

INFLUENCE OF HOMEGROWN SCHOOL FEEDING ON PRIMARY SCHOOLS' PUPILS DROPOUTS IN JIGAWA STATE

¹Omar Babale Adamu, ²Prof. Kaka Waziri Bukar and ³Dr. Kalli Alkali Y. Gazali
Ph.D. Students, ^{1,2,3}Yobe State University Damaturu, Yobe State, Nigeria.

Correspondence: Omar Babale Adamu, Email: umarulfaruku@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of Homegrown School Feeding Programme on Primary Schools Pupils' Dropout in Jigawa State, Nigeria. The two objectives of the study were to: examined the influence of Homegrown School Feeding Programme on Primary Schools Pupils' Dropout in Jigawa State and factors hinders effective implementation of the programme in the state. Data for the study were obtained from 375 sampled primary schools teachers using structured 5-point Likert scale. Mean and percentage were to analyse the data collected, two research questions were answered. The result of the study was HGSF programme has inversely impacted the primary schools' pupils' dropout .and the programme was facing implementation challenges of inadequate financial and human resources for programme implementation, delay in vendors payments and inadequate supervision and monitoring.

INTRODUCTION

The Home-Grown School Feeding Programme is a proponent of Social Safety Net that provides food in lower primary schools with aims to attract children to school, improve their attendance and minimize dropouts among others. The Home-Grown School Feeding Programme is an incentive for vulnerable families to invest in children's education and encourages poor households to send children to school and helps to keep them there.

The National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme is a model of School feeding that is designed to provide children in schools with safe, diverse, and nutritious food, sourced locally from smallholders. A school feeding programme can be considered as 'home-grown' even if only a proportion of food is purchased locally from smallholder farmers, provided that local purchases are designed to support and foster local agricultural and food markets and that these objectives are taken into consideration during programme design and implementation, and institutionalized in related policies and regulations (Muema & Mutegi 2021).

The Nigerian School Feeding Programme termed the National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme is a government-led programme that aims to deliver a cost-effective school feeding programme using food that is locally grown by smallholder farmers. Children benefit from a hot nutritious balanced school meal which reduces hunger and improves education outcomes; farmers also benefit from improved access to school feeding markets and communities. The benefit includes new catering, processing, and food handling jobs. It brings a multiplier effect that will spur economic activities. (Masset, 2022).

The traced the emergence of school feeding programmes to 1900 the Netherlands became the first country to move the programme to a new level of incorporating school meals into national legislation. By the 1930s, the United Kingdom and the United States had also instituted the school feeding programme as part of their national programmes. The Federal Government of Nigeria came up with the Universal Basic Education Act in 2004, which provided the enabling legislative backing for the execution of the Home-Grown School Feeding Programme. Towards the realization of the objectives of the Universal Basic Education programme, the Federal Ministry of Education launched the Home-Grown School Feeding Programme in 2005.

The overall goal of the School Feeding Programme in Nigeria is to reduce hunger and malnutrition among school children and enhance the achievement of Universal Basic Education, with the objectives following:

1. School Enrolment and Completion:

The programme aims to improve the enrolment of primary school children in Nigeria and reduce the current dropout rates from primary school which is estimated at 30%.

2. Child Nutrition and Health: The programme aims to address the poor nutrition and health status of many children and thereby also improve learning outcomes.

3. Local Agricultural Production: Linking the programme to local agricultural production has direct economic benefits and can potentially benefit the entire community as well as the children. The programme aims to stimulate local agricultural production and boost the income of farmers by creating a viable and ready market via the school feeding programme.

4. Creating Jobs and Improving Family and State Economy:

The first funds were disbursed in January 2017 to five states: Anambra, Ebonyi, Ogun, Osun, and Oyo. By August 2017, a total of 14 states had begun the national HGSF programme and the federal government had spent 6,205 million Naira on implementation and claims that 51% of the targeted 5.5 million students are being fed (Oluwole, 2017).

The Concept of School Dropout is defined simply as not attending school during the legal compulsory education age – which, at the time, included all children and youths between 6 and 15 years of age. This had a twofold limitation. On the one hand, it fostered a dichotomous perspective on the phenomenon, focussing attention only on those who had already left school and diverting it from the education and training system; on the other hand, by focussing only on a narrow age group, it failed to highlight the importance education and training after normal schooling age (Álvares, & Pedro 2014).

