

TEACHERS' PERCEIVED INFLUENCE OF HOME-GROWN SUPPLEMENTARY FEEDING PROGRAM ON READINESS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS' IN OSUN STATE

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ABSTRACT

The homegrown supplementary feeding program entails a structured feeding initiative aimed at providing balanced daily meals for school children attending public primary schools within a given community. The provision of adequate nutrition aims at promotion of good health recognized as constituting the foundation of proper growth of the primary school children. This study investigated teachers' perceived influence of home-grown supplementary feeding program on readiness of primary school pupils' in Osun State. The objectives of the study were to: (i) examine if teachers perceived home-grown supplementary school feeding programme as influencing pupils' enrolment and (ii) pupils comportment in Osun State. The descriptive research design of survey type was adopted for the study. The population of this study consists of the head teachers and teachers in Osun State. Multi-stage sampling techniques consisting of purposive, proportionate and simple random sampling techniques was used to select a sample size of 454 respondents. A researcher-designed validated questionnaire was used for data collection. A reliability coefficient (r) of 0.78 was obtained through split-half method. Data collection was conducted by researcher and research assistants. Inferential statistic of Chi-square (χ^2) was used to analyzed the formulated null hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23.0. The findings of the study were that: teachers significantly perceived home-grown supplementary school feeding programme as influencing pupil's enrolment in Osun State. (cal. χ^2 value = 794.90 > crit. χ^2 value = 16.92, df = 9 @ = 0.05) and ; teachers significantly perceived home-grown supplementary school feeding programme as influencing pupils' comportment in Osun State. (cal. χ^2 value = 256.89 > crit. χ^2 value = 16.92, df = 9 @ = 0.05). The study concluded that teachers perceived home-grown supplementary feeding programme to promote pupils enrolment and class composure in Osun State. The researcher recommended that variety of free foods should be provided for pupil's in school to encourage more enrolment and improve the attention span of the pupils in school.

Keywords: teachers; perceived-influence; home-grown; readiness; pupils

INTRODUCTION

Home-grown supplementary feeding program connotes a feeding plan designed to provide balanced diet meal for school children daily who are attending public primary schools within a community. Pupils readiness is when a child is ready and prepared to learn and assimilate better after eating a balanced diet.

‘School feeding program is simply the provision of food for children through school’ (Oyefade, 2014). Different countries have one or a combination of the two feeding modalities in place for various objectives: the two modalities are; school meals and take-home ration where, families are given food if their children attend school. But in the case of Osun State School Feeding Program it is school meal that is being practiced (Oyeniran, 2014).

Child psychologists have said that growth and development of a child depends among other things on nutrition of mother before and after birth (Psacharopouls, 1998). ‘Nutrition is the process through which the body makes use of the nutrients in food. The need for adequate nutrition through the early years of a child cannot be overemphasized. Inadequate nutrition before birth and in the first ten years of life can seriously interfere with brain development and lead to such neurological and behavioral disorders as learning disabilities and mental retardation’ (Oyeniran, 2014).

The provision of adequate nutrition aims at promotion of good health recognized as constituting the foundation of proper growth of these children (MoEST, 1998). ‘Children’s fastest growth, in physical, mental and social emotional characteristics takes place during this age and children are found to be most vulnerable to environmental influences if they lack necessary adequate nutrients during this age. More traumatizing is that, growth deficiencies that occur during primary years are difficult and sometimes impossible to reverse. Following this argument then, attention to raise school enrolment and quality due to its importance, should provide numerous opportunities focusing in raising the nutrition, health and emotional stability of 1 – 10 years age group. An improved nutrition and health are seen as necessary conditions for increasing enrolment, retention, learning achievements and emotional stability in schoolers’ (MoEST, 1998).

Jukes, Drake and Bundy (2008) asserted that a school feeding initiative that offers locally produced and procured food within a nation to the fullest extent feasible. The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) has partnered with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), and other collaborators to devise a strategy for HGSSFP. ‘School feeding programmes constitutes critical interventions that have been introduced in many developed and developing countries of the world to address the issue of poverty, stimulate school enrolment and enhance pupils’ performance and emotional stability’ (Jukes, Drake & Bundy), about 40 percent of them are from Africa. ‘Providing school meals is therefore vital in nourishing children. Parents are motivated to send their children to school instead of keeping them at home to work or care for siblings’ (Akanbi, 2013). The inception of the school feeding program can be traced back to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) initiative and subsequent conferences convened by African leaders. These conferences aimed to address various issues including peace, security, sound economic policies, political stability, and effective corporate governance, all with the goal of enhancing Africa's appeal as a destination for foreign investment.

Several of these advancements encompass the 'New Partnership for African Development,' which, as outlined in the blueprint, constitutes a commitment by African leaders. It is rooted in a shared vision and resolute collective conviction to eliminate poverty and propel their nations towards sustainable growth and development. Concurrently, it aims to actively engage in the global economy and political arena. Also, the 'Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme' and the 'Millennium Hunger Task Force' amongst others were initiatives which were designed to link school feeding to agricultural development through the purchase and use of locally produced food (Jukes, Drake & Bundy, 2008).

