Homegrown School Feeding Programme and Wealth Creation in Benue State

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between homegrown school feeding programme and wealth creation in Benue State. The multi-stage sample technique was utilized to select three Local Government Areas in the State based on the three senatorial districts of the State viz; Adikpo in zone A, Gboko LGA in zone B and Otukpo LGA in zone C. Purposive sampling techniques was used to select respondents. The sample of 290 food vendors and 385 farmers was drawn for analysis. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from respondents and Logit regression as well as the paired t-test statistic was employed for hypotheses testing. The study found that income earned and savings as a result of participation had a significant positive relationship with wealth creation. The study also found that there was a significant increase in the assets acquired by food vendors and farmers as a result of their participation in HGSFP. Thirdly, the study revealed the challenges of food vendors as untimely payment, insufficient funds, high cost of transportation, lack of food coolers and serving plates, high cost of food items in the market and insufficient supply of some products by the government. Based on the findings, the study suggested that the government should increase the funding of the HGSFP; government should ensure timely disbursement of funds to food vendors and should be encouraged to always source the products required for the programme within the local community to further boost the positive results already seen.

Keywords: Homegrown school feeding programme and wealth creation

1.0 Introduction

In the intricate tapestry of socio-economic development, the pursuit of growth and the quest for quality education stand as twin pillars, each indispensable to the realization of a thriving society. Recognizing the profound interdependence of these objectives, innovative initiatives have emerged to seamlessly integrate the realms of wealth creation and education. The synthesis of these two pillars is exemplified by the initiative known as the Homegrown School Feeding Programme (HGSFP), a transformative strategy aimed at fostering both economic growth and educational advancement. Homegrown school feeding links the development of agriculture and school feeding (Sitali, 2021). It is a school feeding arrangement where locally grown food is bought within a locality to feed school-aged children. The programme is a strategy adopted by many national governments such as the USA and Netherlands, among others (Oluwakemi & Ogunrinade, 2021). It also has the potentials to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, as it directly relates to SDGs 1 and 2 (end poverty and hunger). The HGSF program is also expected to facilitate inclusive and equitable quality education (SDG 4), contribute to girls' empowerment (SDG 5), provide decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), reduce inequality among countries (SDG 10), and, finally, aid in the formation of partnerships for sustainable development (World Food Programme (WFP), 2020).

Historically, the Netherlands was the first to incorporate the programme into national legislation in 1900. By the 1930s, both the United Kingdom and the United States had included school feeding as part of their national programs. Further, in the 1940s following World War II, the United States of America embarked on a school feeding programme in Austria as an initiative aimed at combating serious malnutrition in children (Oluwakemi & Ogunrinade, 2021; Tomlinson, 2007). Since then, school feeding programmes have been introduced in many nations around the world. In Nigeria,

the Federal Government passed the Universal Basic Education Act in 2004, which provided legislative support for the Homegrown School Feeding and the trial version was launched in 2005. However, the pilot lasted six months and due to lack of funding, inadequate monitoring and evaluation, lack of supporting infrastructure, and corruption, among others, many states abandoned the programme, with the exception of Osun and Kano states (National Homegrown School Feeding Programme, 2016). The programme was re-launched in 2016 as part of National Social Investment Programme (NSIP) of Nigerian government. Benue state began implementation of the programme in 2017 with a total enrolment of 463,979 pupils across the twenty local governments and six thousand, five hundred and twelve (6,512) cooks. The budgeted expenditure per child daily was one hundred naira (N100) amounting to the tune of N927,958,000 million expenditures per month (Benue State HGSFP, 2022).

Wealth creation is a key component of sustainable development, as it involves generating income and assets that can improve the quality of life for individuals and communities. In a similar vein, IMF (2003) argued that wealth creation is expressed in terms of income generation or, more widely, the creation of assets, both physical and human capital. Omona (2021) defined wealth creation activities as interventions aimed at establishing a system that facilitates effective national socioeconomic transformation, with a focus on increasing household incomes for poverty eradication and long-term development. Similarly, Umar (2021) sees wealth creation as the process by which an individual or state decides to invest in various wealth-generating business portfolios in order to increase its level of wealth.