School dropout definitions into two categories: formal definitions; and functional definitions. Formal school dropout definitions rely heavily on the concept of legal compulsory education. These definitions may include the reference to a level of education, but this usually is an accessory: the core of the definition is either stated in terms of age or the number of years that the individual spends in the education system. This in turn is strongly associated with the legal definition of compulsory education. Functional definitions, in turn, aim to take into consideration the context in which the dropout occurs and seek to have in perspective the consequences of such dropout at the level of the future biographical course of the individual. As such, it can be seen as related to an idea of “minimum schooling” i.e., a basic level of qualification seen as necessary for an individual's successful social and professional integration. For example, in Nigeria there are age bracket for every stage of schooling, a child must be within that age bracket to be considered into the designated schools. (Álvares, & Pedro 2014).

Statement of the Problem

Empirical studies also reveal that School Feeding Programmes indeed have a significant positive impact on primary pupils' performance. Such studies suggest HGSFs are effective in encouraging school enrolment, enhancing class attendance, and lowering student dropouts. On the contrary, few other studies reveal there is no observable impact of the School Feeding Programme on school enrolment. The Federal Government of Nigeria invested large amount on the HGSF programme This study, therefore, took account of these arguments and assessed the significance of a school feeding Programme in managing primary school pupils' dropout.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were to assess the relationship of the National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme on:

1. Primary School Pupils' Dropout in Jigawa State, Nigeria.
2. Assess the challenges of implementation of HGSF programme in Jigawa State

Research Questions

The study answered two research questions:

1. How does the National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme affect Primary School Pupils' School Dropout in Jigawa State, Nigeria?
2. What are the challenges of implementation of HGSF programme in Jigawa State?

Significance of the Study

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The study assessed the influence of the National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme on Basic Education pupils' Survival and School Dropout in Jigawa state. The area to be covered includes the relationship between the of National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme and school dropout, in Jigawa state, Nigeria. The study covers primary school students in Primary 1-3 for the period 2016 to 2022, and teachers were considered as unit of analysis.

Literature Review

The effects of school dropout at individual and societal levels are multiple and widely studied. Leaving the educational and training system without reaching a certain level of qualification strongly limits an individual's range of possibilities in life. In terms of professional career, it leads to integration into less qualified employment segments characterized by low salaries, a disproportionally high risk of precariousness and unemployment and weak perspectives of mobility. School dropout also inhibits full participation in community life, either directly – due to deficits in interpretation and expression skills, speech organization, critical capacity, etc. – or indirectly, through the effects of the self-image of precariousness and low incomes in a society where employment and consumption are central identity elements. In sum, leaving school prematurely implies disproportionally higher risks of poverty and social exclusion throughout an individual's life (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2018).

Machocho (2011), examined the constraints hindering the effective management of the school feeding programme in Kenya. The study made use of a descriptive survey research design, targeting all 88 primary schools in Kathonzwani District in Kenya, in 48 schools that benefit from home-grown school feeding programmes and 40 that do not benefit. It found that HGSFP had a positive impact on both access to education and retention of pupils in schools. The revealed that HGSFP supported schools achieved greater pupils' enrolment and fewer dropouts than the control schools over the years. It emerged that the root cause of dropouts was hunger which addressed by the HGSFP, checked the dropout rates. It, therefore, recommended that: the government should ensure that there is a proper and regular feeding programme implementation; adequate and timely provision of funds for the feeding programmes and ensure the food is sufficient for the schools as well as the pupils; the government should also be prepared for unforeseen and planned circumstances such as inflation, and scarcity. The uniqueness of the current study is that: it was conducted in Jigawa State Nigeria in 2023 with a wider scope and used explorative mixed research design instead of the quasi-experiment used Machocho in 2011 in Kathonzwani District in Kenya.

Dheressa (2020), in a study titled Education in Focus: Impacts of School Feeding Program on School Participation: A Case Study in Dara Woreda of Sidama Zone, Southern Ethiopia. The study investigated the impact School Feeding Program on school enrolment, class attendance, and student drop-out patterns among primary school children in Dara *Woreda* of Sidama Zone, Southern Ethiopia. Data were collected from 102 households as well as 17 selected individual stakeholders. Household Questionnaire, Key Informant Interviews and Observation were the methods employed to collect the data. The quantitative data have been analysed using mean, proportion, independent samples test and bivariate correlation techniques, whereas the qualitative data are analysed along with the quantitative results. The study found no significant positive impact of the School Feeding Program on any of the three school participation indicators (enrolment, attendance and drop-out), The result also showed that the major factors affecting school enrolment are the demand for the

cost of schooling, availability of school, teaching quality and school infrastructure, distance to school, the availability of food incentives and safety concerns. The study recommended that the School Feeding Programme's nutritional and economic values should be improved to significantly enhance community participation.

