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**POLAC MANAGEMENT REVIEW (PMR)
DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCE
NIGERIA POLICE ACADEMY, WUDIL-KANO**



IMPLICATION OF SCHOOL FEEDING POLICY AND GOVERNMENT SCHOOL ENROLLMENT IN BAUCHI STATE, 2015-2024

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Abstract

The study assessed government school feeding policy on school enrollment in Bauchi metropolis, Bauchi state. School feeding policy in Nigeria is a tool for enhancing school enrollment among school children. It continues to play significant roles in enhancing the level of school enrolment in Bauchi state. However, School Feeding Policy as an intervention to education by the federal government of Nigeria is grossly underfunded in Bauchi state to influence school enrolment. Similarly, the school feeding policy has limited coverage in the state as thousands school children have not been motivated to enroll in school. Therefore, the study explores the implication of school feeding policy on students' enrollment as well as the influence of school feeding policy on school enrolment in Bauchi metropolis. The study used System theory to guide the research assumption. Equally, the research used qualitative design in which semi structured interview was employed to collect information from the respondents. Purposive sampling technique was adopted to select 4 informants for the interview. The data from the interview were thematically content analyzed. The results indicates that school enrollments in Bauchi metropolis increase gradually as adoption of School Feeding policy have led to increase enrollments in some schools due to its consistency. The study signifies that School Feeding Policy has impacted positively in Bauchi as enrolment increased significantly over a period of a year. Thus, the study recommends that the financiers of the school feeding programme should ensure that enough funds are provided in time to give schools' management enough time to purchase enough food stuffs in time, so that this does not only help increase enrolment but also improve on attendance and retention rates. The government to employ more teachers to counteract understaffing situation in these schools.

Keywords: School, Feeding, Enrolment, Bauchi Programme

1. Introduction

School feeding policy has been used as an effective mechanism for addressing child nutrition for purposeful educational enrolment and retention and hygiene issues. The policy has also effectively provided opportunity for income-generation, employment creation and economic integration benefits to communities in which they have been implemented (Akyeampong, 2017). Several countries around the globe and especially African countries have adopted the school feeding policy with the aim of boosting school enrollment in their respective countries. Countries like Ghana, Niger, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Togo, etc. have since join the train in adopting school feeding policy (Bowlby, 2018). More so, school feeding policy has helped get many children into school

and help them stay there in African countries including Nigeria and Bauchi State. Studies have shown that school feeding policy has rather increased students enrolment by an average of 9% in developing countries. For example, School feeding policy in Bangladesh have improved school enrollment by 14.2% and reduced the probability of drop-outs by 7.5%. 15, in Madagascar, attendance rates increased from 88% to 98% over two years after the introduction of school feeding policy (Jomaa & McDonnell, 2011).

Similarly, as a policy drive, the school meals programmes revealed that children receiving school meal during the entire school year attend school 4-7 days more than children who do not receive (Gelli, 2015). School feeding programs are widely available in high-income countries but generally have poor coverage in

low- and middle income countries (LMICs), where the need is greatest in terms of hunger and poverty. In Nigeria, the Federal Government currently has a SFP that feeds 10 million children daily and Nigeria's National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme provides a meal daily for pupils in public primary schools. This leaves a whole lot of gaps for vulnerable children in low-cost schools. Nigeria happened to be one of twelve (12) pilot countries invited to implement the policy. So far, Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya and Mali commenced the implementation of the school feeding programme and has since started to yield positive outcomes. As a result, the Federal Government came up with the Universal Basic Education Act in 2004, which provided the enabling legislative backing for the execution of the school feeding policy (Taylor & Ogbogu, 2016). Towards the realization of the objectives of the education in Nigeria and the central role of nutrition to school attendance, the Federal Ministry of Education launched the school feeding policy in 2005. The overall goal of the School Feeding Policy in Nigeria is to reduce hunger and malnutrition among school children and enhance enrolment among primary school students (Ministry of Education, 2014).

Meanwhile, the Nigeria Home Grown School Feeding Policy (HGSFP) has contributed to improving the level of school enrolment as well as the national social protection agenda. Over the period of its implementation, the policy has evolved and periodically, witnessed efforts at improving and targeting quality monitoring, procurement, governance and social accountability SFP in state like Bauchi (Federal Ministry of Education, 2020). At present, the programme is providing one hot and adequately nutritious meal to 1,693,698 pupils in 4,881 schools per each school day. The programme provides employment to about 20,000 caterers and cooks nationwide (Levinger, 2016). In states like Bauchi, Osun, Kano, Jigawa, Gombe where school feeding programmes are implemented, data reveals that the programme has increased enrolment and attendance rates over the years (Akanbi 2013).

