

**IMPACT OF MID DAY MEALS ON PUPILS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN
KIREWA SUB COUNTY
TORORO DISTRICT**

BY

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**A RESEARCH DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE
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APPROVAL

This Research was supervised under the careful guidance of the undersigned academic supervisor and has hence forth to be approved for submission

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Date: 12/02/2024

DECLARATION

I Athieno Betty being of sound body and mind hereby declare that the publications in this proposal are my original works produced in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Bachelors degree of Education, Primary of Busitema University.

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ABSTRACT:

Children are the future of tomorrow who needs an adequate amount of nutrition and education for growth but the disadvantaged section of the societies are not able to provide them. The study was carried out on the Impact of mid-day meals on the academic performance of pupils in Kirewa Sub County, Tororo District. This study was designed to analyze majorly the relationship between mid-day meals and academic performance of pupils in Kirewa Sub County, Tororo District. The study was guided by three specific objectives that is, To establish the effects of having midday meals on the academic performance of pupils in Kirewa Sub County, Tororo District, To examine the socio-economic and administrative factors challenging the provision of mid-day meals on the academic performance of pupils in Kirewa Sub Country, Tororo District. To establish ways of improving provision of mid-day meals to improve on academic performance of pupils in Kirewa Sub County from which literature review was gotten. A total of 68 participants were selected for the study. Participants consisted of 40 pupils, 24 parents from PTA and 4 Headteachers gotten using Yemen's formula $n = N / (1 + N(e^2))$ where N = total population of the area, e = the error value which is a constant (0.05). A substitution of the above formula gave a sample size of 68 people. Data was collected via questionnaires answered by parents and pupils and interviews were used for the head teachers. It was noted that there is a very big impact of midday meals on the academic performance of pupils. This is justified from the responses offered by respondents.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Globally, the problem in academic performance is reported to be increasing in the United States, and some European countries. Feeding has been shown to directly increase the educational and nutritional status of recipient children, and indirectly affect the economic and social lives of themselves and their family (Alejandro, 2018). Additionally, school feeding directly addresses the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of reducing hunger by one-half, achieving universal primary education, and achieving gender parity in education by 2015 (Brindley, 2015). The latest Program for International Students results from 2012 show that 22.1 % of European students had low achievement in mathematics, 17.8% in reading, and 16.6 % in science (Hertler, 2016). The common attributes for global poor academic performance relate to school factors, i.e. peer group influence, learners' socio-economic background, educational level of parents and language barrier (Hertler, 2016). However, reports keep differing among countries and regions. Whereas African American Children are academic under- achievers in the United States of America due to: self-sabotage, family influences, low socio-economic status, failing schools, cultural gaps, crime and drug abuse, lack of African American teachers, lack of parental involvement, resistance in middle-class school norms, low teacher expectations, low effort syndrome, antiintellectualism, lack of priorities, tag line and social services European countries such as Germany reflect academic underachievement at 46% of all learners who sit for examinations per session in a range of subjects due to teacher and home-related challenges (Basque and Dare, 2008).

In Africa, the initiative of school feeding was boosted in 2000 following the United Nations meeting in Dakar to commit itself to the eradication of hunger and attainment of universal primary education. A study by Gasperini (2016) indicates that in conditions of extreme poverty, seasonal difficulties such as drought, or events such as HIV/AIDS, families generally consider it a low priority to get their children to attend school. In such situations Ocha (2018) states that school feeding lead to an increase in enrolment, attendance and retention most especially on the side of girls, who in times of economic crisis or food emergency, are usually the first to be

withdrawn from school in order to assist with sibling care and to generate income. Educational hints in African countries also reflect increasing cases of poor academic performance indicated by reduction in levels of school grades at an average of 43% for learners who sit for national examinations in a single year in different countries (Binet and Simon, 2013) and this is attributed to financial constraints, school environment factors, home environment, and peer-group influence (Adeyemi, Moradeyo, and Semiu, 2014). However, there are also differences manifested in examples from different African countries.

In East Africa, the rate of poor academic performance too is estimated at an average of approximately 60% poor performers for each single examination sitting in the different subjects. A low level of academic performance is registered per examination session in Kenya (46%), Tanzania (62%), and Uganda at 71% with learners attaining very low grades year after year with hardly any hope of significant improvements (Ahmed, 2015). Studies which have tried to harmonize this kind of situation (Amiena, Wynand, and Ravinder, 2014; Clerks, 2013) have always left unchanging situations thus continuing to call for new investigations into what exactly explains the persistent poor academic performance in primary schools. Uganda operates a primary school education system which is structured into seven years of primary school and pupils are supposed to graduate with the Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) Certificate (Education Act 2008). Excellence in PLE is determined by the achievement levels pupils subscribe to, in their preliminary classes most especially right from primary four, the transitional class to primary seven. The body responsible for assessing pupils' primary academic grades in Uganda is the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB). To award primary school academic grades, UNEB uses a grading scale of 1 for division one, 2 for division two, 3 for division three, 4 for division four, U for ungraded results, and X for missed papers of registered candidates. Divisions 1 and 2 indicate candidates who perform above average, while division 3 is performance at average and division 4 is below average, and all marks below division 4 are labeled ungraded (U). Ideally, all pupils ought to be able to read and write, speak English fluently, count and understand concepts.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Underachievement in schools is a global problem and is especially prevalent in developing countries. Indicators of educational performance show that Uganda has done remarkably well on

education access-related targets since the introduction of universal primary education in 1997. However, educational outcomes remain disappointing. The absence of mid day meals, one of the leading causes of scholastic underachievement, has not been given attention by the Ugandan authorities. Instead, as a national policy, parents are expected to provide meals even though many, especially in the rural areas, cannot afford to provide even the minimal daily bowl of maize porridge. To assess and demonstrate the effect of breakfast and midday meal consumption on academic achievement of school children, there was an assessment on household characteristics, feeding patterns and academic achievement of 645 school children (aged 9-15 years) in Kumi district, eastern Uganda, in 2006-2007, using a modified cluster sampling design which involved only grade 1 schools (34 in total) and pupils of grade four. Underachievement (the proportion below a score of 120.0 points) was high (68.4%); in addition, significantly higher achievement and better feeding patterns were observed among children from the less poor households ($p < 0.05$). Achievement was significantly associated with consumption of breakfast and a midday meal, particularly for boys ($p < 0.05$), and a greater likelihood of scoring well was observed for better nourished children (all OR values > 1.0). Basing on the academic achievements in primary schools in Kirewa Sub County, the researcher feels the same study should be carried out in the Sub County.

1.3 Objectives of the study.

1.3.1 General Objectives

The study was guided by the following Objectives.

