

The Management of the Schools' Supplementary Feeding Programmes in Bulawayo Metropolitan Province

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Abstract

With particular reference to Magwegwe Cluster Primary Schools in Mzilikazi District, the study was conducted to determine the management issues faced by education managers in executing the schools' supplementary feeding programs (SSFPs) in Bulawayo's Metropolitan Province. In order to gather data for this study, a qualitative methodology utilizing the case study was employed. Open-ended questionnaires, document analysis, observation protocol, and an interview guide were all used. For the study, a sample of twenty Education Managers from Magwegwe Cluster was selected. A few things influencing the implementation of SSFPs are lack of funding and government assistance. Obstacles such as parents' non payment of levies and the current state of hyperinflation prevent the SSFPs from being implemented effectively. Strategies to be used for the successful implementation of SSFPs included investing in nutritional gardens, asking the local business community for help, and teaching parents about the value of taking their children to school in order to improve the payment of feeding levies. In order to ensure that there is enough food for the schools, the study suggests that the government subsidize the feeding programs as well, as the SSFPs were implemented a little too quickly.

Challenges; Education Managers; Effective Implementation; Factors; Management; Programmes; Strategies; Supplementary feeding

1. Introduction

At their meeting in Dakar, Senegal in 2000, member states of the United Nations pledged to end hunger and achieve universal primary education (Tomlinson 2007). One of the primary strategies selected to address these issues was school feeding programs. The UN declaration, and more especially three of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, attain universal primary education, and

advance gender equality and women's empowerment all encompass school nutrition (Tomlinson, 2007).

Additionally, in the last five to ten years, there has been a significant growth in the number of school feeding programs supported by governments, donors, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), mostly from Africa, due to the UN's commitment to promoting educational goals.

According to Schultz (1988), education spending is essential to the long-term economic growth of any nation. Investments in education have shown strong social and private benefits, especially in primary schooling. However, especially in a developing nation like Zimbabwe, malnutrition and the ensuing bad health prevent students from realizing their full potential. Hunger hinders economic growth and impedes efforts to reduce poverty; hence it is both a cause and an effect of poverty, according to the United Nations (UN) Millennium Goals, 2005. Malnutrition in children can have even more severe and long-lasting effects. Children that are malnourished may experience stunting, wasting, and diminished cognitive ability.

In addition to focusing on the integration of SSFPs and agriculture, the New Partnership on Africa's Development (NEPAD) embraced the strategy of the United Nations Hunger Taskforce (UNHTF) (Ramadhani, 2014). In 2002, the NEPAD was established. The comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (AADP), created by the NEPAD secretariat, serves as a framework for the continent's agricultural recovery, economic expansion, food security, and rural development. Pillar three of this framework focuses specifically on lowering hunger and expanding the food supply. Its goal is to reduce malnutrition in school-age children by supplementing their diets with full, sufficient meals that meet their calorie needs and are produced on small-scale farms. NEPAD developed an improvement indicator as a result: The purpose of basic school lunch service is to assist children from poor and vulnerable areas throughout the member states. According to Saunders (2006), many students from both rural and urban areas find it difficult to attend school regularly because of the distance between their houses and the school. Due to their residential locations being far from schools, approximately 19% of urban students and 29% of rural students have dropped out of school. As a result, they consistently fail to return home during lunchtime, and even when they do, there is insufficient food to feed the entire family.

School feeding has an effect on the enrolment rate of school-age children in the nomadic tribes, according to a study done in Kenya. Amolo (2004) noted several difficulties facing SSFPs on a nationwide scale. These include: the absence of a clear national policy on school nutrition programs; the fact that these programs primarily rely on donor funding raises serious concerns about their sustainability; and the difficulty in getting food to the intended recipients from schools because the majority of them are located in rural areas with weak infrastructure. Despite the dire circumstances, Education Managers' obstacles needed to be discovered for the SSFPs to be effective.

The National School Nutritional Programme (NSNP) in South Africa provides school meals to specific primary schools. Six million children were touched by the program in the year that ended in 2006–07, according to latest statistics (OECD, 2008). Proudlock, Dutschke, Jamieson, Monson, & Smith (2008) estimate that 2.8 million children fell into the starvation category in 2006, up from 22% in 2005. While there are still significant differences by race, province, and urban/rural location, this number has decreased.