Atobatel and Okewale (2021), observed that international organizations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations International Children's Emergency Funds (UNICEF), the World Bank and other stakeholders are making herculean efforts to ensure that the spate of hunger is reduced in the world. The study examined the effect of the school feeding programme on the educational system in the Ijebu-Ode Local Government Area of Ogun State. The study relied on primary sources with the use of questionnaires and interviews to gather information from the respondents in the Ijebu-Ode Local Government Area. The Partial Least Square technique was used to analyse the data garnered from the field. The study revealed that the home-grown school feeding programme does affect the educational system in Ijebu-Ode except it is accompanied by massive infrastructure. He further recommended that the government and the stakeholders should ensure that this programme is monitored to the letter so that low-quality food will not be served to the pupils.

The study of Atobatel and Okewale (2021), examined the effect of the school feeding programme on the educational system in the Ijebu-Ode Local Government Area of Ogun State with the use of questionnaires and interviews for data collection and the Partial Least Square technique for data analysis. while this study was explorative mixed design conducted in Jigawa State Nigeria in 2023, data was collected using questionnaire, FGD and documents review, multistage sampling technique to sampled of 375 teachers as respondents and PPMC was adopted to determine the extent of relationship of HGSF programme on primary schools' dropout.

Elisabetta, Gelli, Adamba, Osei-Akoto, and Alderman (2023) in their study on Food for Thought? Experimental Evidence on the Learning Impacts of a Large-Scale School Feeding Program found that: There is limited experimental evidence on the effects of large-scale, government-led interventions on human capital in resource-constrained settings. They reported results from a randomized trial of the government of Ghana's school feeding. After two years, the program led to moderate average increases in math and literacy standardized scores among pupils in treatment communities and to larger achievement gains for girls and disadvantaged children. Improvements in child schooling, cognition, and nutrition constituted suggestive impact mechanisms, especially for educationally disadvantaged groups. The program combined equitable human capital accumulation with social protection, contributing to the "learning for all" sustainable development agenda.

Gelli, Espejo, Shen, and Kristjansson (2014), in their work "Putting Together Aggregating Impact of School Feeding Programme" found that School-feeding is an important intervention to attract children to school and augment their learning. The benefits of school feeding cover several domains. Key to the overall assessment of these benefits is understanding how different implementation models compare to each other and other interventions with similar aims and objectives. Herein, we outline two approaches to aggregating outcomes of school feeding. One involves a discreet choice experiment to derive utility scores combining outcomes into one measure. The other focuses on quality-adjusted school days as a measure that encompasses the varied benefits of school feeding. The discrete choice experiment offers a robust method to integrate utility for different benefits. However, it necessitates a complex design. The quality-adjusted school days method has greater simplicity. Different interventions that aim to foster learning could be meaningfully compared when developed. The study by Gelli, Espejo, Shen, and Kristjansson 2014 examined the effect of school feeding programme in using quasi-experimental design while this study is an explorative mixed study conducted in 2023 in Jigawa State.

Olatunya, Isinkaye and Olatunya (2015), The study assessed the school meal practices and nutritional status of children in two different settings in Ekiti State, Southwest Nigeria. All the school children drawn from six primary schools from these two distinct settings were studied. The 2007 WHO Anthropometrics Reference values were used to compare the anthropometric parameters of

the children and their school meal practices assessed with a questionnaire. Results: A total of 560 pupils comprising 247(44.1%) and 313(55.9%) from rural and urban settings were studied, respectively. The overall prevalence of stunting, wasting and underweight were 12.3%, 19.1% and 12.1% for children aged five years or less while 22.8%, 6.8% and 1.9% of the older children were thin, overweight, and obese, respectively. In all, rural children were more stunted (28.6%vs 4.8%) and underweight (26.2% vs 5.5%) $p < 0.001$ while urban children were more obese (4.9% vs 0.8%). Nutrition demonstration classes were not given in any school. Most pupils 71.9%) bought their school lunch from shops near their school premises. The lunch packs brought from home were predominantly carbohydrate-based staples, concluding that both the nutritional status and school meal practices of children in the study areas were poor. There is a need for stakeholders to stem the tide.