To Investigate the relationship between mid day meals and academic performance of pupils in Kirewa Sub County, Tororo District.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

i) To establish the effects of having midday meals on the academic performance of pupils in Kirewa Sub County, Tororo District.

ii) To examine the socio-economic and administrative factors challenging the provision of mid day meals on the academic performance of pupils in Kirewa Sub Country, Tororo District.

iii) To establish ways of improving provision of mid day meals to improve on academic performance of pupils in Kirewa Sub County.

1.4 Research Questions

The study attempted to answer the following research questions:-

- i) What are the effects of having midday meals on the academic performance of pupils in Kirewa Sub County, Tororo District ?
- ii) What are the socio-economic and administrative factors that challenge the provision of midday meals on the academic performance of pupils in Kirewa Sub Country, Tororo District?
- iii) How can the provision of midday meals be improved to enhance on the academic performance of pupils in Kirewa Sub Country, Tororo District?

1.5. Scope of the study

1.5.1 Geographical scope

The study was conducted in Kirewa Sub County, Tororo District, located in Eastern Uganda.

1.5.2 Time scope

The study was conducted during the period of June and December 2023.

1.5.3 Content scope

The study concentrated on mid day meals and the academic performance of pupils within Kirewa Sub County.

1.6 Significance of the study

The study enabled parents, teachers and other stakeholders understand the relevance of providing mid day meals to pupils as to improve their academic performance

The study extracted the differences in academic performance between pupils that are given mid day meals and those that don't so as to adjust their programs accordingly.

It also enabled other sectors related to education understand the other factors for instance working conditions that may increase productivity.

1.7. Justification of the Study

Providing midday meals is a practical way to improve the academic performance of students. This is because access to nutritious meals has a positive impact on cognitive development, memory retention, and academic achievement. Midday meals are especially important for students from low-income families who may not have access to adequate nutrition at home. The provision of midday meals ensures that all students have access to quality, nutritious meals that can help them excel academically. Studies have shown that students who receive midday meals perform better in school compared to those who do not. For instance, a study in Kenya revealed that students who receive midday meals had better cognitive performance and attendance rates than those who did not. Therefore the researcher felt that kind of research should be done in Kirewa Sub County, Tororo District.

1.8 Limitations and delimitations

1.8.1 Limitations

The researcher met some challenges in the course of the study and these included;

Financial constraints due to the need to travel to the field to collect data and also printing out the data collection tools to be used which may seem somewhat expensive.

Personal bias from different individuals may also be a challenge to the research activity for example bias on meals provision by some headteachers which will lead to bias in provision of data.

1.8.2 Delimitations

To overcome the challenge of financial constraints, the researcher lobbied for financial assistance from family members, relatives, and close friends.

For the bias challenge, the researcher came up with an approach that helped draw away the bias and so received the most appropriate responses.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter was to study the already written literature on the topic of study basing on the specific objectives.

2.1 Effects of having Midday Meals on the Academic Performance of Pupils

Adelman et al. (2009) show three aspects of nutrition can influence class attendance. First school meals alleviate short term hunger of school children during the school day by providing more nutrients to the child, providing the child with a meal when he or she would have not otherwise have had one, or replacing a meal that would have been received after school with one during school hours (Ahmed, 2014). Thus, this aspect of nutrition targets for short term impact and enables a child concentrate and learn more. A study of the effects of school breakfast in rural Jamaica show that overcoming school hours' hunger leads to better concentration and learning (Powell and Walker, 1998). Second, school meals may also generate nutritional improvements for a child over long run. The improved nutritional status because of school meals will in turn enhance a child's physiological capacity for learning thereby increasing the benefits of schooling and the child's desire to attend school. Third, school meals can also reduce morbidity through improved nutrition and consequently enhance attendance (Powell and Walker, 1998). Adelman et al. (2009) present the interplay between school meals on one hand and grade repetition, learning achievement, and school performance on the other. They show that this effect works in two mechanisms. First, because school meals improve class attendance, children will spend more time learning in school. Therefore, the more time children spend in school, the better they learn and these interplays ultimately result in improved school performance, which thus minimizes the probabilities of dropout. This is however, dependent on other factors such as school quality, availability of learning materials and teacher quality. Thus, unless properly implemented, school feeding has rather the potential to worsen dropouts (Dheressa, 2011).

Second, improved nutrition may also enhance pupil participation and performance in the short and over long run. In the short run, school meals could alleviate hunger and make children

concentrate and learn better so that school performance will be improved and hence dropout is minimized. According to Michelon (2006), cognitive abilities are brain-based skills a person needs to carry out any task from the simplest to the most complex. They have more to do with the mechanisms of how we learn, remember, problem-solve, and pay attention, rather than with any actual knowledge. For instance, answering the telephone involves perception or hearing the ring tone, decision taking to answer or not, motor skill -lifting the receiver, language skills - talking and understanding language, social skills - interpreting tone of voice and interacting properly with another human being. Lawson (2012) noted that providing school children meals has cognitive and health benefits. In a study by Mastewal et al. (2018), respondents observed that SFP improved general health condition and learning outcomes, thus, the combined effect of the health, hygiene and de-worming activities pursued under the SFP resulted in improved health and nutritional status of children, which led to increased retention and educational outcomes in most schools. These results were confounded by socio-economic differences between previously anemic and non-anemic children but even after adjustment for these, the anemic group performed less well. Whether this was because important confounding factors were unidentified or inadequately measured is debated. However, these data raise the possibility that iron deficiency anaemia in infancy does have a longer-term negative influence on cognition (Morley and Alan, 2007).

2.2 Socio-economic and administrative factors that challenge the Provision of Midday Meals on Academic Performance of Pupils

The evidence suggested that the parents' economic status was a key factor in the implementation of Midday meals. This was mainly because most schools in developing countries were supported by parents. For instance, a study conducted in government public schools of Addis Ababa found that 50% of parents were living in poverty life to the extent that only about 40% of the parents were able to contribute to SFPs and the remaining 60% were unable to pay for school feeding which constrained the implementation of the program (Sanya, 2015). Similarly, BoE & BoWCA (2015) pointed out that 16% of children in public schools in Addis Ababa stayed hungry the whole day at school due to poverty that limited their parents' capacity to provide packed food for their children. Likewise, parents who were extremely poor were unable to pay for school meals of their children as well as supporting the SFPs implementation (Elizabeth, 2017). Therefore,

schools found it a great burden on their budget when a big number of students were denied food because of their parents' economic status (Aburaad, 2020). In addition, poverty made it difficult for parents to make financial contributions to keep the school lunch program going on smoothly (Kirui, 2018). Therefore, inadequate finance and in kind support for the school meals programs by parents was reported to be a challenge to SFPs implementation (Omondi, 2018).