In addition, According to Bauchi Ministry of Education (2019) school feeding policy have raised school enrolment rates by 14.2%, reduced the probability of dropping out of school by 7.5% and increased school

attendance by 1.3 days in 2 years. Similarly, the policy has provides an income in to women which also help in increasing children enrolment as the employed women/men send their children/ward to schools using salary from the policy. According to the report so also, school feeding in Bauchi state have goes far beyond the plate of food, producing high returns in the following critical areas: education and gender equality, health and nutrition; social protection and local economies (Bauchi Ministry of education, 2020). For example, in Bauchi local government of Bauchi state, there was an enrolment figure of 59,907 in 2007. This rose to 80,459 pupils by 2015. With this significant role played by school feeding policy on enhancing school enrolment in Bauchi state there are not enough to document this contribution. Thus, this study assess the government school feeding policy on school enrollment in Bauchi state from 2018 – 2020.

2. Literature Review

School feeding is simply the provision of food to children through schools. According to Oyefade (2015), different countries have one or a combination of the two feeding modalities in place for various objectives. However, they can be grouped into two broad categories: in-school meals and take-home rations where families are given food if their children attend school. The school feeding can be in turn grouped into two common categories: programme that provides meals and programme that provides high-energy biscuits or snacks to generate greater impacts on school enrolment, retention rates, and reduce gender or social gaps (Akanbi, 2015). The goal of the School Feeding Policy is to deliver a well-organized, decentralized intervention providing disadvantaged school children with nutritionally adequate, locally produced food thereby reducing poverty through improved household incomes and effective local economic development (<https://www.mogcsp.gov.gh/mdocs-posts/national-school-feeding-policy/>).

In the same vein, Adekunle and Ogbogu (2016) sees school feeding policy as critical interventions that have been introduced in many developed and developing countries of the world to address the issue of poverty,

stimulate school enrolment and enhance pupils' performance. According to Drake (2009) School feeding policy is increasingly recognized as a major investment in both human capital and in local economies which has accelerated country-led demand. It is seen as playing an important role not only in emergency contexts but also in social stability, peace-building and national development. Re-imagining School Feeding calls for increased investment targeted at the ages of 5-21, where new evidence shows the maximum impact on developing human capital potential.

Moreover, school feeding policy as a social safety net has been popular in developing countries as an instrument for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. These programs are also advocated as important interventions for improving the human capital of school-aged children. The Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Task Force Report (Birdsall, Levin & Ibrahim, 2015) on achieving the Education MDG cites FFE programs as one important approach to attract children to school and improve learning. A School Feeding policy (SFP) is essential to provide a balanced diet to ECD children which would in turn enable the children to increase their attention span hence better academic achievement. The School Feeding Program is a crucial component in the development of a holistic child. The effect of under nutrition on young children aged 0-8 years can be devastating and enduring. Good nutrition is the first line of defence against numerous childhood diseases, which can leave their mark on a child for life (Uduku, 2011).

Thus, a School Feeding Policy in the context of this study is a scheduled activity designed by the Nigerian government to provide food to children. Ideally, it is supposed provide enough nutritious and a balanced diet to a selected group of children in order to foster their holistic growth and development, including school enrolment, attendance and retention. One of the major goal of school feeding policy is to enhance school enrolment as observed by Oyefade, (2015), the decision to enroll a child in school and, thereafter, for the child to attend regularly is influenced by many factors. These include the perceived value of education, the availability of employment opportunities, the direct and indirect cost of schooling and the availability and quality of school

facilities. Food incentives offered to students such as school meals compensate parents for direct educational costs. He observed further that implementation of SFP is associated with increase in enrolment, particularly for girls.

In addition, the International Food Policy Research Institute (2020) found that the school feeding policy raised school enrolment rates by 14.2%, reduced the probability of dropping out of school by 7.5% and increased school attendance by 1.3 days a month. Similarly, Oyeniran (2014) observed that schooling and institutions regulating access to enrolment in developing countries, to some extent, contribute to the class and social divide in urban areas. In the last few years, SFPs have enjoyed massive support and attention from international organizations and many development partners; this can be attributed to the multi-faceted role of this social intervention (education, health, agriculture) in achieving development objectives in many countries and a 'perceived' demand for the programme. In its multi-faceted role, SFPs can be linked to several of the MDGs namely; eradication of extreme poverty, hunger, achieving universal basic education, promoting gender equality and women empowerment, developing a global partnership for development, hence, the use of SFPs in the developing countries is a significant intervention to be considered (Birdsall, 2015).