The link between the Homegrown School Feeding Programme and wealth creation is rooted in its potential to generate income and employment opportunities within local communities. By sourcing food locally, the programme is expected to improve the demand for agricultural products, leading to increased production and sales for farmers. This, in turn, should contribute to the growth of the local economy, as farmers invest their income in various sectors such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure among others. According to Masset and Gelli (2013), homegrown school programme will not only promote primary education but also reduce poverty and create wealth in the community by improving local agricultural production, entrepreneurship, employment, and boosting other local economic activities. Similarly, Sumberg and Sabates- Wheeler (2010) stated that the programme is expected to stimulate local agricultural production, create jobs, and reduce high levels of poverty among local caterers and smallholder farmers in the community, ultimately improving the overall socio-economic condition of the local population. It is against this backdrop that this study examined the impact of homegrown school feeding programme on wealth creation in Benue state. The rest of this paper is organized as follows: section two presents literature review while section three presents methodology. Section four covers result and discussion of findings while section five offers conclusion and policy recommendations.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical framework

This study has its foundation on homegrown school feeding programme theory of change and functionalism theory. The HGSFP theory of change focused on three categories: students who need food, peasant farmers who produce food, and members of the community who work beyond gender lines and are tasked with preparing food, maintaining security, and transporting kids to school. The HGSF theory of Change proposes that the social safety nets and agricultural expansion advantages linked to homegrown school feeding will be strong enough to kickstart the development of agriculture and, by extension, rural living conditions in Sub-Saharan Africa (Devereux, Sabates-Wheeler, & Martinez, 2010). This implies that food vendors (caterers) are expected to buy locally sourced agricultural produce from smallholder farmers in the communities where Home Grown School Feeding takes place. This means that the programs enable food vendors, smallholder farmers, and health workers to increase their income and, eventually, create wealth through asset acquisition. The agricultural and economic growth advantages connecting with homegrown school feeding can be categorized into two groups: direct (resulting from food expenditure as well as improve income and marketing opportunities for food growers and vendors) or indirect (resulting from multiplier and spillover effects).

In the same vein functionalism theory sees the society as a system that connects components that work in harmony to maintain a balance state and social equilibrium. This finds application here because the homegrown school feeding programme as a policy is dependent on education, health and agriculture sectors among others to function effectively and efficiently. As the programme hires local women to work as food vendors in learning institutions collaborate with farmers to provide the required products to local food vendors, and to involve health workers to monitor the health of school children and ensure they receive a nutritious meal prepared in a sanitary manner each day, its success requires harmony and balance. The programme has beneficial spillover effects on other sectors showing the interconnectivity of the programme.

2.2 Empirical Review

The influence of Homegrown School Feeding Programme on academic performance in Nigeria was examined by (Solomon & Yusuf, 2022; Cletus, Habila, & Alfa, 2022; Agu, Ossai, Ogah, Agu, Akamike, Ugwu, Edwin, Ewenyi & Azuogu, 2023; Maitafsir & Kwari, 2022; Nkang & Ereh, 2021; Bala, Lawal, & Musa, 2021; Iyamu & Isizah, 2021). They found that homegrown school feeding programme improved enrolment, lessened dropout and absenteeism rates while improving academic performance among students. Similarly, empirical studies outside Nigeria also demonstrated that homegrown school feeding programme influence students' enrolment, retention, attendance, engagement in extracurricular activities and academic performance positively (Chahilu, Chemagosi, & Lusweti, 2022; Senesie, Sonda, Gassama, & Bangura, 2022; Wainaina, Momanyi & Mwalw'a, 2022; Azulirah, 2020). On the contrary Omar, Kaka and Kalli (2024) found that HGSF programme impacted the primary schools' pupils' dropout.

In a similar vein Achoba and Saliu (2023) as well as Musa (2021) found that homegrown school feeding programme had alleviated poverty State among participants in Rijau Local Government of Niger. Also, Barnabas, Agyemang, Zhllima, and Bavorova (2023) as well as Appollm and Braima (2021) in their studies on the effect of homegrown school feeding programme on agricultural production found positive relationships.