Insufficient funding. A study conducted in China found that insufficient funding was the major challenge to SFPs implementation. Insufficient funding in China had resulted into lack of essential nutrients in the school meals thus leading to ineffective SFPs implementation (Wang et al., 2020). Another study in Nigeria found that insufficient funding had hindered the provision of school meals to school children (Taylor & Ogbogu, 2016). Similarly, to the study conducted in Kenya that identified lack of sustainable funding for the maintenance and expansion of School feeding to be the most challenge to the SFPs implementation (Buhl, 2010).

Price fluctuation. It was found out that changes in food prices and inability to mitigate price fluctuations in Ghana was seen as a barrier to SFPs implementation. The price variations between harvest and lean seasons as reported by caterers involved increases of <400% where payments from the Ghana School Feeding Programs (GSFP) are retrospective, caterers were often found not have the resources to buy in bulk at lower prices. Caterers also reported that buying on credit from market traders weakened their negotiation position. The payments and budgets did not reflect the actual numbers of children served, as enrolment tended to increase during the school year, resulting in higher costs for caterers (Gelli et al., 2019). A study carried out by Melat (2020) also showed that high cost of food items was identified to be a hindrance to SFPs implementation.

Education Status of Parents. A number of studies had shown that educated parents had higher probability of being knowledgeable about the importance of feeding children while at school, feeding practice and health seeking behaviour than their counter parts. Therefore, educated parents were more willing to pay for school meals of their children than the uneducated whose children have higher chances of missing out lunch and this constrains the SFPs implementation because majority of parents were uneducated (Demilew & Nigussie, 2020).

A study carried out by Taylor & Ogbogu (2016), reviewed that school feeding implementations were constrained by lack of effective monitoring and evaluation systems. In addition, other

studies had also pointed out that minimal follow up by the City Education Department (CED) had been a major constraint to SFP implementation (Omondi, 2018).

A study conducted in Ethiopia showed that shortages of water supply in the district, lack of grain storage facilities in school and inadequacy of cooking equipment and facilities like kitchen, storage area and dining area had constrained the smooth running of SFPs (Zenebe et al., 2018). Similarly, Sanya (2015), contended that storage facilities at school had hindered the smooth running of SFPs. For example, all food that was contributed by either parents or Government was stored in one store together with the construction materials like cement.

A study conducted by Sanya, (2015) in Tanzania found out that the only administrative challenge to SFPs was poor government support on school feeding. This was due to poor government contributions in the implementation of SFPs, where by Government contributed only 12% of the whole programs while parents contributed 88% to the implementation of the programs.

According to Acheampong, (2022), the delay release of money and low budgetary allocation had greatly affected the quality and quantity of food. Similarly, a study carried out in northern Ghana showed that irregular release of funds was seen as a challenge in running school feeding programs (Sulemana et al., 2013).

A reviewed research showed that, increased enrolment as a result of free primary education had constrained the capacity of schools to adequately manage the school meals programs (Beatrice, 2014). Likewise, a study conducted by Gelli et al. (2019), found out that the payments and budgets did not reflect the actual numbers of children served, as enrolment tended to increase during the school year, resulting in higher costs for caterers.

Most of the literature reviewed focused on the benefits of school feeding programs on pupil's enrolment, attendance and academic performance in both developed and developing countries. It was also evident that most studies had employed a quantitative approach. Therefore, the challenges of running SFPs were given little attention in the existing literature, thus a great opportunity for such a study to be carried out so as to point out the challenges of running SFPs in public schools. Thus, this research study sought to bridge these gaps by considering the perceptions, views, and opinions of the head teachers, welfare teachers, PTA chairpersons, and

the children, CDO and DEO, in respect to the socio-economic and administrative factors that constrain the implementation of SFPs.

2.3 Improvement in the provision of midday meals to enhance on the academic performance of pupils

A number of strategies can be laid to improve provision of midday meals so as to enhance the academic performance of pupils. This has been witnessed before even in other states as explained;

Adoption of national food security. National Food Security Act 2013 (NFSA) was a unique initiative taken by Indian government to fight against hunger and protect right of the people for food. With its peculiarities including the life cycle method, women empowerment, consideration of disadvantaged sections of society (Tanksale, 2015). Food security at the national level refers primarily to the availability of food in the country. The National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA 2013) converts into legal entitlements for existing food security programmes of the Government of India. It includes the Midday Meal Scheme, Integrated Child Development Services scheme and the Public Distribution System. The Mid-day meal program was officially started in Tamil Nadu. Under this programme, cooked mid-day meals were to be introduced in all government, government aided and local body schools for children at primary level. However, in the first six years after the scheme was launched (until 2001), most states failed in putting required arrangements and thus provided monthly dry ration based on the attendance of the students (Khera, 2006). One of the aims of the MDM is to resolve hunger in the classroom and provide children with adequate nutrition. There are many students who go to school with an empty stomach and could not concentrate on studies, so MDM provides them with nutrition and lets them focus on activities in the classroom. Even in absence of MDM students go to their home for lunch and never return.

Adequate food stocks to meet domestic demand, either by domestic demand, Provision or by imports. The global population and even our nation have been caught off guard by the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic for example. In India, both the government and the population are struggling to curb this pandemic. As a preventive strategy to reduce the spread of the coronavirus disease, the Government of India (GOI) placed a countrywide lockdown. The

uncertainties about the potential strategies for containing this pandemic cause us to prioritise and plan to step up different initiatives in the field of health. In the midst of urgent health needs, an agenda that will definitely have to be prioritised by politicians would be to ensure that food is available for child nutrition during this crisis. According to the 2011 Census, in the age group 0-6 years, 16.45 Cr children and in the age group 0-14 years, 37.24 Cr children comprise 13.59 percent and 30.76 percent of the total population, respectively. India accounts for around one third of the estimated population of stunted preschool children worldwide. The prevalence of stunting in India is 38.4 percent, while waste is 15.7 percent and the number of underweight children under the age of five is 32.7 percent, according to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) conducted in 2015-16. The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Program and Mid-Day Meal Scheme are now in place to meet the nutritional needs of this especially vulnerable and significant segment of the population. Almost 13.5 lakh Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) are operating in India across 36 states & Union Territories, covering 1022.33 lakh recipients under supplementary nutrition.

