

INFLUENCE OF NATIONAL HOME GROWN SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME ON THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN GWER-EAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF BENUE STATE.

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Abstract

The study investigated influence of National Home Grown School Feeding Programme on management of Public primary schools in Gwer-East Local Government Area of Benue State. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. Ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study. The population of study comprised 656 primary school teachers. A total of 80 primary school teachers were selected through proportionate stratified random sampling technique. A 4-point structured rating scale questionnaire titled Influence of School Feeding Programme on Management of Public Primary Schools (ISFPMPPSQ) was developed by the researchers and used for data collection. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions and inferential statistics of Chi-square (χ^2) was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that school feeding programme has significant influence on pupils' academic performance and that school feeding programme has significant influence on pupils' enrolment in public primary schools. It was recommended among others that the government should sustain school feeding programme in all public primary schools across the nation and that donor agencies should continue assisting in funding the school feeding programme in Nigeria.

Key Words: Feeding, School, Management, Enrolment, Academic performance and Pupils.

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Introduction

National Home Grown School Feeding Programme is the provision of food to pupils while they are in school. The programme differs from country to country, but it can be classified into two main groups based on their modalities. The first is the in-school feeding programme where pupils are fed in school, and the take-home rations where families are given food if their pupils attend school (Tijani, Opara & Jime, 2017). National Home Grown School Feeding Programme is designed to provide food to school children in order to maintain and improve physical, mental and psycho-social health, as well as to improve school attendance (Tijani et al, 2017).

National Home Grown School Feeding Programme has been adapted in many countries across the globe to combat hunger and malnutrition and to encourage enrollment in schools. The high level of food insecurity, malnutrition and hard economic situation in the country all make National Home Grown School Feeding Programme relevant. Children suffering from hunger cannot be interested in going to school, what they want is food to satisfy their hunger. On empty stomach children easily become distracted and loose concentration during classes (World Food Programme, 2006). Acknowledging this, the Federal Government of Nigeria introduced National Home Grown School Feeding Programme which comprises of in-school feeding and take-home rations where families are given food if their children attend classes. The National Home Grown School Feeding Programmes is considered by many stakeholders in Nigeria as an attempt to encourage child development through school enrollment and academic performance. These programmes are frequently targeted towards population that have issues of foodinsecurity and reside in areas with high concentration of families from low socio-economic status, towards schools that have poor enrollment rates and attendance (Kinyua, 2014).

Statement of the problem

For ages malnutrition has been linked with public health problems like kwashiorkor in developing countries like Nigeria. Malnutrition may likely result to poor enrollment and attendance to schools. Ill health associated with malnutrition may result to increase in dropout rate and even educational wastage. Malnutrition may also negatively influence pupils' academic performance. Relevant stakeholders are worried that if children attend classes on empty stomach, it may negatively influence enrollment rate in schools and pupils' academic performance. The influence of Home Grown School Feeding Programme on academic performance of students in public primary schools in Gwer-East Local Government Area of Benue State is the focus for this research.

Theoretical / Conceptual Framework

The study is anchored on Abraham Maslow (1943) Hierarchy of Human Needs. Maslow postulates that every human being has a hierarchy of needs, beginning at the lower order needs such as food, water, and sleep. These lower order needs are called physiological needs. The second order need is safety needs, while the third is needs to belong, while the fourth is self esteem and finally self-actualization.

All children have a set of needs that if met can help mold them and build a good foundation for adulthood. Considering physiological needs such as food, water, and sleep which if not properly met can affect children's academic performance in school. Without

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to investigate influence of Home Grown School Feeding Programme on academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Gwer-East Local Government Area of Benue State. Specifically, the study investigated;

1. Influence of Home Grown School Feeding Programme on academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Gwer-East Local Government Area of Benue State.
2. Influence of Home Grown School Feeding Programme on enrollment rate in public primary schools.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions.

1. To what extent does Home Grown School Feeding Programme influence academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Gwer-East Local Government Area of Benue State.
2. To what extent does Home Grown School Feeding Programme influence enrollment rate of pupils in public primary schools.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. Home Grown School Feeding Programme has no significant influence on academic performance of pupils in Gwer-East Local Government Area of Benue State.
2. Home Grown School Feeding Programme has no significant influence on enrollment rate of pupils in public primary schools.

Research Method

The study made use of ex-post facto research design. Ex-post facto research design is appropriate where it is not possible for the researcher to directly manipulate the independent variable (Emaikwu, 2011). The design looks out for cause-and-effect relationship. Instrument for data collection was Influence of Home Grown School Feeding Programme Questionnaire (IHGSFPQ) constructed by the researchers. Out of 80 copies of the questionnaire administered to respondents, 75 copies were returned. Data collected was analyzed using Mean and Standard Deviation to answer the research questions. Inferential statistics of Chi-Square (x^2) was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Population and Sample

The population of the study comprised of 656 teachers of public primary schools in Gwer-East Local Government Area of Benue State. Eighty primary school teachers were selected through proportionate stratified random sampling technique. Respondents were drawn randomly from each stratum in such that the relative proportions of the stratum in the resultant sample were the same as exist in the parent population.