Similarly, Ahmed (2014) argues that SFP increases enrolment, attendance and retention and decreases the number of children who drop out of school. It has been observed that parents who otherwise could not have afforded additional meal a day, by sending their children to school are able to do so because of the SFP. Also, Kumar (2019) assert that when food was provided to pupils, short-term hunger was alleviated, especially in malnourished or otherwise well-nourished children thereby increasing their attention and concentration in class which also reflects on their level of cognitive function and learning outcome.

Furthermore, World Food Programme (WFP, 2020) reported that over a three-month period led to a 5 percent increase in enrollment and up to 36 percent improvement in attendance. Also, propound that, the school feeding is a means by which enrolment, academic performance; cognitive development of pre-school

children is enhanced. This is in line with earlier authorities in the above paragraphs. Moore (2018) found that school feeding interventions have a positive impact on school participation, including enrolment for children not enrolled prior to the introduction of school feeding, and on morning and afternoon attendance. Small effects on age at entry and reduction in grade repetition were also identified for both types of school feeding modalities, though no effects were found on progression to secondary school. School Feeding Policy contributed to increasing absolute enrollment in Nigerian schools by 28% for girls and 22% for boys in just one year (Gelli, 2017). After the first year, however, enrollment pattern showed variation depending on the type of SFP; i.e. whether the provision of food in school was combined with take home rations or was served alone. In those places where on-site feeding and take home rations were offered together, girls' absolute enrollment kept on increasing by 30% subsequent to the first year. Meanwhile, schools that provided only on-site feeding have just recorded increase in an absolute enrollment that was same as before the feeding program was implemented.

School's enrolment was the first step towards them being in school but the extent to which School Feeding Policy (SFP) influenced this realization in Bauchi state was an important subject under scrutiny. Yunusa (2014) noted that School Feeding Policies have the potential for influencing student enrolment as well as performance because it enabled them attends school regularly and studied more effectively. Uduku (2015) opined that SFPs would best influence school enrolment as well as the performance of pupils when coupled with adequate learning materials, physical facilities and teacher motivation. Nutritional and health status are powerful influences on a child's learning and how a child performs in school Children who lack certain nutrients in their diet do not have the same potential for learning as healthy and well-nourished children. Children with cognitive and sensory impairments naturally perform less and are more likely to repeat grades. The irregular school attendance of malnourished and unhealthy children is one of the key factors for poor performance (Uduku, 2015).

Furthermore, Akanbi (2011) came out with the outcome that the school feeding policy has influenced the attendance and enrolment rates over the years in Bauchi State. According the that study, between 2002/2003 and 2005/2006 session before the introduction of HGSFP, the highest enrolment figure was 97,010; but after the introduction there was an upsurge in the enrolment which has since been maintained up to year 2010 and in 2010 the enrolment went as high as 130,000. This is in tandem with the Development Activity Proposal (DAP) 1997-2001 on enrolment, the average number of children enrolled per program primary school has increased from 52 – 219. According to Sachs (2015) SFP exclusively benefited poor children by creating incentives to enroll and attend schools as well as improve general attentiveness and capability to learn. School-based food distribution in Bauchi increased enrolment to 20 percent at a time when enrollment at non-participating schools 21 was 2 percent as (Musa, 2019) reports.

Osei-Fuso (2011) observed that school feeding policy and other school-based nutrition and health policies influence as well as motivates parents to enroll their children in school and to see that they attend school regularly. Repot of WFP (2020) advocated that school meal has significant positive effect on such indicators as primary completion rates, continuation to secondary and exam scores. Specifically, enrollment is higher, particularly in early grades in the schools that offered school meals.

Similarly, enrollments have been noticed to increase gradually and sometimes decline completely in some places in Bauchi state. Adoption of School Feeding police have led to increase in enrollments in some schools due to its consistency, while in others there have been a decline in enrollment in spite of provision of SFP. This proves that the SFP should not be underestimated. Ouko (2012) found out that SFP are an incentive to pupils which make them attend school. Ouko (2012) further revealed that with the provision of SFP, school attendance and enrollment may increase gradually or even decline due to other factors.