Introduction of mid-day meals scheme. The Central Government, in partnership with the State Governments and the Union Territories, introduced the National Mid-Day Meal in Schools Programme, also known as the Mid-Day Meal (MDM) Scheme. Under this scheme, on each school day (at least 200 days a year), each child studying in elementary classes (I-VIII) in government and government aided schools is provided with one hot cooked mid-day meal containing the prescribed energy and protein. At present, through 11.34 lakh schools in India, about 11.59 crore children are enrolled under this scheme (Upadhyay, 2020). In order to ensure social distancing in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, the closing of AWCs and schools may provide some immediate benefits in terms of disease control and the prevention of the burden on the already overwhelmed health system, but may leave children undernourished. The closure of centres and schools in Anganwadi has led to interruptions in the delivery of nutrition services throughout India (Economic Times Online, 2020).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter gives an explanation on how the research activity was done enlightening steps and methods to be used.

3.1 Study Area

Kirewa Sub County is located in Tororo District, Eastern Uganda

3.2 Research Techniques.

According to Punch (2009), mixed method research refers to the empirical research that involves the collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data. This is the combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches. This research used qualitative paradigm more than quantitative paradigm. Qualitative approach sought to preserve the integrity of narrative data and attempted to use the data to exemplify unusual or core themes embedded in contexts (Felix, 2011). According to Omari (2011), qualitative paradigm in three pillars that is human learning, teaching and management is principally a social phenomenon involving complex processes and interactions both intrapersonal and interpersonal. Human learning may occur as part of education, personal development, schooling or training. Also, it is a study of how learning occurs in part of education psychology, neuropsychology, learning theory and pedagogy. However, teaching refers to impart knowledge or to instruct someone on how to do something. Qualitative approach to research is concerned with subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions and behavior. This approach generated results either non-quantitative form or in the form which are not subjected to rigorous quantitative analysis (Kothari, 2004). Quantitative approach was used when data is collected into numerical forms and to which statistical analyses may be applied to determine the significance of the finding (Felix, 2011).

3.3 Population Study

Kombo and Tromp (2006) define target population as a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples were taken for measurement. Onen and Oso (2005) target population refers

to total number of subjects, or the total environment of interest to the researcher. Kirewa Sub County has a total of 6885 pupils, 60 teachers and 34 parents in PTA, totalling to 6979 people (Government schools validation list as of 7/11/2023) from which 40 pupils, 24 parents from PTA and 4 Headteachers were picked to participate in the study. In this study, a population of 68 respondents were considered using simple sampling method. Yamane's formula: $n = N/(1+N(e)^2)$. Was used to determine the sample size. The variables in this formula are: n = the sample size, N = the population of the study, e = the margin error in the calculation which is always constant at 0.05.

3.4.1 Sampling Design

According to Kombo & Tromp (2006) sampling design refers to the part of the research plan that indicates how cases or respondents are to be selected for observation. Kamuzora et al (2008) define a sampling frame as a complete list of all objects/elements in the population from which your sample was drawn. Onen and Oso (2005) say that sampling is description of the strategies which the researcher uses to select representative respondents from the target population. The researcher employed probability and non-probability sampling techniques to obtain information from the sample according to the groups divided. Omari (2011) describes non-probability samplings as those that use whatever subjects are available rather than following a specific subject selection process. Purposive sampling was used under non-probability sampling to collect data from headteachers. Purposive sampling is a blanket term for sampling techniques that choose participants deliberately due to qualities they possess, headteachers for this case. In probability sampling, the researcher intended to select respondent by using simple random sampling techniques whereby every unit has a chance of being selected. Omari (2011) purposive or strategic sampling is the involvement of picking units most relevant or knowledgeable in the subject matter and study them and convenience sampling is just include any unity that comes along without much effort. Adam and Kamuzora (2011) state that purposive sampling is the decision with regard to which element/ item should be included or excluded in the sample rests on the researcher's judgment and sometimes known as judgmental sampling. Therefore convenience sampling is an accidental sampling involves the basis of their availability and willingness to respond (Omari, 2011). Najjumba (2005) alludes that purposive sampling is non-probability form of sampling. Its goal is to sample participants in a strategic way so that those

sampled are relevant to the research questions that were being posed. Kombo and Tromp (2006) assert that convenience sampling is based on using people who are captive audience that the researcher meets haphazardly. The researcher used purposive sampling technique to gather information from 4 head of schools and Simple random sampling was used to gather information from 40 students and 24 parents. This type of sampling will help the researcher to collect data at the spur of the moment happen to be there at the moment.

3.4.2 Sampling Procedure.

For simple random sampling, a lottery method was used to get a sample, each member of the population was assigned a number, after which numbers were selected at random. Respondents, whose number were chosen, participated in the activity to provide data. While purposive samples were arrived at through identifying members with vital information and schedule appointments for the interview that is to say, the headteachers. The researcher were select purposive participants based on their role in the school, that is to say, the headteachers.

3.4.3 Sample Size

The sample size of this study were 68 respondents divided into four groups that is, headteachers, parents in PTA, and students. Headteachers were 4, 24 parents, and 40 Pupils. Kothari (2004) define the sample as the technique or the procedure the researcher would adopt in selecting items for the sample. Onen and Oso (2005) say that a sample is a part of target population that has been procedurally selected to represent it. Adam and Kamuzora (2008) a sample is a finite part of a statistical population whose properties are studies to gain information about the whole

3.5 Data Collection

The study considered both primary and secondary data sources.

3.5 Data Sources

3.5.1 Secondary Data The secondary data refers to the information gathered from secondary hand since they were primary collected, manipulated and used by other researcher. In this study, secondary data was generated from different sources that include: research papers, public talks

and website. This mainly focuses on to get a wide understanding on the subjects of impact of school feeding programme on students' attendance.

3.5.2 Primary Data The primary data refers to the information generated from the field they are named primary because they are freshly collected by the researchers and have not been manipulated by any other person. Such data are provided by the subjects or respondents in the sample through scheduled interactions by using well prepared tools (Mugenda, 1999). In this study, two tools were employed; questionnaires and interview schedules. The choice of these tools depended on the type and availability of respondents the time available for the study and the expected effectiveness of the instruments.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

The researcher used questionnaires and Interview guides for the data collection process.

3.6.1 Questionnaires According to Omari (2011), questionnaire is the single most widely used technique in education but also most misused. In this method the researcher will prepare open ended questionnaire that encouraged head of schools to give information needed to the study. The reason to use questionnaire is that, it could be used in distant respondents and a well-planned.