More than 1.5 million schoolchildren in Kenya are provided a hot lunch consisting of corn and beans every day, which for many of them is their sole meal, according to The World Bank (2016). In addition to lunch being supplied, over 8.8 million South African schoolchildren receive a hot midmorning meal. This includes those who live in the poorest provinces. The Global School Feeding Sourcebook: Lessons from 14 nations (2013) offers a thorough examination of school feeding programs to uncover common themes, problems, and best practices. It does this by drawing on case studies from all around the world, including programs in nine Sub-Saharan African nations. Based on the data, the programs that address community needs are locally owned and engage parents or the community in some way are the strongest and most sustainable. In Namibia, it is expected of communities to supply storerooms, cooking utensils, and fuel. By encouraging locally run meal programs, school feeding programs in Mali have placed schools at the centre of the community's growth. Ghana's government creates nutritionally balanced school meals using locally sourced products by using an online planner for meal plans. Accordingly, the decision to scale up school feeding programs depends on how they are implemented, how they are designed, and how well the community's stakeholders cooperate.

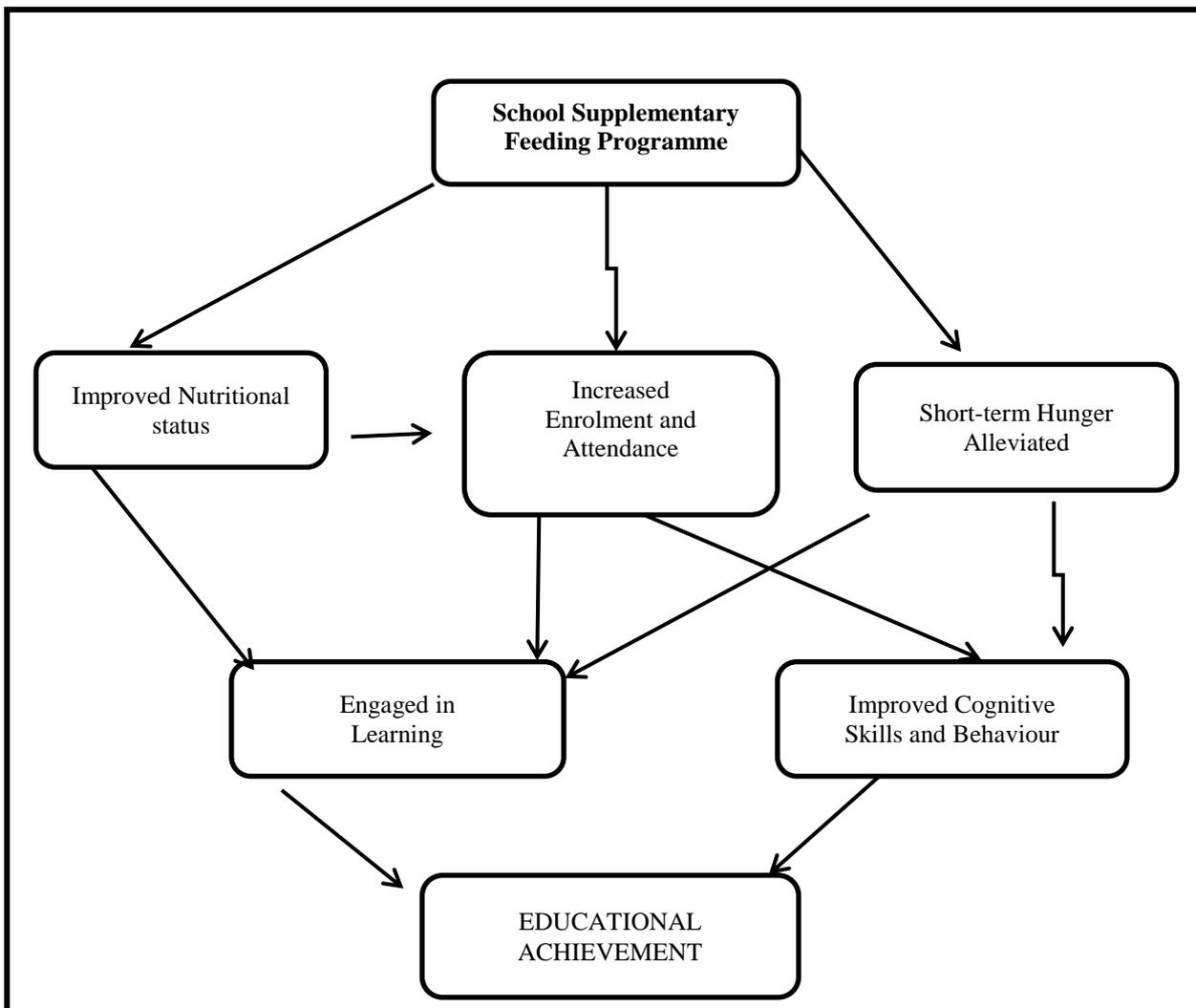
World Food Program (2006) states that Malawi lacks a national SSFP that is overseen by the government. The World Food Program (WFP) and groups like GTZ and Action Aid, which have helped the SSFP during times of need, currently oversee and fund school feeding programs. The majority of funding for school feeding programs comes from the WFP, both in terms of quantity and geographic reach. The Malawian government does not directly offer funding, but it does supply logistical personnel from several government ministries.