From the foregoing, the impact of homegrown school feeding programme on wealth creation has not been examined. As a result, extends the analysis from poverty reduction to assets requisition beyond basic needs. The possibility of wealth creation from the programme may make it a model for other development efforts by various stakeholder especially as more and more resources continue to be committed to similar endeavours. Having participated in the programme from 2017 to 2023, the time is sufficient to see the wealth creating impact of homegrown school feeding programme on the participants namely food vendors and farmers.

3.0 Methodology

A descriptive survey design was employed for the study. The design sufficed as it involved gathering data and systematically describing the typical features or facts about a certain community from a few people or items thought to be representative of the entire group. A sample size of 290 food vendors and 385 small holder farmers was determined using sample size calculator (https://www.calculator.net) and the Bowen 1964 population allocation formula in Mzelibe and Illogu (1999) was used to determine the allocation of respondents for each of the three local governments selected namely Kwande, Gboko and Otukpo. The simple random sampling was used in selecting respondents from each local government to avoid biasness. Primary data were used for the study and were collected with the use of a structured questionnaire.

3.1 Method of Data Analysis

The descriptive statistical methods such as tables, simple percentages and tables were used to summarize demographic data. The logit regression analysis as well as paired t-test were used to test the hypothesis. For accepting or rejecting hypotheses using logit regression, the following decision rules were used: the null hypothesis if the probability value of bi [p (bi) > critical value], which means that the estimate bi is not statistically significant at the 5% level of significance. the null hypothesis if the probability value of bi [p (bi) < critical value], which means that the estimate b1 is statistically significant at the 5% level of significance. The paired t-test was used to examine the mean difference in

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the number of assets acquired before and during participating in homegrown school feeding programme. The null hypothesis is that the mean difference is equal to zero while the alternative hypothesis is that the mean difference is not equal to zero. The alternative hypothesis is further categorized into three, viz: the mean difference is less than zero (Ha: mean(diff) ≠ 0), the mean difference is not equal to zero (Ha: mean(diff) != 0), and the mean difference is greater than zero (Ha: mean(diff)>0). In rejecting a null hypothesis, at least, two of the alternative hypotheses must be considered. The model for food vendors is stated as:

$$WC = f(AGE, FS, YWE, INC, SAV)$$

Where: WC = wealth creation (at least one asset during participation in HGSFP = 1, otherwise = 0), AGE = Age (in years), FS = family size (number), YWE = years of participation in the HGSFP (in years), INC = Income from HGSFP (naira) and SAV = savings (at least a little = 1, otherwise = 0).

While the model for farmers is stated as:

$$WC = f(AGE, FS, YWE, LS, LOS, SAV)$$

Where: WC = wealth creation (at least one asset during participation in HGSFP = 1, otherwise = 0), AGE = Age (in years), FS = family size (number), YWE = years of farm experience (in years), LS – land size (in hectares), LOS = level of sales (increase = 1, otherwise = 0), SAV = savings (at least a little = 1, otherwise = 0)

4.0 Results and Discussion of Findings

The research obtained data on socio-economic and demographic characteristics of food vendors and small holder farmers (respondents) in Benue state and is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Socio-Economic Characteristics	Food Vendors		Farmers	
	Frequency	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Age				
25 years and below	24	8.3	94	25.2
26 – 50 years	168	57.9	209	56.0
51 years above	98	33.8	70	18.8
Total	**290**	**100**	**373**	**100**
Sex				
Male	0	0	210	56.3
Female	290	100	163	43.7
Total	**290**	**100**	**373**	**100**
Marital Status				
Single	18	6.2	85	22.8
Married	168	57.9	208	55.8
Widow/widower	66	22.8	42	11.3
Divorced/separated	38	13.1	38	10.1
Total	**290**	**100**	**373**	**100**
Family Size				
< 5	112	38.6	107	28.7
6 – 10	97	33.4	133	56.7
11 – 15	51	17.6	96	25.7
>15	30	10.4	37	9.9
Total	**290**	**100**	**373**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2023

For food venders, Table 1 indicated that 8.3 percent of the food vendors were 25 years and below, 57.9 percent of the food vendors were within the age bracket of 26 years and 50 years while 33.8 percent of the food vendors were 51 years and above. This implies that majority of the food vendors fall within the productive age. Additionally, it revealed that all the food vendors were females. Again, Table 1 showed that majority (57.9 percent) of the sampled respondents are married while 6.2 percent are single. The remaining 13.1 percent and 22.8 percent of the sampled respondents were divorced/separated and widower/widow respectively. Furthermore, Table 1 presented the distribution of the sampled respondents by household size. The results indicated that majority (38.6 percent) of the food vendors have household size of 5 persons and below. About 33.4 percent of the sampled respondents had between 6 – 10 persons in their homes, 17.6 percent of the sampled respondents had between 11 – 15 persons in their homes, while 10.4 percent had a household size above 15 people respectively.