3.6.2 Interview Guide

It is a method of data collection that involves presentation of oral verbal stimuli and reply in terms of oral verbal responses. Kothari (1971) says that certain types of respondents such as officials or executives (headteachers for this matter), who are very busy may not remember to fill in time. So interviewing them becomes an appropriate alternative method. Kothari (2004) explained that interview method allows flexibility as the opportunity les to restructure questions always are there. The researcher used interview method to collect information to headteachers.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher obtained a letter from from education office and school administration introducing her to Nagongera Sub County officials and specifying that the data to be collected is solely for study purposes. Upon obtaining the requisite permission, the researcher will proceed

with data collection from parents using questionnaires. After that, interviews were conducted with selected key informants.

3.8 Data Quality Control

Data quality control looked at the steps to ensure that the data collected has minimal errors which include validity and reliability.

3.8.1 Validity According to Kothari (2004), validity of the data collection method refers to the procedures which measure what is supposed to measure. Research validity can be divided into two groups: internal and external. It can be specified that “internal validity refers to how the research findings match reality, while external validity refers to the extent to which the research findings can be replicated to other environments” (Pelissier, 2008, p.12). . Various tools and techniques are used to gather information in research. Accuracy is essential whether you're using measuring tools (like scales and rulers) or information-gathering tools (like surveys, questionnaires, and interviews). Therefore the researcher used questionnaires and interviews to ensure validity for the research.

3.8.2 Reliability of Data

Reliability is the extent to which a test or procedure of data collection provide similar results under similar conditions on all occasions. This implies that, if repeatedly asses the impacts of school feeding on students’ attendance, a researcher will get similar response. To ensure reliability in the study, researchers will carefully select appropriate measures and establish protocols for administering the measures consistently. She also took steps to control for extraneous variables that may impact the results.

3.9 Data Processing, analysis and Presentation

Data was processed, analyzed and presented as shown below;

3.9.1 Data processing

Data collected from the primary source was be compiled, sorted, edited for accuracy and clarity, classified, coded into a coding sheet and analyzed using a computerized data analysis package/tool known as Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS 26). Descriptive statistics

will be generated in order to determine the various characteristics of the respondents who would have participated in the study.

3.9.2 Data analysis

The analysis of qualitative data consisted of abstracting from the raw data at all points that a researcher considered to be relevant to the topic under investigation. Descriptive statistics was generated in order to determine the various characteristics of the respondents who would have participated in the study.

3.9.3 Data presentation

Frequency distribution tables, cross tabulation, charts, and graphs were used to interpret the data collected from the field.

3.10 Ethical Consideration

Ethics is typically associated with morality, and both words concern matters of right and wrong (Babbie 2007). But what is right and what is wrong? Although this definition may frustrate those in search of moral absolutes, what we regard as morality and ethics in day-to-day life is a matter of agreement among members of a group. Research ethics matter for scientific integrity, human rights and dignity, and collaboration between science and society. These principles make sure that participation in studies is voluntary, informed, and safe for research subjects. The researcher balanced pursuing important research objectives with using ethical research methods and procedures. As it's always necessary to prevent permanent or excessive harm to participants, whether inadvertent or not. Defying research ethics also lowered the credibility of your research because it's hard for others to trust the data if the methods are morally questionable. Even if a research idea is valuable to society, it doesn't justify violating the human rights or dignity of your study participants.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the results are presented, analyzed and then interpreted. The chapter highlights the response rate, demographic characteristics of the respondents and empirical findings based on the objectives of the study.

4.1 Response Rate

This section presents the response rate per category of respondents included in the study. Response rate in survey research refers to the number of people who answered the survey divided by the number of people in the sample. These are the different groups in Kirewa Sub County where responses were sought from.

Table 1: Response Rate

Category	Sample size	Response	Response Rate in %
Pupils	40	40	100
Parents	24	24	100
Headteachers	4	4	100
Total	68	68	100

4.2 Effects of having midday meals on the academic performance of pupils in Kirewa Sub County, Tororo District.

Feeding has been acknowledged as the greatest bottleneck to both children's access and benefit to education for the few who manage to get to school. For effective learning at school, a child

