

ASSESSMENT OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DAILY MENU AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS PUPILS IN LAGELU LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OYO STATE NIGERIA.

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the relationship between daily menu of primary school pupils and their academic achievement in Lagelu Local government area of Oyo state. Ninety-six primary school pupils were randomly selected from twenty primary schools in the Local government area. The instrument used for the study was author constructed questionnaire. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistic in analysing the demographic information given and Z test was used in testing the hypothesis formulated. The result obtained showed that there is significant relationship between the socio-economic status of the respondents parents and their academic achievement, for example, over 71% of high academic achiever pupils parents were highly educated, over 78% of them were civil servants and teachers, 83% of them earn between N500 - 1M per annum and 85% of them come from small family size. The results further revealed a significant relationship between daily menu of the sampled participants and their academic achievement (Z- score 1. 787 > 1.68). Furthermore, a summary of food intake by the respondents showed that High academic achiever pupils recorded 85% protein consumption, 67% of fat, 40% of carbohydrates, 55% of vitamins and 57% of minerals as against those of Low academic achievers of 25% of protein, 33% of fat, 60% of carbohydrates, 45% of vitamins and 43% of minerals. Therefore, government should provide school meal for primary school pupils as stipulated in UBE edict and parents should also provide their children with meal that are balanced for their good health and better academic performance.

Key words: *Daily menu, Academic achievement, Primary School Pupils.*

INTRODUCTION:

Nigeria is currently passing through hard times economically, citizens are feeling it seriously. The overall effects of the bad economic situation is telling on all phases of our life development. For example the academic development of our children is badly affected.

Evidence abound to show that in a given situation, where the socio- economic status of the citizen is high, the academic achievement of the learner, in that society would be higher and where it is low the academic achievement may be hampered (Amuzat, 1992). Also, Ipaye (1983) opined that socio- economic status has been found to relate positively to the amount and quality of a person's education. And since intelligent is one of the factors that has greatest influence on a child's

performance, there is no way one can separate parental socio- economic status from child's academic achievement. Jencks cited in Amuzat (1992) reported in reanalysis of several large survey, of Educational and occupational achievement in America, using a variety of occupational achievement status indicators, concluded that family background explain close to half of the variation in Educational attainment.

Due to poor economic situation in Nigeria, the cost of living has become unbearably high, many mothers hardly take balance diet or can they afford the cost of balance diet or proper medication for their children. World Health Organization (WHO, 2009) observed that 20 – 45% of women of child bearing age for example in developing world do not eat the WHO recommended amount of 2,250 calories per day, talk less of the extra 285 a day needed during pregnancy. This situation tends to continue after birth and during the critical stage of the child's development. All these result in low intelligent quotient (I Q) associated with poor nutrition, this no doubt affects half or $\frac{3}{4}$ of pupils in primary school in Nigeria, this, will no doubt reduce the learning capability of the children.

Available data indicate high level of protein energy malnutrition as well as short term hunger among school age children in developing countries (WFP, 2013; WFP; 2009). According to World Food Programme (2009) sixty-six million primary school age children attend classes hungry across the developing countries and twenty three million of these children live in Africa alone. In Nigeria, about 30% of school children have low body mass index (FMOH, 2006) Nigerian studies have documented prevalence rates of stunting, underweight and wasting as 27.7%, 29.8% and 25.5% respectfully among school age children in the south east. (Ejekwu, 2012) and 44.8%, 43.1% and 41.1% respectively among boys in public primary schools in the south west (Olanipekun, Obatolu, Fasoyiro, & Ogunba, et al 2012)

