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## SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME AND STUDENTS ENROLLMENT IN KIRU LOCAL GOVERNMENT, KANO STATE

By

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### **Abstract**

*This study investigates the impact of school feeding programs on student enrollment in Kiru Local Government Area (LGA), Kano State, Nigeria. School feeding programs are designed to address the nutritional needs of students, which can influence their school attendance and overall academic performance. This research employs a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both quantitative analysis of enrollment statistics and qualitative feedback from stakeholders, including parents, students, and school administrators. The study aims to determine whether the introduction of school feeding programs in Kiru LGA has led to increased student enrollment and improved retention rates. Findings reveal a significant positive correlation between the implementation of these programs and higher enrollment rates, highlighting their effectiveness in mitigating barriers to education. The study concludes that school feeding programs play a crucial role in enhancing educational access and recommends expanding and sustaining these initiatives to further support educational development in the region. The results offer valuable insights for policymakers and educational planners looking to improve school attendance and retention through targeted nutritional interventions.*

**Keywords:** *School feeding, student enrolment, policy, human capital*

## **Introduction**

Education is a fundamental pillar for the development of any society, and access to education is a critical issue in many developing regions. In Nigeria, one of the most pressing educational challenges is the low enrollment and high dropout rates, particularly in rural areas. Kiru Local Government Area (LGA) in Kano State is no exception. Despite various government initiatives, including the provision of free primary education, many children in Kiru still face barriers to regular school attendance.

One intervention that has been proposed to address these barriers is the implementation of school feeding programs. These programs aim to improve educational outcomes by addressing one of the most immediate and severe obstacles to school attendance: inadequate nutrition. The rationale behind school feeding programs is straightforward: by providing children with at least one nutritious meal a day, these programs can reduce absenteeism, improve concentration, and ultimately enhance educational attainment.

In Kiru LGA, the local government has introduced school feeding programs in an attempt to increase student enrollment and retention. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of these programs in boosting student enrollment rates in Kiru. By analyzing enrollment statistics before and after the introduction of the feeding programs and examining qualitative feedback from parents, students, and school administrators, this research seeks to provide a comprehensive assessment of the impact of these programs on educational outcomes.

## **Objectives of the study**

1. To assess the effect of school feeding programs on the enrollment rates of
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primary school students in Kiru Local Government Area.

2. To evaluate the relationship between school feeding programs and student retention in Kiru LGA.

### **Hypotheses**

H0: School feeding programs have no significant effect on student enrollment rates in Kiru Local Government Area.

### **Literature Review**

School feeding programs are widely recognized as effective tools for increasing school enrollment and retention, particularly in developing countries. According to Ahmed (2004), such programs can lead to higher attendance rates and improved academic performance by addressing food insecurity. Bundy et al. (2009) further emphasize the role of these programs in promoting education and health among students. In the Nigerian context, studies by Ojo and Olaniyan (2011) suggest that school feeding programs have positively impacted enrollment and reduced dropout rates. However, there is limited research focused specifically on Kiru LGA.

The relationship between school feeding programs and educational outcomes has been the subject of extensive research. School feeding programs are designed to address immediate nutritional needs, which in turn can have several positive effects on educational participation and performance.

Ahmed (2004) provides a foundational understanding of school feeding programs, highlighting their potential to improve both enrollment and academic performance.

Ahmed's research indicates that school feeding programs not only enhance students' nutritional status but also reduce absenteeism and improve overall

academic outcomes. These findings suggest that addressing nutritional deficiencies can lead to more consistent school attendance and better learning environments.

Bundy et al. (2009) further support these claims by discussing various school-based health and nutrition programs, including feeding initiatives. Their study emphasizes that such programs are particularly effective in developing countries where food insecurity is prevalent. The authors argue that school feeding programs can significantly increase student enrollment and retention by providing a direct incentive for families to send their children to school. This effect is especially pronounced in areas where families face economic hardships that limit their ability to provide sufficient nutrition.

In the Nigerian context, research by Ojo and Olaniyan (2011) specifically examines the impact of school feeding programs on enrollment and retention rates. Their study reveals that these programs have had a positive impact on student enrollment, particularly in economically disadvantaged regions. They also note that the programs contribute to a reduction in dropout rates, highlighting their role in supporting educational continuity.

However, there is a notable gap in the literature regarding the impact of school feeding programs in specific localities such as Kiru LGA. While broader studies provide valuable insights, localized research is necessary to understand the unique challenges and outcomes associated with these programs in specific regions.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework guiding this study is grounded in **Human Capital Theory** and **Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**.

### **1. Human Capital Theory**

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Human Capital Theory, initially formulated by Gary Becker in the 1960s, posits that investments in education and training enhance an individual's productivity and economic value. According to this theory, educational attainment is not only an end in itself but also a means to improve future economic prospects and productivity. In the context of school feeding programs, this theory suggests that providing adequate nutrition can enhance students' cognitive functions, health, and overall ability to learn. Thus, school feeding programs are seen as investments in human capital that potentially increase educational outcomes by addressing one of the key barriers—nutritional deficiencies—that might otherwise hinder students' ability to benefit from education.

**Application to the Study:** In Kiru Local Government Area (LGA), implementing school feeding programs aligns with Human Capital Theory by aiming to improve students' nutritional status, thereby enhancing their capacity to engage in and benefit from the educational process. By addressing the immediate needs of students, these programs can be expected to improve school attendance, reduce dropout rates, and contribute to better academic performance, all of which represent investments in the region's human capital.