Similarly, for farmers, Table 1 indicated that 56.0 percent of the farmers were within the age bracket of 26 years to 50 years, 25.2 percent of the farmers were 25 years and below while 18.8 percent of the farmers were 51 years and above. This shows that majority of the farmers were within the productive age. Again, Table 1 revealed that 56.3 percent of the farmers were males while 43.7 percent were females. Moreso, Table 1 showed that majority (55.8 percent) of the farmers were married while 22.8 percent are single. The remaining 10.1 percent and 11.3 percent of the farmers were divorced/separated and widower/widow respectively. Finally, Table 1 presented the distribution of the farmers by household size. The results in the Table indicated that majority (56.7 percent) of the farmers have household size of between 6 – 10. About 25.7 percent of the farmers had between 11 – 15 persons in their homes, 28.7 percent had 5 persons and below while 9.9 percent had a household size of 15 persons and above respectively. The implication of this finding is that rural people's household sizes are always larger due to their reliance on family as a source of farm labour.

4.1 Effect of homegrown school feeding programme on wealth creation

The relationship between homegrown school feeding programme and wealth creation is shown in Table 2-6.

Table 2 Food Vendor's Monthly Income before and during HGSFP

INCOME	BEFORE HGSFP		DURING HGSFP	
	Frequency	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**
₦20,000 and below	42	14.5	0	0
₦20,001 – ₦40,000	91	31.4	20	6.9
₦40,001 – ₦60,000	50	17.2	34	11.7
₦60,001 – ₦80,000	61	21.0	83	28.6
₦80,001 – ₦100,000	36	12.4	98	33.8
₦100,001 and above	10	3.5	55	19.0
Total	**290**	**100**	**290**	**100**
Means	49406.90		84944.83	
Means Difference	35537.931			
t-test statistic (Prob.)	33.284 (0.000)			

Source: Field Survey, 2023

It is evident from Table 2 that before HGSFP 14.5% earned ₦20,000 and below but with HGSFP there is no income in that category. The percentage change from incomes between ₦20,001 and ₦40,000 as well as ₦40,001 and ₦60,000 before and during HGSFP is -0.78% and -0.32% respectively reflecting that many people moved out of these categories. While the percentage change from incomes between ₦60,001 and ₦80,000, ₦80,001 and ₦100,000 as well as ₦100,001 and above before and during HGSFP is 0.36%, 1.72% and 4.5% % respectively is indicative of increased incomes. The paired

t-test statistic result showed an average monthly income of ₦49,406.90 and ₦84,944.83 of food vendors before and during HGSFP respectively with the mean difference of ₦35,537.93. The result also revealed a t-test statistics value of 33.284 and probability value of 0.0000<0.05. The null hypothesis that the mean difference between the average monthly income before and during HGSFP is zero is rejected at 5% level of significance. The test of difference of means confirms this with a mean difference of ₦35,000 which is statistically significant, and the value interestingly corresponds to the minimum wage, howbeit coincidental. This finding is consistence with the findings of Achoba and Saliu (2023) and Iortswam (2023).