should have three main meals daily including; breakfast, lunch and dinner

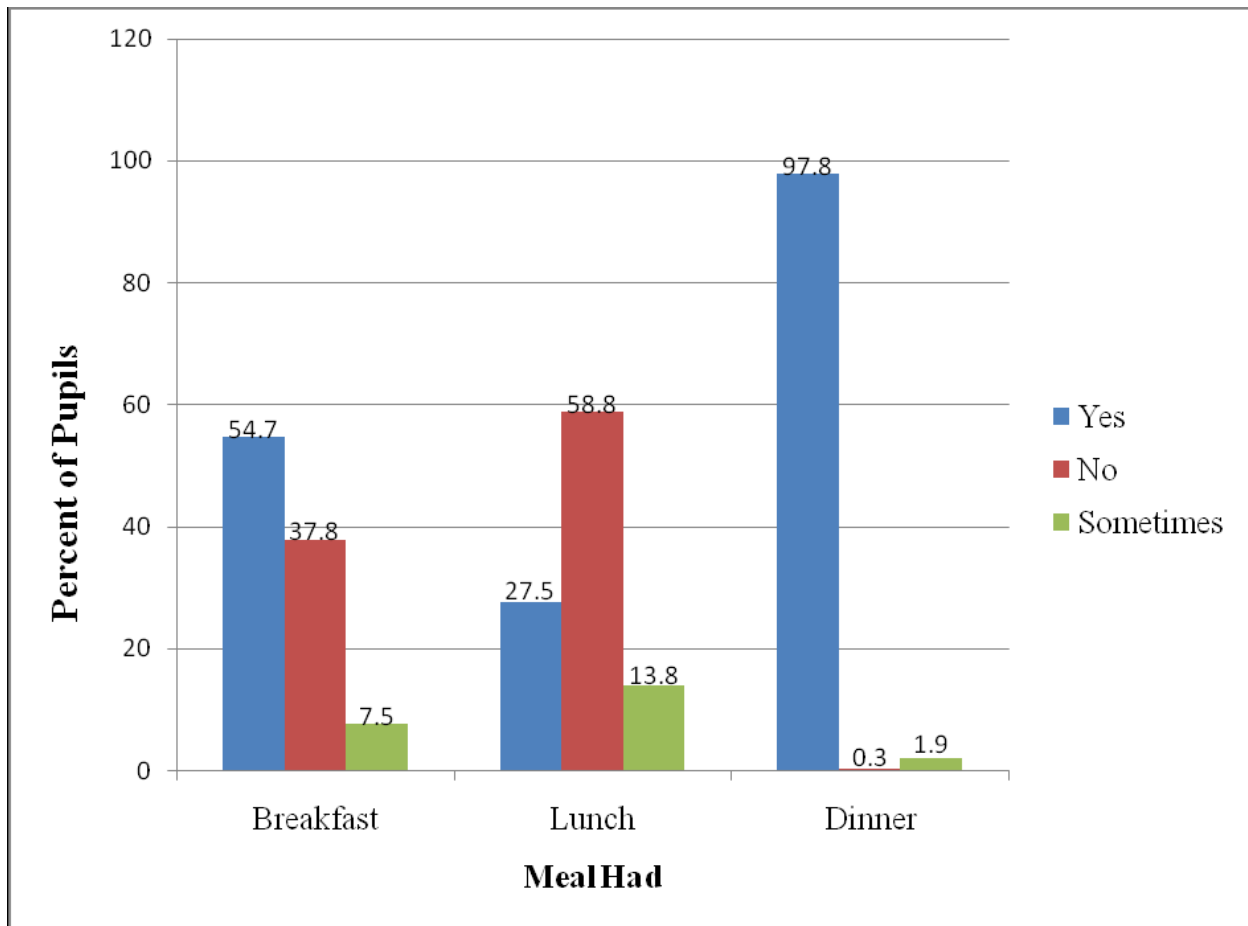


Figure 1 Percentage of Pupils who have Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

A large proportion 37.8% who did not have breakfast is likely to lose concentration and attention in the morning. This is confirmed by the Dairy Council of California (2009) that states that; children who skip breakfast have trouble concentrating at school and become inattentive and restless by late morning. In this study, only 54.7% indicated having breakfast before going to school. The situation is further aggravated if the same pupils do not eat lunch while at school. It is evident that the above is true since 58.8% of the pupils confessed not having anything to eat for lunch. There is thus a high (61.4%) likelihood that the pupils who miss breakfast also miss lunch and resulting into short term hunger. The resultant short term hunger inevitably will affect the level of learning and concentration when the pupils return to classroom for the afternoon sessions. This is a serious hindrance to learning as Birdsall et al. (2005) warns that hunger affects cognitive functions and may therefore impair a child's ability to benefit from schooling.

It is also important to note that a large majority (97.8%) of the pupils reported that they had dinner at home, before going to bed, though 2.2% reported that they never did so. Having a meal is one thing but whether the pupils feel satisfied with the meals they have is another. Of those who had meals, 39.1% of them confess not to get satisfied indicating inadequate food intake in terms of quantity. As earlier revealed that the pupils largely depend on carbohydrates, it is unfortunate that they do not get enough of them, a recipe for malnutrition. However, 60.9% said they got satisfied – at least the quantity suffices though the quality may be wanting.

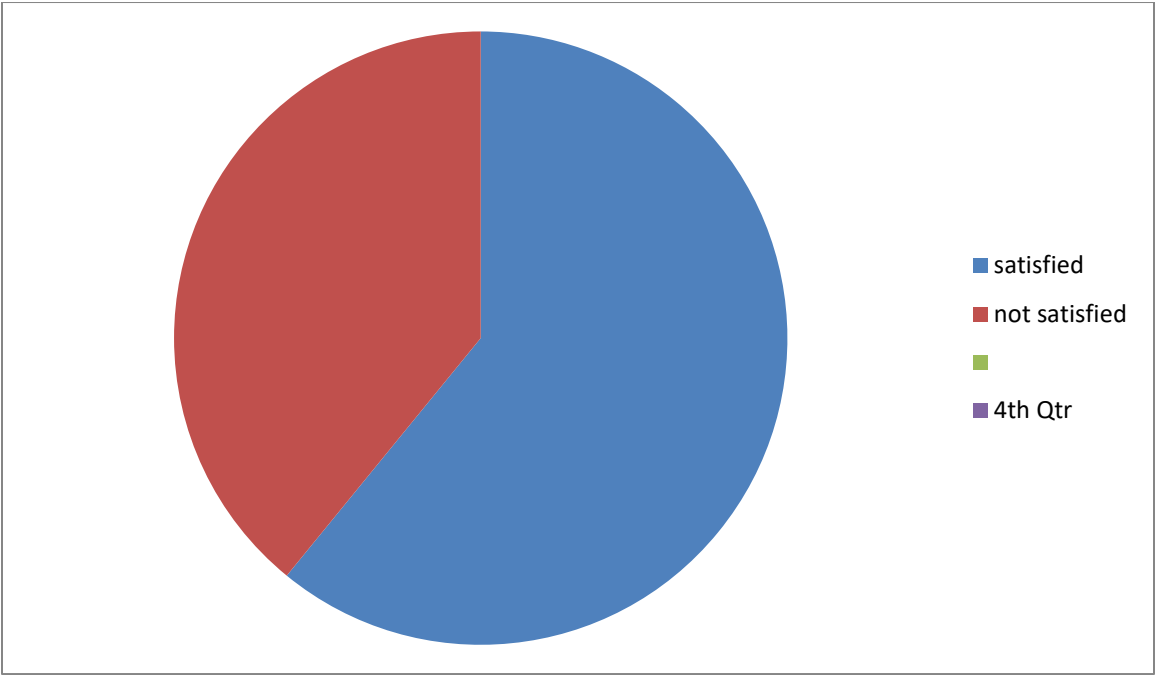


Fig 2: Rate of satisfaction

With these findings, it is clear that the effects of scrapping of the mandatory school feeding programs in UPE schools have serious negative impacts of the pupils’ learning abilities. The Government assumption that parents would be able to provide food for their children while at school is not realistic. New interventions are required to address the critical issue of school feeding in UPE schools.

4.3 Socio-economic and administrative factors that challenge the Provision of Midday Meals on Academic Performance of Pupils

The study found out that running school feeding programs in UPE schools is constrained by a range of socio-economic challenges. These include; negative perceptions and attitudes of parents, price fluctuation, poverty, and insufficient funding and education status of parents.

Most of the participants reported that negative perceptions and attitudes of parents affected the feeding in schools. This came out strongly in both the rural and the urban schools. The participants reported that many parents considered feeding as a burden imposed on them by the school teachers yet they did not have money to pay for school meals. Some participants indicated that parents reacted by withdrawing their children from schools that pay for meals taking them to those that do not charge SFP fees when the program was introduced. Many parents did not embrace the feeding program because they perceived it as a burden that was imposed on them by teachers yet they didn't have money to pay for school meals for their children. And many parents reacted by removing their children from schools that pay for school meals and took them to schools that do not. They do not care whether their children are fed or not as long as they study. Even some parents say that there should not be SFPs in schools. (IDI with Headteacher, one of the School)

According to one of the welfare teacher, the negative perceptions and attitudes show that parents have low morale accompanied with little love for their children to eat a meal at school due to their ignorance about the importance of feeding children while at school. Parents have low morale in paying for school meals and have little love for their children to eat. Others do not know the importance of feeding children with a hot meal. The welfare teacher from the rural school narrated.

