized by focusing resources on take-home rations. Additionally, it was found that in the study setting, school attendance improved learning more significantly than nutrition status improvements, but that school feeding programs encouraged attendance and still have a positive net result on education levels. In a study done McEwan (2013), it was shown that there is no evidence that higher-calorie meals positively impact school enrollment and attendance, first-grade enrollment age and grade repetition, and fourth-grade test scores over average-calorie school feeding meals in Chile's national program (McEwan, 2017). Thus, McEwan's study suggested that Chilean policy, to produce significant positive results, should focus more on the nutritional composition of school meals, rather than caloric content alone

### **Statement of the Problem**

It is asserted that school pupils feeding program has been provided as a way of attracting vulnerable children to school, a way of improving their attendance and minimizing drop-outs (Schultz, 2018). The United Nations World Food Program (2019) claimed that school feeding program is an incentive for vulnerable families to invest in their children's education and encourages affected households to send children to schools and helps to ensure that they were kept there. This study intends to assess these claims especially in the area of parent inability to send their children to school, attendance during school days and their performance during daily extracurricular activities like sporting and other psychomotor dispositions. In specific, the study aims at assessing the impact of the Kano State Primary Schools feeding program on pupils' participation in school as perceived by the pupils, their teachers and parents.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To assess the influence of school feeding program on the pupils' class attendance in public primary schools of Kano State.
2. What are the influences of school feeding program on extracurricular activities in primary school in Kano State?
3. To assess influence of school feeding program on public primary school pupils' enrolment in Kano State

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the influences of school feeding program on the pupils' class attendance in public primary schools of Kano State?
2. What are the influences of school feeding program on extracurricular activities in primary school in Kano State?
3. To what are the influence of school feeding program on public primary school pupils' enrolment in Kano State?

### **METHODOLOGY**

The study was use a descriptive survey research design to investigate the relationship between the school feeding program and variable such as pupils' enrollment, attendance and dropouts.

The population of the study includes all primary school pupils and their teachers and parents from all the public primary schools in Kano State. The study used hat and draw sampling procedures to select 6 local governments were as out of the 44 local governments of Kano State and to select 4 schools from each of the selected local governments, making a total of 24 selected schools. The study used a convenience sampling to select 25 respondents (i.e. 5 pupils, 1 head teacher, 4 class room teachers, and 15 parents) from each of the 24 selected primary schools to bring the total sample size of 600 respondents out of which 384 will be studied based on research advisor.

The research instruments for the study were developed by the researchers. Three questionnaires were designed by the researchers i.e. one for the head teachers and teachers, one for the pupils and one for the

parents. The research instruments were given content validity by two selected experts from Sa'adatu Rimi College of Education, Kumbotso and one expert from Kano State Universal Basic Education Board. Content and face validity were determined by the researchers Pilot study using two schools (one urban and one rural) from the local government that were not selected for the study. The reliability of the instrument was determined by the researchers using test retest method. The results were subjected to SPSS to compute the internal consistency of the instrument using Cronbach Alpha. Accordingly, the researchers used pupils' class enrolment register and class attendance register to collect data on pupils' enrolment and attendance. Data collection was made using trained research assistants who were drawn from the school neighborhood to ensure all the items are well filled and total return of the instruments was made. Frequency count and descriptive statistics were used to answer the research questions.

## RESULTS

**Table 1: Summary of Demographic Variables**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	316	82
Female	18	18
<b>Location</b>		
Urban	138	36
Rural	246	64
<b>Designations</b>		
District Head	59	15
Head Teacher	24	06
Teacher	264	70
Non Teacher	34	09

Source: Field Data 2023

Table 1 above presents demographic variables of the sample under study. The table showed distribution of respondents by gender 361(82) of the respondents were male while 18(18) respondents were female. A total of 384 respondents were studied across Kano state. Distribution of respondents by location was recorded with respondents from Urban 138 (36) while those from rural areas were 246 (64). Survey covers designation of basic education stakeholders those who indicate they were district heads were 59(15) while respondents who showed they were school head teachers were 24 (6), Teachers who form the sample of the study were 264 (70) while non-teachers were 34 (9).

**Research Question 1:** What are the influences of school feeding program on the pupils' class attendance in public primary schools of Kano State?

**Table 2: Factor 1, Pupils' attendance before feeding program**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Once a Week</b>		
NO	362	94
YES	22	06
<b>Twice a Week</b>		
NO	360	94
YES	24	06
<b>Three Times a Week</b>		
NO	243	63
YES	141	37
<b>Throughout a Week</b>		
NO	302	79
YES	82	21

Source: Field Data 2023

Table 2 above presents pupils attendance before the feeding program teachers who indicate Yes pupils attend school once a week were 22(6). Those who indicated No pupils attend schools once a week were 362(94). On school attendance twice a 360 teachers showed No while 24 teachers showed Yes pupils attend schools twice a week. Respondents showed No Pupils attend school three times a week were 234(63) while those who indicated Yes Pupils attend school three times a week were 141 (37). Attendance throughout a week was surveyed with sample indicating No 302 (79). Those who showed Yes attendance of the pupils at school is recorded at 82 (21). Based on the above we can conclude before the feeding pupils attend school once a week and twice a week having higher frequency and percentage of 362 and 360 respectively. This concludes majority of the pupils do not attend school throughout the week.