According to Desalegn, Gebremedhin, and Stoecker (2022), the Home-grown School Feeding Program (HGSFP) is a model designed to provide school meals to students using foods sourced from local markets, aiming to address hunger and food insecurity problems among school children in Ethiopia. The study aimed to explore the successes and challenges of the HGSFP in the Sidama Region, Southern Ethiopia. A total of sixteen FGDs and twenty-one in-depth interviews were conducted in eight schools. Purposive sampling was used to include study participants based on their potential relevance in delivering in-depth information. The findings of the study showed that the HGSF programme was successful in improving the class attendance and academic performance of school children. In addition, the program contributes to saving the parents' money and time because of the food provided. SFP challenges, lack of clean water, delay in ration delivery, poor-quality food provision, inadequate amount of food, inadequate of infrastructure for the programme, and inadequate of training in sanitation and hygiene for cooks were the major challenges. Therefore, the challenges need high-level attention to make the school feeding programme more successful in Sidama, Region, Ethiopia. The two studies used mixed method but differs in term of respondents and sampling technique. Desalegn, Gebremedhin, and Stoecker (2022) interacted with teachers and programme implementing staff using Purposive sampling while this researcher interacted with pupils, teachers and pupils' parents selected using multistage sampling.

Challenges of National School Feeding in Jigawa State

School feeding programs face numerous and continuous challenges, some of which are context-specific; however, others are more universal and apply to all SFPs implemented in developing countries. The sustainability of these programs, procurement of food considering food price fluctuations and environmental and agricultural changes, as well as questions of a program's cost-effectiveness are familiar challenges faced by School Feeding Programme planners and designers (Awojobi and Tinubu 2020).

WFP (2019), lack of accountability in schools especially where the bottom-up approach is adopted contributes to corruption and theft among food providers in schools. The School Feeding Programme becomes expensive in the eyes of implementers especially nowadays where they are operating in quite challenging times as compared to when they were just initiated. In the past, schools had fewer children unlike nowadays when a lot of children are attending school due to other interventions like free education. With little funding and corrupt practices by food handlers, implementers are forced to reduce the portions and number of feeding days. School children become victims in this case because they end up receiving inadequate food than the required amount allocated to them just as was reported in the Nigerian school feeding scheme.

The new national HGSF Strategic Plan 2016-2020 identifies the following additional factors as reasons why the pilot was not successful:

1. "Failure of the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) to disburse funds to pilot States as well as non-remittance of counterpart funds from participating States."
2. "Inadequate monitoring and evaluation."

3. "Inadequate sensitization and advocacy of relevant stakeholders, resulting in low community involvement and participation."
4. "Lack of supporting infrastructure such as Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities."
5. "Institutional structure at Federal level was not made fully operational."
6. "Inadequate policy and legal framework at the State and Federal level."

The challenge to school feeding programmes was the rising cost of food commodities, involving lack of water, lack of parental involvement and low-quality food, unsupplied meals, failure to follow, procurement procedures, lack of storage facilities and level of involvement of community members in the implementation of the school feeding programme (Ahmed, 2013). 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. A successful program requires that countries 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 are 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 are extremely limited by the demands placed on the staff, resources, and infrastructure required for school-feeding programs, and often must rely on outside financial and personnel help to continue programs for a significant amount of time.

Research Methods

The study adopted correlational survey design to measure the relationship between the dependent variables and the independent variables. The primary data were obtained through a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire administered to the sampled respondents in the randomized primary schools in Jigawa state using the random sampling technique. The population of the study was fourteen thousand seven hundred and seventy-six (14,776) teachers in two thousand, three hundred and twenty-four (2,324) public primary schools across the twenty-seven (27) Local Government Councils of Jigawa State. The sample size was determined using the Raosoft sample size calculator with a population size of 14776 at a confidence interval/margin error of 5%, confidence level of 95% and standard deviation of 50%. Therefore, the sample size for the study was 375 teachers.

Senatorial	LGA	Schools	Respondents Per School	Total
Jigawa North-East	Hadejia	3	14	42
	Kaugama	3	14	42
	M/Madori	3	14	42
Jigawa North-West	Gagarawa	3	14	42
	Ringim	3	14	42
	Taura	3	13	42
Jigawa South-West	Birninkudu	3	14	42
	Dutse	3	14	39
	Kiyawa	3	14	42
		27	125	375

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected was entered, cleaned, organized, and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics (frequencies, mean, and Standard Deviation) were used to answer the research questions and inferential statistics Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC)

was applied for testing hypotheses. The results of data analysis were presented in summary form using tables.