Table 3 Farmer's seasonal Income before and during the period of HGSFP

INCOME	BEFORE HGSFP		DURING HGSFP	
	Number of Respondents (Frequency)	Percentage (percent)	Number of Respondents (Frequency)	Percentage (percent)
₦20,000 and below	41	11.0	30	8.1
₦20,001 – ₦50,000	78	20.9	58	15.5
₦50,001 – ₦100,000	86	23.1	92	24.7
₦100,001 – ₦200,000	103	27.6	124	33.2
₦200,001 and above	65	17.4	69	18.5
Total	**373**	**100**	**373**	**100**
Means	114753.35		134146.35	
Means Difference	19393.003			
t-test statistic (Prob.)	5.716 (0.000)			

Source: Extractions from SPSS 27 Output

It is evident from Table 3 that the percentage change in farmers' incomes of N20,001 and below, as well as between N20,001 and N50,000 before and during HGSFP is -0.27% and -0.26% respectively reflecting that many people moved out of these categories of income streams. While the percentage change from incomes between N50,001 and N100,000, N100,001 and N200,000 as well as N200,001 and above before and during HGSFP is 0.07%, 0.20% and 0.06% % respectively is indicative of increased incomes among farmers. The paired t-test statistic result showed an average seasonal income of ₦114,753.35 and ₦134,146.35 of farmers before and during HGSFP respectively with the mean difference of ₦19,393. The result also revealed a t-test statistics value of 5.716 and probability value of 0.0000<0.05. The null hypothesis that the mean difference between the average seasonal income before and during HGSFP is zero is rejected at 5% level of significance. This implies that there is a significant increase in the seasonal income of farmers as a result of HGSFP. This finding is in line with the findings of Iortswam, (2023), Achoba and Saliu (2023) and Barnabas, et al (2023) who found that farmers who collaborated with food vendors to sell their goods saw an improvement in their income level.

Table 4 Assets acquired by Food Vendors before and during HGSFP

ASSETS	Food Vendors				Farmers			
	BEFORE HGSFP		DURING HGSFP		BEFORE HGSFP		DURING HGSFP	
	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
Bicycle/Motorcycle/Tricycle	71	24.5	94	32.4	103	27.6	116	31.1
Land and Property(ies)	123	42.4	128	44.1	284	76.1	297	79.6
Home Appliance(s) (Electronics)	174	60.0	214	73.8	309	82.8	320	85.8
Home Appliance(s) (non-electronics)	118	40.7	189	65.2	291	78.0	309	82.8
Farm and storage (Ajiagh)	256	88.3	264	91.0	342	91.7	355	95.2
Others	79	27.2	102	35.2	121	32.4	127	34.0
None	34	11.7	26	9.0	30	8.1	17	4.6
Means	0.4695		0.5296		0.5822		0.6051	
Means Difference	0.06010				0.02298			
t-test statistic (Prob.)	5.297 (0.000)				5.653 (0.000)			

Source: Extractions from SPSS 27 Output

Food vendors results in Table 4 shows that the percentage change from bicycle/motorcycle/tricycle, land and properties electronic home appliances, non-electronic home appliances, farming and storage (ajiagh) and others is 0.32%, 0.04%, 0.23%, 0.60%, 0.03%, and 0.29% indicating an increase in the purchase of the assets. While the percentage change from food vendors that do not acquired asset before and during HGSFP is -0.24% reflecting that many people moved out of these categories. The paired t-test statistic result showed an average assets acquisition of 0.4695 and 0.5296 by food vendors before and during HGSFP respectively with the mean difference of -0.06010. The result also revealed a t-test statistics value of 5.297 and probability value of $0.0000 < 0.05$. The null hypothesis that the mean difference between the average assets acquired before and during HGSFP is zero is rejected at 5% level of significance. This implies that there is a significant increase in the assets acquired by food vendors during HGSFP.

Farmers result results in Table 4 showed that the percentage change from bicycle/motorcycle/tricycle, land and properties electronic home appliances, non-electronic home appliances, farming and storage (ajiagh) and others is 0.13%, 0.05%, 0.04%, 0.06%, 0.04%, and 0.05% indicating an increase in the purchase of the assets. While the percentage change from farmers that do not acquired asset before and during HGSFP is -0.43% reflecting that many people moved out of this category. The paired t-test statistic result showed an average assets acquisition of 0.5822 and 0.6051 by farmers before and with the introduction of HGSFP respectively with the mean difference of 0.02298. The result also revealed a t-test statistics value of 5.653 and probability value of $0.0000 < 0.05$. The null hypothesis that the mean difference between the average assets acquired before and during HGSFP is zero is rejected at 5% level of significance. This implies that there is a significant increase in the assets acquired by farmers during the introduction HGSFP.