**Table 3: Factor 2, Pupils' attendance during feeding program**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Once a Week</b>		
NO	199	52
YES	185	48
<b>Twice a Week</b>		
NO	12	03
YES	372	97
<b>Three Times a Week</b>		

NO	ss	24	06
YES		360	94
<b>Throughout a Week</b>			
NO		60	16
YES		324	84

Source: Field Data 2023

Table 3 above presents pupils attendance during the feeding program teachers who indicate Yes pupils attend school once a week were 199(52). Those who indicated No pupils attend schools once a week were 185(48). On school attendance twice in a week 372(97) teachers showed Yes while 12(3) teachers showed No pupils attend schools twice a week. Respondents showed Yes Pupils attend school three times a week were 360(94) while those who indicated No Pupils attend school three times a week were 24 (6). Attendance throughout a week was surveyed with sample indicating No 60 (16). Those who showed Yes attendance of the pupils at school is recorded at 324 (84) while those who showed No pupils attend school throughout a week were 60(16). Based on the above we can conclude during the feeding pupils attend school throughout a week having higher frequency and percentage of 324(84). This concludes majority of the pupils attend school throughout the week during the feeding program.

**Research Question 2:** What are the influences of school feeding program on extracurricular activities in primary school in Kano State?

**Table 4: Extra Curricular Activities during Feeding Program**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Temperament</b>		
Good	59	59
Poor	41	41
<b>Agility</b>		
Good	75	75
Poor	25	25

Source: Field Data 2023

Table 4 above presents pupils Curricular and Extra Curricular Activities during the feeding program. Pupils temperament during the feeding program teachers who indicate pupils have good temperamental conditions were Good with 59(59) while those who showed pupils temperamental conditions was poor were 41(41). Pupils agility during the feeding program was surveyed teachers who indicate pupils have good agility were 75(75) while those who showed pupils low agility were 25 (25). Based on the above we conclude pupils were changing for the best during school feeding program as they were improvement in examinations, temperamental conditions and Agility.

**Research Question 3:** What are the influences of school feeding program on public primary school pupils' enrolment in Kano State?

**Table 5: Pupils Enrolment during School Feeding**

Variables	N	Mean	Std
1. There is an increase in school enrolment during the provision of School feeding program	384	3.78	.408
2. There is a decrease in pupils' enrolment due to the provision of school feeding meals	384	3.37	.637
3. School feeding program does not encourages parents enroll their children to school	384	2.16	.587
4. Girls were more enrolled before the school feeding program	384	2.34	1.122
5. School feeding program reduce pupils' dropout rate in school	384	2.97	1.141
6. Children eat meal and left school	384	2.76	1.163
7. School feeding program Increase enrolment	384	3.02	1.063
8. Children come to school prior to their enrolment at school	384	2.66	1.043

**Source: Field Data 2023**

Table 5 above present's teachers responses on pupils enrolment during school feeding teachers indicated there is increase in school enrolment during school feeding with a Mean X and standard deviation (sd) of 3.78 and .408 respectively. Samples responded to school feeding encourage parents to enroll their children and ward to schools with X 3.37 and sd .637 respectively. Respondents indicated Girls were poorly enrolled before the school feeding X 2.16 and sd of .587. While those who showed the enrollment of boys was higher with X 2.34 and sd 1.122 based on this findings we can conclude pupils enrolment during school feeding program has increase the number of children enrolment in Kano State. Children eat meal and left school this was score with a mean of 2.76 and sd 1.163 which showed children remain at school after eating their meal.

Teachers responses on pupils dropout during school feeding teachers indicated pupils do not drop out from school with a Mean X and standard deviation (sd) of 2.97 and 1.1411 respectively. On enrolment the result shows school feeding increase enrolment with a Mean X and standard deviation (sd) of 3.02 and 1.063 respectively. Samples responded to children come to school prior to enrolment at school with a X and sd respectively. Respondents indicated Girls were more enrolled before the school feeding X and sd of 2.34 and 1.122 respectively. Based on these findings we can conclude pupils enrolment during school feeding program has reduce pupils' dropout, increase enrolment and draw children to school prior to their enrolment in Kano State.

## **CONCLUSION**

To ensure children enrolment and retention in basic education food has to be provided in its proper ration. The food supply should be supported by provision of fruits, vegetables and other protein content food that will enhance children health. This study has found the pupils enrolment is higher and continues to increase with food provision in schools. It has also being witness that preschool children left their home to attend school prior to their enrolment. The food supply have increase enrolment especially in rural areas, improve in academic performance is being witness and improve on agility and positive temperamental conditions were also recorded. It has being witness progress at children weight, and height which was slightly ahead of United Nation bench mark. School feeding has succeeded in improving children numeracy, literacy and handwriting. Members of nearby communities have supported the increase in monitoring the feeding process through supervision of and collaboration with government relevant agencies who give food to children. To ensure global basic education competitiveness school feeding should continue, government and other relevant stake holders should further invest in giving quality food for realization of international basic education objectives.

## **Recommendations**

1. There is need to improve quality of food given to school children.
2. There is need for members of the immediate community to ensure hygienic preparation of food to avoid contaminations.
3. Adequate preparation should be made by government, PTAs SBMCs to mount infrastructure for upcoming children who attend school to eat before their enrolment.
4. Day care and ECCE classes should be mounted to retain visiting children to at least understand the school/learning environment.

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