Nigeria happened to be one of twelve (12) pilot countries invited to implement the programme. Thus far, Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, and Mali have initiated the implementation of the school feeding program. Consequently, the Federal Government introduced the Universal Basic Education Act in 2004, which furnished the necessary legislative support for the implementation of the Home-Grown School Feeding and Health Programme. In alignment with the goals of the Universal Basic Education program and recognizing the pivotal role of nutrition, the Federal Ministry of Education launched the Home-Grown School Feeding and Health Programme in 2005. (Federal Ministry of Education, 2007).

The primary objective of the School Feeding Programme in Nigeria is to alleviate hunger and malnutrition among schoolchildren while promoting the attainment of Universal Basic Education. Osun was one of the twelve (12) states chosen to initiate a phased-pilot rollout of the program. Despite the launch of the Home-Grown School Feeding Supplementary and Health Programme, it did not garner significant attention until a change in government occurred in the state in November 2010. Following this, the new administration, led by Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola, convened an education summit chaired by Professor Wole Soyinka. The summit's objective was to critically examine the problems hampering growth and progress of education in the state and to proffer workable solution (Federal Ministry of Education, 2014).

At the conclusion of the Summit, recommendations were put forth aimed at revitalizing education in Osun State. Among these recommendations was the transformation of the School Feeding Programme. Consequently, a thorough review of the existing school feeding program was conducted. The Programme was re-packaged and christened "Osun Elementary School Feeding and Health Programme O' meals". 'It was formally launched in the State on 30th April, 2012 with the pupils in Grades 1 – 3 of the Public Primary Schools in the State being fed with one meal per day' (Federal Ministry of Education, 2014).

Statement of the Problem

Nutrition is recognized as paramount in facilitating the physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development of children. Food is acknowledged as vital for sustaining life and empowering individuals, while also playing a significant role in supporting various facets of child development. The effectiveness of this support is contingent upon the correct quantity and quality of food provided. (Tomlinson, 2007). This reality has not been fully embraced within primary schools in Osun State. Many institutions in this region enroll children from disadvantaged households who are significantly affected by hunger and malnutrition stemming from their impoverished socio-economic conditions. 'As observed globally, children often exhibit a reluctance to consume breakfast, and sending them home for lunch does not address this issue adequately. Furthermore, a considerable number of these children

lack assurance of mid-day meals due to their disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds'. (Oyefade, 2014).

'School feeding program has been seen as a great means of promoting the health status of children as supplements for their inadequately nutritious food taken at home. It was deduced that school feeding can promote readiness and interest of pupils towards learning as balanced diet is necessary because it builds, protects, and repairs the body. Human being requires sufficient food for sustainability, functionality' (Del Rosso, 2009). This is particularly crucial during the early stages of human development and becomes even more critical during primary school years.

The issue of malnutrition and its impact on brain development, physical health, and intellectual functioning carries significant implications. Researcher found that as a result of poverty, many pupils in Osun State end up experiencing stunted growth and development, which be extension affect their readiness to grow. Besides, researcher also found that many children are not being properly fed of which expose them to diseases, infections and emotional frustration than well fed children and all this affect readiness of pupils in class in the sense that they will not be able to concentrate in activities and will be tired, irritable and lethargic,. All the aforementioned problems are what prompted the researcher to investigate teachers' perceived influence of home-grown supplementary feeding program on readiness of primary school pupils' in Osun State.

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses are formulated and will be tested

1. Teacher will not significantly perceived home-grown supplementary school feeding programme as influence pupil's enrolment in Osun State.
2. Teacher will not significantly perceived home-grown supplementary feeding programme as influence pupil's comportment in Osun State.

RESEARCH METHOD

For this study, a descriptive research design of survey type was employed. The population of this study consists of the head teachers and teachers in Olorunda Local Government Area of Osun State. The population of all the head teachers and teachers are six hundred and eighty (680). (Olorunda Local Government Education Authority Igbona, Oshogbo, 2019). Multistage sampling techniques of purposive, proportionate and simple random sampling techniques was use to draw four hundred and fifty-four (454) respondents.

A researcher's developed questionnaire was used for data collection. The questionnaire consisted of two sections that contains items which the respondents ticked for the study. A four-point Likert type rating scale with the alternatives of strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) was adopted. The instrument was validated by three experts in the Department of Health Promotion and Environmental Health Education, University of Ilorin. The reliability of the instrument was also achieved through split-half method of reliability by administering the validated questionnaire to a similar respondent of the study in Ila-Orangun Local Government Area in Osun State and subjected to Spearman Brown Prophecy Formula correlation coefficient and the instrument yielded 0.78 correlation coefficient. The researcher collected the data personally together with three research assistants. The data obtained sorted, coded and analyse using appropriate statistical

analysis. Inferential statistic of Chi-square was used to tested the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

Hypothesis One: Will home-grown supplementary school feeding programme influence pupils' enrolment as perceive by teachers in Osun State