Table 4 Regression Results of Food Vendor Model

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	z-Statistic	Prob.
AGE	0.214189	0.726175	0.294955	0.7680
FS	0.146861	0.050320	2.918510	0.0035
YWE	0.029900	0.099541	0.300374	0.7639
INC	1.368615	0.644623	2.123125	0.0337
SAV	0.279619	0.560975	3.843476	0.0001
C	16.07032	6.430410	2.499113	0.0125

Source: Extracted from Eviews 10

Result presented in Table 5 showed that the coefficient of family size (FS) is positive (0.146861) and is statistically significant at 5 percent critical level. This implies that a one percent increase in the family size of the respondents will likely lead to 0.15% increase of wealth created by the respondents. This result conforms to apriori expectation. By implication, having a larger family size may imply more labour resources, which can be utilized in income-generating activities and contribute to wealth creation.

The coefficient of income (INC) is positive (1.368615) and is statistically significant at 5 percent critical level. This result conforms to apriori expectation. A one percent increase in the income of the respondents will likely lead to 1.37% increase of wealth created by the respondents This implies that the implementation of the HGSFP has had a positive impact on income and, subsequently, wealth creation. The increased monthly income of food vendors participating in the programme provides them with a steady source of income, allowing them to save more money and acquire assets. According to IMF (2003), when the income of people increased over time, it gives them the ability to acquire more assets which in turn creates wealth for them. This is in consonance with the findings of Iortswam, (2023), Achoba and Saliu (2023), Musa (2021), Nuwatuhaire and Ainomugisha (2020).

The coefficient of savings (SAV) is positive (0.279619) and is statistically significant at 5 percent critical level. This result conforms to apriori expectation. By implication, a percent increase in the savings of the respondents will likely lead to 0.28% increase of wealth created by the respondents This theoretically plausible. According to Harrod-Domar growth model savings equals investment. This implies that savings provides a financial safety net and can enable individuals to invest in income-generating opportunities, further contributing to wealth creation. This finding is in line with Mbugua (2018). This finding is at variance with the findings of Nuwatuhaire and Ainomugisha (2020).

The coefficient of age is positive (0.214189) but it is not statistically significant at 5% significance level. This implies that a one percent increase in the age of the respondents will likely lead to 0.21% increase of wealth created by the respondents. As individuals age, they may have had more time to accumulate knowledge, develop expertise, and build networks that contribute to their financial success enabling them to acquire more assets that will lead to wealth creation. Furthermore, the results indicated that the coefficient of years of participation in the HGSFP (YWE) is positive (0.0299) and is not statistically significant at 5 percent critical level. This result conforms to apriori expectation. This implies that a one percent increase in the years of experience of HGSFP of the respondents will likely lead to 0.03% increase of wealth created by the respondents. By implication, as individuals gain more work experience, they understand their job and perform better which could lead to more tasks that will increase their income. This higher income provides individuals with more resources to save, invest, and accumulate wealth. This finding agrees with the finding of Asikhia (2016).

Table 6 Regression Results of Farmers Model

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	z-Statistic	Prob.
AGE	-0.020758	0.012521	-1.657951	0.0973
FS	0.237611	0.043698	5.437518	0.0000
YWE	0.029819	0.039442	0.756021	0.4496
LS	0.118939	0.036626	3.247401	0.0012
LOS	0.352285	0.486668	2.105892	0.0352
SAV	1.274827	0.295959	4.307446	0.0000
C	1.676689	0.705292	2.377297	0.0174

Source: Extracted from Eviews 10

Result presented in Table 6 showed that the coefficient of family size (FS) is positive (0.237611) and is statistically significant at 5 percent critical level. This result conforms to apriori expectation. Thus, a one percent increase in the family size of the respondents will likely lead to 0.24% increase of

wealth created by the respondents. This implies that, with more family members, there is a greater workforce available to engage in farming activities, which can increase productivity and output. This can result in higher income and ultimately contribute to wealth creation.