Result

Research Question 1: How does the National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme affect Primary School Pupils' School Dropout in Jigawa State, Nigeria?

Table 2

Impact of National Homegrown School Feeding Programme on Pupils Drop-out in Jigawa State

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
Teachers				
Dropout Rate	375	4.17	0.511	Positive
Pupils				
Dropout Rate	384	4.18	0.762	Positive
		4.175	0.6365	Positive

Source: Field Survey, (2023)

Based on the constructs of these variables, means and standard deviations statistics were used to examine the influence of the Homegrown School Feeding Programme on Primary school pupils' drop-out in Jigawa State. Table 2 shows the mean responses and standard deviations regarding items in the constructs, were ranked high and agreed because the overall average mean score was 4.175, interpreted as high with a standard deviation of 0.6365 dispersed around the mean, respectively. The study revealed that all the items on the HGSF Programme are highly impacted (reduced) on the drop-out of Primary school pupils in Jigawa State.

Research Question 2: Examine the challenges of implementation of HGSF programme in Jigawa State?

The result of the study revealed that the National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme is facing implementation challenges of inadequate financial and human resources to properly implement the programme, delay in payments, and lack of proper supervision and monitoring of the programme.

DISCUSSION

Objective 1: The findings of the study show that HGSFP has a significant negative impact on Primary School pupils' dropout in Jigawa State which agrees with the findings of Theresa (2020), that there is no significant positive impact of the School Feeding Programme. And disagrees with Machocho's (2011) findings that HGSFP had a positive impact on both access to education and retention of pupils in schools. A study by Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and the World Bank in Sub-Saharan Africa, (2019) found school feeding to be an impactful intervention for boosting student learning, attendance rates increased from 88% to 98%, enrolment by 14.2%, and reduced the probability of dropouts by 7.5%.

Objective 2: The result of this studies agreed with the findings of Awojobi and Tinubu 2020, and Solomon and Yusuf (2022) reported the factors affecting the effective implementation of the Homegrown School Feeding Programme were include administrative bottlenecks in the processing of food vendors and suppliers' payments, delays in the crediting of the food vendors' accounts, and the inadequate human resources to implement the programme at local level.

And contradict findings of Adekunle and Christiana (2016) ghost vendors and/or schools, and inability of federal government to undertaken vendor verification exercise by the federal government.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

the study concluded that the Homegrown school feeding programmes has negative impact inverse relationship with primary schools' dropouts in Jigawa State is generally great. There is a strong and negative association between the school feeding programme and primary school dropouts implying that these variables are more likely to decrease with the improvement of the school feeding programme. For school dropouts, there is a strong and negative relationship with homegrown school feeding programmes. The study concluded that the homegrown school feeding programmes is facing implementation challenges that hinder effectiveness of the Homegrown School Feeding Programme to attained optimum result.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The government should provide adequate and timely funds for the feeding programmes and ensure rational allocation and utilization of the funds directed towards the intended goal and objectives. That is the funds are judiciously utilized for Homegrown School Feeding Programme activities. Such as the provision of adequate and nutritious foods for the targeted beneficiaries. Sustainability of the programme impact through incorporating Income Generating Activities for parents, ensuring the programme was not jeopardised by minor financial needs of simple writing materials or transition to the next educational level (secondary education), economic opportunities should be created for the low-income families to be empowered skills and capital to have a sustained income to support the education of their children.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaire for Teachers and Students

Section One: Personal Data

School:

LGA:

Academics Qualification/Status:

Sex:

Age:

Section Two: Assessment of Effects of School Feeding Programme on Basic Education in Jigawa State.

Question 1. Impact of National HGSP programme on primary school pupils' Dropouts

S/No	Questions	Strongly Agreed	Agreed	Undecided	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed
1.	The National HGSP programme has reduced the dropout rate of pupils in junior primary schools					
2.	National HGSP programmes increase pupils' survival rate in junior primary schools					
3.	National HGSP programmes have increased students' survival rate because of an increase in parents' spending power					

Question 2. Challenges of the School Feeding Programme

S/No	Questions	Strongly Agreed	Agreed	Undecided	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed
4.	Inability to effectively monitor the food preparation to ascertain the quality of food and the environment where the food is prepared					
5.	The quantity of food served is small and insufficient to satisfy the pupils					
6.	The meals served are assorted/balanced and nutritious diet					
7.	Meals are provided for the pupils daily and promptly while in school.					
8.	Pupils have no access to a good source of water after meals					