Table 1. Analysis show influence of home-grown feeding programme on pupils enrolment

S/N	ITEMS Remarks	SA	A	D	SD	Df	Crit. χ^2	Cal. χ^2
1.	The feeding programme improve the enrolment of the pupil's	268 (78.8)	69 (20.3)	3 (0.9)	0 (0)			
2.	The feeding programme encourages parents to bring their child to school	262 (77.1)	75 (22.1)	3 (0.9)	0 (0)			
						9	16.92	717.37
						Ho		
3.	Meal given to pupils during break encourages other pupils to come to school	257 (75.6)	80 (23.5)	3 (0.9)	0 (0)			Rejected
4.	The feeding programme increase the pupils interest in school	236 (69.4)	103 (30.3)	1 (0.3)	0 (0)			

Level of Significance = 0.05; N = 340

Table shows the result of hypothesis 1 calculated chi-square value of 717.37 is greater than the critical value of 16.92 (cal. χ^2 val > tab. χ^2 val) with the degree of freedom of 9 at 0.05 level of significance. Hypothesis one was therefore rejected. This implies that home-grown supplementary school feeding programme significantly promotes pupil's enrolment as perceived by teachers in Osogbo metrolis, Osun State.

Hypothesis Two: Teacher will not significantly perceived home-grown supplementary school feeding programme as influencing pupils' comportment in Osun State.

Table 2. Analysis show influence of home-grown supplementary feeding on pupils comportment

S/N	ITEMS Remarks	SA	A	D	SD	Df	Crit. χ^2	Cal. χ^2
1.	The feeding programme makes students to be well behaved in class	164 (48.2)	171 (50.3)	5 (1.5)	0 (0)			
2.	The feeding programme	163	176	1	0			

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brings about stability among the primary school pupils	(47.9)	(51.8)	(0.3)	(0)	9	16.92	256.89	Ho Rejected
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S/N	ITEMS Remarks	SA	A	D	SD	Df	Crit. x ²	Cal. x ²
3.	The meal programme enhances the pupil's physical growth and mental balance in class	179 (52.6)	160 (47.1)	1 (0.3)	0 (0)			
4.	The meal given to pupils to eat during break calms the students while in class	183 (53.8)	153 (45.0)	4 (1.2)	0 (0)			

Level of Significance = 0.05; N = 340

Table 2 shows the result of hypothesis two calculated chi-square value of 256.89 is greater than the critical value of 16.92 (cal. x² val > tab. x² val) with the degree of freedom of 9 at 0.05 level of significance. Hypothesis two was therefore rejected. This implies that teacher significantly perceive home-grown supplementary school feeding programme as influencing pupil's comportment Osun State.

Discussion of Finding

Hypothesis 1: revealed that home-grown supplementary school feeding programme significantly influence pupil's enrolment as perceived by teachers in Osogbo metropolis, Osun State. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Oyefade, (2014) who discovered that 'the decision to enroll a child in school and, thereafter, for the child to attend regularly is influenced by many factors. These include the perceived value of education, the availability of employment opportunities, the direct and indirect cost of schooling and the availability and quality of school facilities. Food incentives offered to students such as school meals compensate parents for direct educational costs. Also, several studies have found a strong relationship between education and poverty, particularly inequality'. The poor are heavily deprived ad so are their children. Oyefade (2014), highlighted 'several factors with significant impact on many dimensions of poverty on school attendance and education quality, particularly early childhood malnutrition, deprivation based on gender and income inequality tend to be responsible'. The researcher is of the opinion that since the majority of the teachers perceived home-grown supplementary school feeding programme to improve pupil's enrolment in school. Effort should be put in place to ensure regular provision of the food.

Hypothesis 2: revealed that teacher significantly perceived home-grown supplementary school feeding programme as influencing pupil's comportment in Osun State. This finding aligns with the results of Vermeersch and Kremer (2004), who also conducted a field study in western Kenyan preschools between 2000 and 2002 to assess the impacts of a school feeding program on school participation and achievement. In their study, preschoolers, defined as children aged 4 to 6 who lived within walking distance of the school, were examined. They observed that children in the treatment group participated 35.9 percent of the time, while those in the comparison (control) group participated 27.4 percent of the time, a statistically significant difference (Vermeersch & Kremer, 2004). The program increased participation among both children who were previously enrolled (referred to as the intensive margin) and children who would have attended school even without the program (referred to

as the extensive margin).The researcher is of the opinion that majority of the teacher perceived home-grown supplementary school feeding programme to improve pupil's comportment while learning in class.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that:

1. Many pupil are now enrolled in school as a result of home-grown supplementary school feeding programme in Osogbo metropolis, Osun State.
2. Teacher perceived home-grown supplementary school feeding programme encourages pupil's comportment in Osun State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher made the following recommendations:

1. Home-grown supplementary school feeding programme should be made readily available in order to promote pupil's enrollment
2. Home-grown supplementary school feeding programme should continue to provide balanced diet to encourage pupil's comportment in class.

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