Hunger is one of the most frequently mentioned causes of this situation. Therefore, in order to maximize retention and primary school completion rates while still enabling children to benefit from free primary education, interventions like the SSFPs in these schools are required. The former secretary for primary and secondary education declared that the Tashinga Primary School Home-Grown School Feeding Program was the most successful direct intervention in improving students' health. She emphasized that the program was a vital resource for kids' growth and development (Bundy, Burbano, Grosh, Jukes, & Drake, L. 2009). Therefore, the SSFPs have the potential to improve student academic attainment, decrease dropout rates, and boost access to primary education. However, a lack of precise regulations, sustainability, accessibility, higher enrolment, and the programs' school meal arrangements could result in significant obstacles that restrict their

success (Machocho, 2011). The researcher was therefore motivated by these and other difficulties to look into the difficulties Education Managers in the Bulawayo Metropolitan Province's Magwegwe Cluster faced when implementing SSFPs.

2. Conceptual Framework

SSFPs have a positive effect on academic attainment. By reducing the opportunity costs of attending school and by offering more motivation to participate in formal education, SSFPs raise school attendance. Short-term hunger may be reduced by SSFPs, enhancing children's cognitive development and attention span. Furthermore, by giving kids extra calories and nutrients in addition to their regular meal, SSFPs assist kids' nutritional status. Better health and resistance to infectious infections and illnesses that would prevent kids from going to school result from this (Jacoby, Cueto, & Pollitt, (1998). Therefore; Figure 1 shows the relationship between SSFPs and potential impacts on school children.



Source: Adopted from Grantham-Mc Gregory et al., (1998 p 12) & Jacoby et al., (1998p 25).

3. Methodology

The study was informed by constructivism which assumes that knowledge is socially constructed and there are multiple truths. For this research project, a case study methodology in conjunction with a qualitative research strategy was chosen. The research methods were defined by the size of the sample because the study used open-ended questionnaires, an interview guide, a document analysis procedure, and an observation protocol to collect data. Using purposeful sampling, individuals were selected.

4. Findings

The findings indicate that, on the whole, education managers in this study had positive attitudes on the implementation of SSFPs; however, their main obstacles stem from a lack of financial resources, which are necessary to purchase food for students to eat. Most education managers are now feeling frustrated as a result of this. However, the majority of education managers is supportive of the program and believes that it is necessary because it benefits students and schools as a whole more.

4.1 Factors affecting the implementation of SSFPs

The study's empirical conclusions indicated that SSFP implementation success may be influenced by school environment elements. Financial or material resources were considered to be one of the elements influencing the implementation of SSFPs. Due to the majority of parents' unemployment; learners had to go to school without eating. This had an impact on the students' academic performance, which in turn had an impact on the school's pass rate, which would never rise. The majority of participants' findings indicated that the dropout rate among students was their main source of concern. When pressed for more details, they bemoaned the fact that the learners couldn't go to school without food and without having paid their tuition. The findings also conclude that a number of factors such as resources, employment status, dropout rates were some of the factors affecting the implementation of SSFPs in primary schools.

4.2 Attitudes of Education Managers towards the SSFPs

The purpose of this study was also to ascertain the perspectives of Education Managers regarding the SSFPs' implementation. The majority merely stated that they felt positively about the program in response. The school saw numerous benefits from the program; therefore they said the notion was admirable. It increased the student's attendance at school, raised their pass percentage, and enhanced their nutritional status. One participant said that the economy was tight and that the introduction was a little too hurried. Some participants held differing opinions about the introduction of SSFPs into elementary schools. Because the program required financial difficulties, they saw it negatively. Levies and school fees were not being paid promptly or in full. This had a detrimental effect on the education managers because it made the program's implementation more challenging because there wasn't enough money.

The research draws the conclusion that education managers view the use of SSFPs favorably based on the data. This is because it increased students' attendance at school, raised their pass rate, and enhanced their nutritional status. This is consistent with a study conducted in 2012 by Jackson in Campton & Ghana, which found that the school meals kept students in school and reduced absenteeism and school dropout rates. The Education Managers surveyed expressed satisfaction with the school meals program. Furthermore, the results verified that educators consistently maintained full classrooms with students who arrived on time.

4.3 Challenges faced by Education Managers during the implementation of SSFPs

The data acquired for the study indicates that there are many obstacles involved in implementing SSFPs. The majority of participants listed the issue of parents' lack of financial contribution as their main concern. They emphasized that parents were finding it difficult to keep up with the fees and even the food levies due to the difficult economic conditions. As a result, the difficulties the school faced were numerous, starting with the construction of suitable buildings for food preparation. The failure of parents to participate has a detrimental impact on the implementation of school-sponsored family programs (SSFPs). Epstein (1995) argues that parent-school relations affect both the success of school-implemented educational transformation programs and student accomplishment. The Kwazulu-Natal study results of Beesley (2014) also validated important obstacles that the education managers faced, such as financial resources.