The negative attitudes and perceptions were also associated with the belief that UPE schools are free of charge. It is reported that parents say the president told them not to pay money and just send their children to school. Parents say government schools are purely free and there is no payment required either in form of fees or meals. This has made it difficult for schools to change parents mind towards school feeding program and thus hindered the smooth provision of midday meals in schools. (One of the teachers)

Several participants reported that poverty has hindered many parents from supporting midday meals in public schools. For instance, the head teacher from the one school reported that “poverty has hindered parents’ ability to pay for school meals for their children and buying food

at home. Poverty has affected parents' ability to cater for their children's feeding fees since they also have no money to buy food at home. Many parents are farmers and their season was hit by sunshine thus have nothing to sell and fund the program. Which has made it difficult for schools to provide meals to all children at school?" (IDI with Head Teacher)

"A head teacher also reported that many parents who bring children in public schools are farmers and too poor to support the midday meals. Many parents who bring their children in this school are mainly farmers and since their reason didn't come out well, their response has been negative. 80% of parents like the program but they are poor, they do not have money to pay for school meals. So, we tell them to pay in kind. Some bring beans and maize which are still not sufficient". (IDI with head Teacher)

Similarly, a 15 year old girl P.6 class day scholar reported not eating at school due to poverty that hinders her parents from contributing to school meals. I neither eat at school nor bring packed food because my parents cannot afford to pay for my school meals. I feel bad when am seeing other children eating lunch at school but I tried to talk to my mother who told me that there is no money at home since even getting what to eat at home is difficult. (IDI with a p. 6, 15 year old girl)

Several participants reported that insufficient funding from parents has affected the quality and quantity of food provided to children at school. This was mainly attributed to poverty among parents who are the main funders of the midday meals in the public schools as provided for in the Education Act of 2008. According to this Act, the responsibility of feeding children while at school was left to parents and guardians in both rural and urban schools

For example, a p.7, 12 year old boy in boarding section decried the less and poor-quality food provided to them.

"We are provided with poor quality food that does not even satisfy us at all, sometimes they serve it late. For example, today since supper I have not eaten anything. The porridge served neither has sugar nor milk. Every week, there are four children that get affected with ulcers including me". (IDI with a p.7, 12 year old boy)

Many participants reported that there is no support from the government provided to public schools as far as school feeding is concerned. This was in both rural and urban schools. For example, the PTA chairperson from the urban school reported that no support is provided to public schools from the government to cater for midday meals except UPE funds which are also insufficient.

The only support government provides to schools is UPE fund and it does not cover school feeding programs since it's not even enough to meet the school needs. Government does not provide any support concerning the midday meals because the program is parent led. There is no little contribution made by government to add on that of parents to ensure the smooth running of SFPs. This has made it difficult for schools to run the program without government support but to only depend on little funds parents contribute and majority do not contribute anything to the program. Even the UPE funds provided by government are too little that cannot meet half of the planned school activities and everything have become worse especially this year because government has reduced the UPE funds to the smallest. And parents who are responsible for feeding their children at school, they do not have money to pay for school meals even they fail to get what to eat at home. (IDI with Head Teacher)

The head teacher from the urban school reported that children are served little food and some children miss out on lunch because of embezzlement of feeding fee and food by the staff members. This is because the money that could be used to buy enough food is invested in personal interests. During monitoring I found out that feeding fee and food is being embezzled by staff members. Whereby of the 15kgs of maize flour supposed to be cooked, during monitoring I found out that 3kgs had been taken away to be sold and get money without meeting the specific target. This affected the feeding of children because the food served to children did not satisfy them and others ended up missing because the 15kgs of maize flour that were supposed to be cooked, they only cook 12kgs and 3kgs had been embezzled. In addition, we buy beans and find stones in the middle sack of beans and you find that the 100kgs of beans 40kgs are stones. (IDI with Head Teacher)

ITEM	USED	EMBEZLED/WASTE	TOTAL
Maize flour	12kgs	3kgs	15kgs
Beans	60kgs	40kgs	100kgs

Table 2: Status of embezzlement or waste of food

However, embezzlement did not emerge as an issue in the rural school probably because few pupils contribute money and the contribution of parents is mainly in kind. Embezzlement is not an issue in this school because few parents contribute money but majority of them contribute in kind. For example, they bring kilograms (kgs) of beans and maize or maize flour and we measure them before being kept in the store. Even the school is smaller. (IDI with Head Teacher)

4.4 Improvement in the provision of midday meals to enhance on the academic performance of pupils

On improvement of provision of midday meals, 100% of the respondents (Pupils, Parents and Head teachers) had a contribution and therefore the research findings have shown that the provision of midday meals in schools can significantly improve the academic performance of pupils. Several ways have been identified to enhance the delivery and impact of midday meals, leading to better educational outcomes. Here are some key findings from the perspective of learners, parents and head teachers.

One of the teachers suggested nutritional Quality as he said "One important aspect is the nutritional quality of the meals provided. He suggested that meals should be well-balanced, providing a variety of nutrients necessary for children's growth and development. Including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and protein-rich foods can contribute to improved cognitive function and academic performance."

A pupil who receives these meals suggested menu variety and said "that a diverse menu with different meal options attracts more children to participate in the midday meal program. Offering a mix of local and regional cuisines, as well as taking into account cultural preferences, can help increase student satisfaction and participation. And hence helping them perform better in class"

Hygiene and Food Safety was also suggested by a parent and said "Maintaining high standards of hygiene and food safety is crucial in ensuring the effectiveness of midday meal programs. Implementing proper food handling practices, regular inspections, and monitoring of the cooking and serving areas can minimize the risk of foodborne illnesses and promote overall health among students."

Community Involvement was brought up by a parent "involving local communities in the planning and execution of midday meal programs can have a positive impact on their success. Engaging parents, teachers, and community members promotes ownership, ensures transparency, and helps address specific dietary requirements and preferences."

Other responses as to the improvement of provision of midday meals towards the improvement of academic performance of pupils included:

Integrating nutrition education into schools' curriculum and meal programs can empower students to make healthier food choices. Teaching children about the importance of nutrition, balanced diets, and the benefits of consuming various food groups can have long-term positive effects on their eating habits and academic performance.

Continuous monitoring and evaluation of midday meal programs is vital to identify gaps and areas for improvement. Regular assessments of the program's impact on students' academic performance, attendance, and overall health can help refine the strategies and ensure the desired outcomes are being achieved.