Senbajo, Oshikoya, Odusanya, and Njokanma (2011) and Adegun, (2013) reported that a significant difference was found in the category of food brought to school by pupils in the different school types, only 2.0% and 5.8% of pupils in public schools and mission schools respectively had balanced diet or meals compared to 32.5% of pupils in the private schools. Further more fruits and vegetables were present in the lunch packs of 3.0%, 10.2% and 48.3% of pupils in public, missions and private schools respectively. Furthermore where pupils brought food, they were no balanced meals. For example out of the 792 pupils studied, only 12.4% had balanced meals while fruits and vegetables were present in the meals of 29.2% These findings explain the significantly higher rate of malnutrition among pupils in Nigerian public schools compared to private ones as documented by researchers (Olanipekun, et al., 2012; Senbajo, et al., 2011; Adegun, 2013). The difference in the diet contents of pupils in different school types may be attributed to the socio-economic status of parents as only well off families can afford the fees paid in private schools. A significant association was found between the category of food in lunch packed and parents occupational and educational status. Parents' occupational status indicate household wealth which is an important determinants of the quality of food affordable by the family. A strong link has been documented

between parent socio-economic status and malnutrition by previous studies (Senbanjo, et al., 2011; Babar, Muzaffar, Khan, & Imdad, 2010).

Children of professionals and parents with tertiary education were more likely to have balanced diet in their diet compared to others. Mother's education and household wealth have been reported as the prime factor that regulate family nutrition (Ozdogar, et al., 2012; Vereecken & Maes, 2010). Canagarajah, Ngwafon and Thomas (1987) asserted that the nutritional welfare of Nigeria children is precarious. Many house – holds are unable to provide adequate nutritious food for all family members which has led to increasing malnutrition. Childhood malnutrition and its consequences such as wasting and stunting, are wide spread and rampant disease. All these precarious situations are likely to inhibit good academic performance, as malnutrition is capable of blighting the brain cells which as a result bring about mental retardation.

Evidences are abound that the products of the Nation's Primary institutions are not performing well academically in termly and joint sessional examinations. (Oladipo, 2003) Today, many primary six certificate holders cannot read, write and speak, the pupils inability to be functionally literate may not be unconnected with the poor home environment characterized with poor nutrition or unbalanced diet. The study therefore examined the relationship between daily menu taken by the pupils and their academic performance. The need for this is evident in the finding of Mober (1975), who stressed that many research studies have shown that infants in African societies have started well in mental development. This seems true mostly in their first 6 months or so of life, Thereafter, the measured IQ are not often so much ahead of Europeans levels. In some cases, as with those in an orphanage or other impoverished conditions. IQs have as in Europe, fallen low especially where malnutrition exists and where it is common, mental development suffers. In view of this, Ebuehi and Disu (2000) rightly observed that any well fed child is healthier, happy, bright, active and has high resistance to disease, while a poorly fed child would be re-captive to teaching, learning and physical activities.

The Federal government of Nigeria in the realisation of the critical roles of nutrition to education launched the Home- Grown school Feeding and Health Programme (HGSFHP) in 2005 in collaboration with UNICEF, WFP, New partnership for African Development and other international development partners (Akanbi, 2011; FMOH, 2006; Yunusa, 2012). The aim of HGSFHP was to provide a nutritionally adequate meal during school hours while boasting food production by local farmers in the 12 pilot states. Unfortunately only Osun State is still implementing the programmes (FMOH, 2006; Yunusa, Gumel, Adegbusi, & Adegbusi, 2012). Pupils need well balanced diet from all classes of food and eat required amount. A well balanced nutritious diet shall compose of 12-15% of protein, 25-30% of fat and 55-60% of carbohydrates. There must also be adequate vitamins, minerals, water and dietary fibre. Pupils need protein, minerals, water for growth and maintenance of body system, carbohydrates fats, protein for energy, vitamins to regulate body system and water for nutrients transportation (UNICEF, 2003).

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM:

In Nigeria, evidence abound that the performance of the present generation of primary school learners in common entrance examination and primary six school leaving certificate examination is relatively poorer than in the past. The need to find out whether the daily menu taken by the pupils can be associated with their poor performance motivated the conduct of the study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The main objective of the study was to determine the relationship between the daily menu taken by the pupils and their academic performance.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

In conducting this study, the following hypotheses were tested.