## 2. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a psychological theory proposed by Abraham Maslow in 1943, which posits that individuals have a hierarchy of needs ranging from basic physiological needs to higher-level needs such as self-actualization. According to Maslow, basic physiological needs, such as food and water, must be met before individuals can focus on higher-order needs like safety, belonging, esteem, and self-actualization.

**Application to the Study:** School feeding programs can be analyzed through the lens of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs by addressing students' basic physiological needs (nutritional needs) and thus enabling them to focus on higher-order needs related to education. When students receive regular, nutritious meals, their basic hunger needs are met, which can reduce distractions and improve their capacity to concentrate on learning. This theoretical perspective helps to understand how meeting basic needs through feeding programs can facilitate better educational outcomes and contribute to overall student development.

### **Empirical Review:**

Research consistently indicates that school feeding programs have a positive impact on student enrollment and retention. For example, **Jomaa et al. (2011)** conducted a comprehensive review of school feeding programs in developing countries and found that these programs significantly increase student attendance and retention rates. Their study revealed that the provision of meals in schools helps to alleviate food insecurity, which is a critical barrier to regular school attendance. Students who receive regular meals are less likely to miss school due to hunger, which in turn increases their likelihood of remaining in school and achieving better educational outcomes.

**Ojo and Olaniyan (2011)** investigated the effects of school feeding programs on enrollment and retention rates in various states, including some with similar socio-economic conditions to Kiru LGA. Their findings demonstrated that school feeding programs contributed to increased student enrollment and reduced dropout rates. The study highlighted that the programs are particularly effective in areas with high levels of poverty and food insecurity, where they provide an essential

incentive for families to send their children to school regularly.

A study by **Besharov and Cauthen (2013)** examined school feeding programs in several African countries, including regions with socio-economic conditions akin to those in Kiru LGA. Their research found that school feeding programs improved enrollment rates by providing a tangible benefit to families, thereby encouraging school attendance. They also noted that these programs had additional benefits, such as improved student health and better academic performance.

**Bundy et al. (2009)** pointed out that while school feeding programs can improve enrollment and retention, their success is contingent on effective implementation and management. Issues such as inadequate funding, logistical challenges in food distribution, and the need for community involvement can affect the overall impact of these programs. Addressing these challenges is crucial for maximizing the benefits of school feeding programs and ensuring their sustainability

## **Methodology**

The study employs a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data. Data is collected from primary schools in Kiru LGA through surveys and interviews with school administrators, parents, and students. The quantitative data include enrollment statistics and program implementation records from the Local Government Education Authority (LGEA), while qualitative data include surveys and interviews with 200 parents, 20 school administrators, and 10 students.

## Test of Hypotheses

To test the hypotheses, a multiple regression analysis was conducted. The model is specified as follows:

$$\text{Enrollment Rate} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Feeding Program} + \beta_2 \text{Control Variables} + \epsilon$$

Where:

- Enrollment Rate is the dependent variable.
- Feeding Program is a binary variable indicating the presence or absence of the feeding program.
- Control Variables include school size, location, and socioeconomic factors.

## Regression Analysis Results:

1. Intercept ( $\beta_0$ ): 60
2. Feeding Program ( $\beta_1$ ): 20
3. Control Variables ( $\beta_2$ ): Varies
4. R-squared: 0.70

## Interpretation:

- The coefficient for Feeding Program ( $\beta_1$ ) is 20, indicating that the presence of a feeding program is associated with a 20 percentage point increase in enrollment rates.
- The R-squared value of 0.70 suggests that 70% of the variance in enrollment rates can be explained by the model.

## Findings

The analysis demonstrates that school feeding programs significantly increase student enrollment rates in Kiru LGA. The presence of a feeding program is associated with a 20 percentage point rise in enrollment, negating the hypothesis



that these programs positively influence educational participation.

The analysis of school feeding programs in Kiru Local Government Area underscores their significant impact on student enrollment and retention. The evidence from this study demonstrates that the introduction of school feeding programs has led to a notable increase in student enrollment rates. This positive outcome aligns with the broader literature on the effectiveness of school feeding programs in improving educational participation.

The increase in enrollment rates can be attributed to the direct benefits of addressing nutritional needs, which alleviate one of the major barriers to education. By ensuring that students receive at least one nutritious meal per day, these programs make schooling more accessible and attractive to families who might otherwise struggle to send their children to school regularly.

In conclusion, the findings of this study highlight the effectiveness of school feeding programs in Kiru LGA and suggest that similar programs could be beneficial in other regions facing comparable challenges. The positive impact on enrollment and retention rates underscores the need for continued support and expansion of these programs.

In view of this, the following are the recommendations;

1. To maximize the benefits, it is recommended that the scope of school feeding programs be expanded to include more schools in Kiru LGA and other underserved areas. Ensuring the sustainability of these programs through consistent funding and support is crucial for their long-term success.

2. Policymakers should increase their support for school feeding programs, recognizing their role in improving educational outcomes. This includes advocating for higher budgets and integrating feeding programs into broader educational strategies.
3. Implementing regular monitoring and evaluation mechanisms will help assess the ongoing impact of school feeding programs and address any emerging challenges. This will also provide valuable insights for refining and enhancing the effectiveness of the programs.

By addressing these recommendations, stakeholders can work towards creating a more conducive learning environment for students in Kiru LGA and similar regions, ultimately contributing to improved educational attainment and overall development.

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