Collaboration between government bodies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other stakeholders can strengthen the implementation of midday meal programs. Sharing resources, expertise, and best practices can enhance the reach and effectiveness of such initiatives, leading to improved academic

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION.

5.0. Introduction.

This chapter highlights the summary, conclusion and recommendation from the previous chapter four.

5.2. Conclusions

From the performance of pupils who have midday meals and those who don't, it is clear that short term hunger is real and it exists among UPE School going pupils in Kirewa Sub County, Tororo District. In addition, not all the parents are in position to adequately feed their children even at home, since they do not have enough food, due to the recent food shortages. When these children are inadequately fed, they do not get satisfied. They therefore report to school early in the morning while hungry. Although some schools have come up with school feeding programs as means of curbing short term hunger, most of the parents are not willing to participate. This leaves the helpless children suffering from short term hunger while at school. The children have therefore come up with their own means of coping with short term hunger, which in the long run may be harmful to them and the society. For example the girls who have sexual relationships with Bodaboda men to earn money in order to buy food may end up getting early and unwanted pregnancies, and eventually dropping out of school. Pupils' looking for fruits around the village is a habit that slowly nurtures theft, since these pupils do not go to their own gardens at home, but instead go and steal from other people's gardens. Short term hunger negatively affects pupils' learning, and this was noted in the end of term grades. Factors such as concentration in the afternoon and attendance to school (both morning and afternoon) significantly affected pupils' grades, this in turn hampering the sole reason as to why UPE was established.

5.3 Recommendations

There is a need to coordinate the functioning of various departments with regard to Mid-Day Meal scheme. The Sub County, Kirewa should be entrusted the entire responsibilities of the implementation of the scheme at the sub county level. A Sub County level committee for the midday meal should be constituted after making some modifications in the existing provisions.

The Headmaster of the concerned primary school should be designated as secretary of this committee. The above committee should be authorized to make purchase of food grains required for Mid-Day-Meal scheme, twice in a year. It would not only make the food grains available at cheaper rates, but ensure the quality also. In case of default, this committee should be taken to task.

It must be clearly told to the guardians that their ward would be entitled to obtain scholarship, dress and Mid-Day-Meal only after ensuring their attendance up to 80 percent. No proxy in attendance should be allowed. It must be ensured that the children are provided food at a proper place in hygienic conditions.

Despite the fact that UPE is free and there is no mandatory fee that has to be paid to the school, there is need to sensitise communities, parents inclusive, on the effects of short term hunger on pupils' learning. Parents who take their children to schools that have a school feeding program should be enthusiastic enough to participate in the program since it directly benefits their children.

At schools where there are no feeding programs, parents and teachers should be encouraged to introduce them. Parents and teachers associations have a huge role to play here in looking after the welfare of their children and their children's education.

The media should be involved in creating awareness of researched findings of the effects of short term hunger on pupils' schooling. Stakeholders such as district administrators, School Management Committees, Parents/Teachers Associations, school administrative staff should all be sensitised and be given the capacity to sensitise the rest of the communities.

Schools that have land should adopt the culture of teaching the pupils how to grow their own food by initiating school gardens. This will enable the pupils not only alleviate short term hunger while at school, but also learn practical agricultural skills that they can use in the future.

5.4 Suggestion for Further Research

A case study research should be carried out, since one may not necessarily understand what the pupils exactly feel, and how they behave when they suffer short term hunger, unless they live in these communities and have further interactions with the affected pupils for some time and at a deeper level.

This research examined the relationship between mid-day meals and academic performance of pupils in Kirewa Sub County, Tororo District. Differences may exist across regions and districts. Further research should therefore be carried out in other regions, if the results are to be generalised for all schools going children in Uganda at large.

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APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HEADTEACHERS

1. How long have you been involved with the school?

1 - 2 years

3 - 4 years

5 years and above

2. Do you think there is any relationship between midday meals and academic performance of pupils?

Yes

No

If yes Specify.

3. Which of the following can you consider an administrative challenge to the provision of mid day meals.

a) Enrolment rate

b) lack of water and storage facilities

c) Low levels of accountability

d) Others, (Specify)

4. How important do you think a well-balanced midday meal is for academic performance?

a) It encourages schooling

b) Facilitates concentration in class

c) Enhances a child's judgement

d) Energizes the pupils for con curricula activities.

5. Are there any suggestions you can put forth towards the improvement of provision of mid day meals to pupils?

Yes

No

If yes Specify

6. Which of the following are community level challenges faced in provision of midday meals in schools?

a) Poverty

b) Degree of conservatism

c) Lack of skilled labour

d) Land tenure system

7. Which of the following any changes in pupils' behavior have you experienced after introducing midday meals?

a) Attentiveness

b) Daily attendance

c) Participation in class

d) Creativity and Innovativity

7. Do you believe that the provision of midday meals contributes to higher levels of concentration and focus in classrooms?

Yes

No

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS

1. Do you think there is any relationship between midday meals and academic performance of pupils?

Yes

No

If yes Specify.

2. Do you think midday meals have positively impacted pupils' health and well-being?

Yes

No

If yes Specify

3. Which of the following challenges does the community face in provision of midday meals in schools?

a) Poverty

b) Degree of conservatism

c) Lack of skilled labour

d) Land tenure system

4. Have any pupils expressed increased motivation or eagerness to attend school due to the provision of midday meals?

Yes

No

5. Do you think the availability of midday meals has reduced absenteeism or lateness among students?

Yes

No

6. In your opinion, how has the introduction of midday meals positively influenced school community relationships?

a) It has drawn parents closer to teacher

b) It has created market for the goods locally produced

c) It has provided employment opportunities to locals

d) Others, (Specify)

7. If you could make any recommendations or suggest improvements for the midday meal program, what would they be?

APPENDIX III: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PUPILS

1. How long have you been in the school?

1 - 2 years

3 - 4 years

5 years and above

2. How often has the school been providing mid day meals to pupils?

Daily

Weekly

Monthly

Termly

3. Which of the following are community level challenges faced in provision of midday meals in schools?

a) Poverty

b) Degree of conservatism

c) Lack of skilled labour

4. Do you think there is any relationship between midday meals and academic performance of pupils?

Yes

No

If yes Specify.

5. Do you think the availability of midday meals has reduced absenteeism or lateness among pupils?

Yes

No

6. Which of the following ways can the provision of mid day meals be improved?

a) Provide free meals at school

b) Encourage packing of food from home

c) Encourage parents to pay so as meals are provided at school

d) Send pupils back at break and lunch time to collect meals.

Others, Specify