1. There is no significant relationship between the quality of menu taken and the academic achievement of primary school pupils in the local government based on their social economic status
2. There is no significant relationship between the quality of menu taken and the academic performance of primary school pupils in Lagelu Local government area of Oyo state.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

A study of this nature would be useful in highlighting the possible problem inherent in Nigerian educational system, especially issues related to pupils' poor performance in academic activities and poor feeding.

It will also be of great benefit to the government especially in the implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) in which its law stipulates that primary school pupils should be fed in schools. The study will reveal whether this need is germane or not for the success of the scheme.

Through the result of the study, parents shall also be informed of the need to meet adequately the physiological needs of their children for their overall success in life.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Lagelu Local government area of Oyo state. Descriptive survey method was used in conducting the study. Ninety six pupils in primary schools were randomly selected through the use of purposive simple random technique. Only pupils that performed excellently well and woefully in the Joint Examination in the Local government Area were used for the study. They were divided into two groups of high academic achievers and low academic achievers. Ten (10) schools in the rural areas and ten (10) schools in urban areas were randomly selected from the Local government for the study.

Instrument

The instrument used in collecting data for the study was a structured questionnaire constructed by the researcher. The instrument validity and reliability were enhanced by the researcher. The instrument has two parts, part 1 contains information on socio- economic status of the respondents while part 2 has four sections, section A contains information on menu taken at breakfast, section

B has information on break day meal, section C has information on the Lunch while section D has information on the sr, response was anchored on taken regularly, hardly and never.

Academic performance of students were determined through the following process. High academic achievers were the students that scored 50% and above in Mathematics, English, Yoruba, Basic Science, Creative Arts, while students with less than 45% in major subjects were regarded as Low academic achievers

Method of data collection:

The researcher visited all the schools involved in the study and with the assistance of the class teachers, the instruments were administered and collected back the same day.

Method of data analysis

Data collected were analyzed through the use of Z test and percentage spread.

RESULTS

Table I: Respondents' Socio-Economic Status

Characteristics	HAA (N=48)		LAA (N=48)	
	F	%	F	%
Parent Academic Background				
B.A/B.Sc	10	20	-	-
NCE	15	31	1	2.1
OND	10	20	2	4
O'L	10	20	5	10
Pry	3	6.3	15	31
Illiterates	-	-	25	52
Parental Occupation				
Civil Servant	15	31	3	6
Teaching	23	47	4	8
Trading	5	10	8	17
Farming	4	8	17	35
Jobless	1	2.1	16	33
Parental Income				
1 million	25	52	2	4
500,000	15	31	5	10
200,000	5	10	10	20
100,000	3	6.4	31	64.4
Family Size				
10	-	-	17	35
7	7	15	26	54
4	25	52	4	8
4	16	34	1	2.1

NB: **HAA** - High Academic Achievers
LAA - Low Academic Achievers.

Table II: Z- test of difference between two Means of high academic achievers and low academic achievers in respect of their daily menu.

Variable	N	\bar{x}	SD	DF	Z
High Academic Achiever	48	43.3	1.2	47	
Low Academic Achiever	48	42.7	1.0	47	1.73

< 1.68

Table III: Summary of Food Intake by the Respondents

Variable	Protein	Fats	Carbohydrate	Vitamins	Minerals
High Academic Achiever	75%	67%	40%	55%	57%
Low Academic Achiever	25%	33%	60%	45%	43%

DISCUSSIONS

The first hypothesis generated assumed that there is no significant relationship between the quality of menu taken by the pupils and their academic achievement based on parental socio economic status. The results as shown in table I proved otherwise. Majority of the parents of high academic achievers were highly educated. Over 71% possessed certificates ranging from OND- BA/BSc, while about 83% of the low academic achievers parents possessed low level certificate or non. On occupational status 78% of the parents of high academic achievers worked as civil servants / teachers, while 68% of the low academic achievers worked as petty traders or jobless. As regards income. 83% of the high academic achievers earned between N500000-1m per Annum, while 64.4% of low academic achievers parents earned less than N100000 per annum. On the family size of the respondents, over 85% of the high academic achievers were from family size of four or less, while over 89% of the low academic achievers belong to family size of more than seven.