Land cultivated size is link to productivity. The coefficient of land cultivated size (LS) is positive (0.118939) and is statistically significant at 5 percent critical level. This result conforms to apriori expectation. This implies that a one percent increase in the land size cultivated by the respondents will likely lead to 0.12% increase of wealth created by the respondents. This suggests that the size of land cultivated has a positive impact on wealth creation and increase agricultural productivity. Farmers who cultivate larger land sizes are more likely to generate higher incomes and accumulate wealth. This finding aligns to the finding of Achoba and Saliu (2023) who stated that HGSFP prioritize the use of locally sourced food items thereby increasing local agricultural production and yields.

Sales represent the primary source of revenue for farmers. The coefficient of level of sales (LOS) is positive (0.352285) and is statistically significant at 5 percent critical level. This result conforms to apriori expectation. This implies that a one percent increase in the sales of the respondents will likely lead to 0.35% increase of wealth created by the respondents. By implication, higher sales indicate increased demand for agricultural products, which could lead to higher profits and income for farmers. This, in turn, allows them to save more money and invest in assets, contributing to their overall wealth creation. This finding aligns to the finding of Barnabas, et al (2023), Achoba and Saliu (2023), Musa (2021), Nuwatuhaire and Ainomugisha (2020).

The coefficient of savings (SAV) is positive (1.274827) and is statistically significant at 5 percent critical level. This result conforms to apriori expectation. By implication a one percent increase in the savings of the respondents will likely lead to 1.27% increase of wealth created by the respondents. This theoretically plausible. According to Harrod-Domar growth model savings equals investment. This implies that savings provides a financial safety net and can enable individuals to invest in income-generating opportunities, further contributing to wealth creation. This finding is in line with Mbugua (2018). This finding is at variance with the findings of Nuwatuhaire and Ainomugisha (2020)

The coefficient of age is negative (-0.020758) and is not statistically significant at 5% significance level. This implies that a one percent increase in the age of the respondents will likely lead to 0.02% decrease of wealth created by the respondents. With age, individuals may experience physical limitations that hinder their ability to engage in labour-intensive agricultural activities. This could limit their income-generating potential and wealth creation. Additionally, Older individuals may have financial responsibilities such as supporting children or caring for elderly parents. These obligations can strain financial resources and limit the ability to save and invest for personal wealth creation.

The results indicated that the coefficient of years of work experience (YWE) is positive (0.029819) and is not statistically significant at 5 percent critical level. This result conforms to apriori expectation. This implies that a one percent increase in the years of farm experience of the respondents will likely lead to 0.03% increase of wealth created by the respondents. By implication, having more years of work experience can provide individuals with a deeper understanding of farming techniques, market dynamics, and agricultural practices, which can lead to improved productivity and increased profitability. With the accumulation of experience, farmers can make better decisions regarding crop selection, land management, and resource allocation, thereby maximizing their output and income potential. Furthermore, individuals with more years of experience may have established networks and relationships within the agricultural sector, which can provide access to valuable resources such as credit facilities, training programs, and market information. These resources can further enhance productivity and income generation, contributing to wealth creation. This finding agrees with the finding of Asikhia (2016).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings, it is concluded that income generated as a result of participating in HGSFP spurs wealth creation. This implies that as participants earned more income from the programme, it has shown potential to improve their saving habit which provides a financial safety net

and enable them to invest in income-generating opportunities and thus, create wealth. There was also a significant increase in the assets acquired by participant as a result of the introduction of the programme but the magnitude differs among food vendors and farmers respectively. Thus, the study recommended that:

i.   The government should consider increasing the allocation and funding of the National Homegrown School Feeding Policy because it has shown promise to support wealth creation in rural communities. This is necessary because the potentials shown by the programme can be realized if earnings are not completely eroded by rising cost of food and transportation.

ii. The timely disbursement of funds by the government should be improved so that cooks receive funds in a manner that allows them to plan and ensure that the feeding is run smoothly without breaks during school weeks.

iii. Participants of HGSFP should be enlightened on the importance of saving as this provides a financial safety net and enables investment in income-generating opportunities that leads to wealth creation.

iv. Since the study found high cost of products as a hinderance for the effectiveness of HGSFP, the government should provide avenues for grants and soft loans to farmers to subsidies food productions.

v.   Since the study found that not all products used for HGSFP were not sourced within the local community, the HGSFP monitoring, and implementation team should come up with a plan to check for compliance and reward same to encourage others to follow suit.

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