Research Question 1

To what extent does school feeding programme influence academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Gwer East local government area of Benue State?

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Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of Respondents of the Extent School Feeding Programme Influence Academic Performance

S/No	Items	SA	A	D	SD	X	STD	Decision
1.	School feeding programme improves academic performance of pupils	50	12	10	3	3.37	1.05	Accept
2.	Pupils who are well fed concentrate in class more than those who are ill fed	30	20	15	10	2.87	1.15	Accept
3.	School feeding reduces dropout rate	32	20	13	10	2.97	1.11	
4.	Pupils value school feeding more than academic work	49	16	7	3	3.42	0.6	Accept
5.	Teachers eye pupil's school Meals	39	30	3	3	3.43	0.72	Accept
Cluster Mean						3.21	0.92	

Source: Researchers field survey result. (2021)

Table 1 show the mean scores of respondents for items 1 to 5 as 3.37 (1.05), 2.87 (1.15), 2.97 (1.11), 3.42 (0.6), 3.43 (0.72) respectively with cluster mean of 3.21 (0.92).

Based on the cut-off point of 2.5, the respondents agreed that the feeding programme positively influence pupils' academic performance;

Pupils who are well fed concentrates in the class and it improve academic performance; it also reduces dropout rate; pupils value the food they are given over and above academic work; teachers welfare should also be considered.

The findings were further subjected to hypothesis testing.

Hypothesis 1

School feeding programme has no significant influence on academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Gwer East local government area of Benue State.

Table 2

Chi-Square test of respondents on the influence of school feeding programme on academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Gwer East local government area of Benue State.

Response	OF	EF	Df	level of sig	x ² Cal	x ² Tab	Decision
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VHE	35	18.75	3	0.05	10.47	2.5	Reject
HE	30	18.75					
LE	5	18.75					
VLE	5	18.75					

Since calculated Chi-Square Value of 10.47 is greater than χ^2 tabulated value of 2.5 checked

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pupils.

Research Question 2

To what extent does school feeding programme influence enrolment of pupils in primary schools?

Table 3

Mean scores and standard deviation of Respondents on school feeding and pupils enrolment

Item No	Item Description	SA	A	D	SD	X	STD	Decision
1.	Pupils' enrolment has increased	39	20	5	11	3.36	1.08	Accept
2.	Pupils' drop-out rate has reduced	30	20	10	15	2.87	1.15	Accept
3.	Pupils are eager to enroll	40	25	5	5	3.33	0.187	Accept
4.	Enrolling in school is the wish of pupils	39	30	3	3	3.43	0.72	Accept
5.	Transition from home to school is smooth	40	20	5	10	3.20	1.05	Accept
	Cluster mean					3.19		

Source: Researchers field survey result.

Table 3 shows the mean scored for item 1 to 5 as 3.16 (1.08), 2.87 (1.15), 3.33 (0.87), 3.43 (0.72), 3.20 (1.05), respectively with a cluster mean of 3.19. Based on the cut-off point of 2.5 respondents agreed that pupils' enrolment has increased because of school feeding programme, dropout rate has reduced, pupils are eager to enroll, pupils themselves wish to enroll and there is smooth transition from home to school because of school feeding programme.

The findings were further subjected to hypotheses testing.

Hypothesis 2

School feeding programme has no significant influence on enrolment of pupils in primary schools.

Table 4

Chi-Square Analysis of Respondent on influence of school feeding programme on Enrolment.

Response	OF	EF	Df	level of	χ^2	χ^2	Decision
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				Sign	Cal	Tab	
VHE	40	18.75	3	0.05	10.35	2.5	Reject
HE	30	18.75					

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Since Chi-Square calculated value is 10.35 which is greater than χ^2 tabulated value of 2.5 checked at 0.05 level of significance the null hypothesis is rejected. This means school.

Feeding programme has positive influence on pupils' enrolment in primary schools.

Discussion of Findings

The first finding reveals that school feeding programme significantly influence pupils' academic performance in primary schools. This finding agrees with that of Adekunle, Christiana and Oghogu (2016) who found that school feeding enhances academic performance of pupils.

The second finding reveals that school feeding programme increases pupils' enrolment in primary schools. This finding agreed with that of Akanbi, Olayande (2011) who found in their study that school feeding programme boost school enrolment.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were found;

1. Federal government should sustain school feeding programme in all public primary schools in all the states of the federation and Abuja
2. Donor agencies and relevant state holders should assist in funding school programme

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