In view of these results, one can say that parental social- economic status may determine academic performance of primary school pupils. The result is consistent with the findings of Barbar, et al. (2010) who asserted that parental economic status will not only affect academic performance of children but also make it impossible for them to really rub shoulder with their counterparts from high socio- economic status.

The second hypothesis generated for the study stated that there will be no significant difference in the academic achievement of primary school pupils based on the quality of their daily menu. Looking at the results as contained in Table II above, it is obvious that the calculated z test score of 1.73 was higher than the table value of 1.68. In view of this result, the hypothesis was rejected. This finding is consistent with the finding of Ebuehi and Disu (2000) who observed that a well fed child is healthier, happy, bright, very active and has high resistance to disease, while a poorly fed child would be receptive to teaching, learning and physical activities.

The result of this study can be justified by looking at the current socio- economic situations in the country. Central Bank of Nigeria, World Bank (2006), and Canagarajah, et al. (1987) reported that majority of the citizens are living below the poverty level. Parents cannot feed their children properly, even when they feed, many homes or families provide unbalance diet. Pregnant women and children at their formative age suffered most, when a pregnant woman cannot get nourished diet, the child in the womb will not develop properly mentally and physically, even after birth the child physiological needs are not adequately met, in view of this, the child mental and physical development suffer (WFP, 2003, 2013).

Without mincing words, the roles of good feeding cannot be over emphasized in any activity that are mentally related. Many Nigerian children due to bad nutrition have become uneducable, dullards or unintelligent before birth or shortly after birth. The need to correct this anomalies'

motivated many Nations of the world to introduce school meal programme for primary school pupils. The case of Makueni District of Embu province in Kenya is a living example. In this program lunch is served in all their schools. The program was supported by the World food program and parents. The aim was to ensure that children are not hungry and able to concentrate on school work, due to this effort, the performance of schools in this district was excellent. It is very gratifying to note that the UBE policy in Nigeria also gives room for the provision of meals for primary school pupils, the implementation of this policy by the government will go a long way in assisting the pupils to have access to nourished and balance diet which as a result will enhance the improvement of the pupils academic performance.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Poor feeding will no doubt result into malnutrition, and malnutrition disorder affects the cognitive and intellectual development of school children. There is no doubt about it, many parent in Nigeria due to economic hard time cannot properly feed their children with balance diet, (Khan, 2000), hence the problem of poor academic performance cannot be ruled out in our educational institution as reflected in the result of this study. This situation must be checked in order to assist our children to live healthy and productive life. Many Nigerian children are not doing well academically due to problem related to feeding. The need to save the situation called for the following recommendations.

Many intervention programs should be put in place in order to promote the health and nutritional status of our school children, most important of it, is a National policy on health and nutrition education which must be integrated into our educational programme e.g UBE programmes. The Policy must be specific on the objectives of health and nutrition programme and they must be focused on education. The executors must be provided with sufficient fund and freedom to operate the programme .Philanthropists, organizations, communities and rich parents must be involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the programme.

In view of the issue discussed above, the Nation can move forward if the current policy on UBE programme which stipulates, that primary school pupils should be fed is fully implemented. Akanbi (2011) reported that sponsored school lunch programme aimed at ensuring that every school child get at least one adequate diet daily. Unfortunately this programme has been affected by the economic down turn especially in the developing countries. For example in Nigeria the Home Grown School Feeding and Health Programme launched in 2005 by the Federal Government is being implemented by Osun state government (Yunusa, 2012) The present regime in Nigeria should be appreciated for extending this gesture to seven states in Nigeria, Oyo state inclusive and eight hundred forty- four million naira (N844m) was released for the programme.

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