4.4 Strategies to employ in order to maintain effective running of SSFPs

The majority of participants reported that their schools have made investments in nutrient-dense gardens in an effort to reduce the relish problem. In addition, they said that they have approached non-governmental organizations and the business community for assistance with grain in order to address the negative perception of the program. The majority of participants stated that they would first educate the parents about the value of their children's education. Parents would then have a good attitude toward the significance of volunteering to participate in various school projects as a result of this. In order to help, parents would also need to offer to come home and cook their kids' meals for free.

The study also comes to the conclusion that Education Managers can use a variety of tactics to guarantee the successful and efficient deployment of SSFPs. Using nutritional gardens in schools and enlisting the support of the neighbourhood business community, SSFPs can be implemented successfully in primary schools. Additionally, Jackson (2012) proposed that SSFPs should consider instructing students on food preparation, management, and nutrition (Khan, 2006). In his research, Machocho (2011) also recommended that the government make sure that food programs are regularized in all schools. Parents needed to be educated on the importance of sending their children to school, whether there is a feeding programme or not. It was also suggested that government should provide funds for the feeding programme in good time and ensure it is enough for the schools according to the pupils' population.

5 Recommendations

- Parents need to be made aware of the value of their children's education as well as the fact that the implementation of SSFPs depends on their cooperation and involvement. Schools may host theatre and music competitions with themes centred on the value of education, as well as fun days and prize-giving events. The relevance of eating a healthy diet may serve as the basis for themes.
- The government ought to provide resources and finances to support the continuation of the SSFPs. Governments may extend invitations to non-governmental organizations to collaborate with educational institutions and support the construction and acquisition of standard kitchens and store rooms. The government may also enlist the help of the nearby business community by accepting donations of various kinds of food.

- Government should sensitise parents on the importance of SSFPs through awareness campaigns. Social media may also be used as a medium of communicating with the parents.
- Schools must utilise pieces of land they have and acquire green houses to grow their own grain and vegetables.
- The government should draw a sample of specifications of records which the Education Managers should follow. If schools approach these programmes blindly without any policy guidelines, they may end up being misguided and cost schools a lot of money.

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Appendix A.

Interview Protocol for Education Managers

Section A: Biographic data

- 1. Name of interviewee..... Pseudonym:
- 2. Name of School: Pseudonym:
- 3. Gender:
- 4. Highest academic qualifications:
- 5. Highest professional qualifications:
- 6. Number of years in the present post:
- 7. Date of appointment: Venue: Date:
- 8. **Section B: Factors, Attitudes, Challenges and Strategies for implementing School’s Supplementary Feeding Programmes (SSFPs)**

9. What are the factors that influence implementation of the School’s Supplementary Feeding Programme in your school?

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10. What do you think are the attitudes of Education Managers towards the implementation SSFPs in Magwegwe Cluster Schools?

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11. What are the challenges you face in your attempt to implement SSFPs in your school?

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.....12.What strategies do you use in your school to minimise the challenges you mentioned in question number 10 above?

.....13.Any other comments you would like to make on your school’s Supplementary Feeding Programme?

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Appendix B

Open –Ended Questionnaire for Education Managers

Section A. Biographic data

- 1. Gender:
- 2. Highest academic qualifications:
- 3. Highest professional qualifications:
- 4. Post held:
- 5. Number of years in the present post:

Section B: Factors, Attitudes, Challenges and Strategies for implementing Schools’ Supplementary Feeding Programmes (SSFPs)

6. What are the factors that influence the implementation of the SSFP in your school?

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7. What are the attitudes of Education Managers towards the implementation of SSFPs in Magwegwe Cluster Schools?

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8. What are the challenges which you face in your attempt to manage SSFPs in your school?

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9. What strategies can be employed in your school to minimise the challenges you mentioned in question number 9 above?

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10. Any other comments you would like to make on your School’s Supplementary Feeding Programme?

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Appendix C
Observation Protocol

No.	Description	Activities	Comment
1	Availability of resources	1.1 Kitchen or cooking area 1.2 Construction specifications 1.3 Pots 1.4 Plates and spoons 1.5 Water point 1.6 Storage facility 1.7 Fire wood	
2	Evidence of feeding	2.1 Timetable	

	taking place	2.2 Frequency 2.3 Adequacy	
3	Documentation for SSFPs	3.1 Policy Document on feeding. 3.2 Ministerial Guidelines 3.3 Feeding register	