Along with influencing enrollment, School Feeding Policy also help to adjust the age at entry by attracting children during their right age. In poor state

like Bauchi, children may begin primary education much later than the recommended age for various reasons. For instance factors such as lack of funds, lack of childcare and little awareness about the benefit of enrolling children during the recommended age are some of the causes for late entry (Alderman, Gilligan & Lehrer, 2018). Attendance increased from 73% to 95% among participants. The programme also claims to put additional food into the hands of mothers and serves as a contact between mothers and teachers on distribution days (WFP, 2018).

Moreover, Yendaw and Dayour (2015) showed that the perception of respondents regarding the quality and quantity of food prepared in school has demonstrated a very high influence on the school attendance patterns of pupils in the study area. The study further revealed that while 70.1% of children attend school throughout the week as a result of meals quality and quantity, as much as 63.2% of pupils attend school once a week due to negative perception about the quality and quantity of food prepared in school. This implied that the quality of food prepared for pupils should be enhanced so as to boost enrolment and high attendance in the area. This study sought to establish whether the kinds of food provided to children in school have influence on the attendance.

Therefore based on the literatures so far reviewed, the study revealed that, not much available literatures discussed the impact of government feeding policy as its enhance school enrolment in Bauchi state particularly Bauchi metropolis. This limitation brought the gap for this study.

Theoretical Underpinning

The theory which informs our discussion of government school feeding policy and school enrolment in Bauchi metropolis is the general systems theory. The scholar most associated with this theory is Easton (1965) “sees the political system as a set of interrelated and reciprocally regulated patterns of actions and orientation, pattern that cluster together in equilibrium and that have certain needs of maintenance and survival. It is a phenomenon of whatever type, including physical, biological, social, political, etc., which is an organized whole with identifiable, interrelated structures delineating it from the environment (supra system) in which it is located and with which it interacts, processing the inputs from it into outputs for it. The general systems theory seeks to argue that every system, including political system, has sub systems which make up the entire system. They are assigned functions and provided with enabling empowerment, including resources, appropriate authority, etc. to enable them discharge their responsibilities optimally. Where this is the case, there is said to be homeostasis (stability) in the political system. On the other hand, instability reigns in the political system where the contrary is the case and the subsystems and entire system are also unable to function optimally (Easton, 1965).

Input and output analysis of a political system is very important. A political system is said to obtain its inputs (demands, supports, liberty or autonomy, cooperation, criticisms, resources, information, direct labour, etc.) from the environment. These inputs are what the subsystems employ to discharge their responsibilities, so that the political system can send out its outputs into the environment and obtain further inputs for its operations.

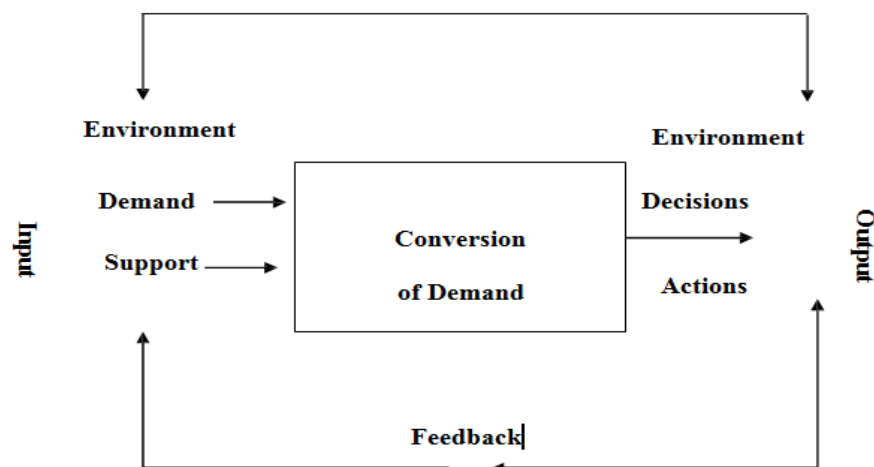


Fig. 1: Diagrammatic representation of David Easton's System Analysis

Thus, inferring from the above theoretical assumption input (hunger, poverty, illiteracy etc) deterred a lot of parents in Bauchi metropolis to send their children/ward to school, this emanate the need for government conversation of demand. Responding to the demand of the citizens the government process (in terms of policy formulation, bills etc) served as solution by providing output in terms of increase in school enrolment as well as pupils massive turnout to education. Hence, system theory can best be used in explaining how government school feeding policy affect school enrolment in Bauchi metropolis of Bauchi local government.

3. Methodology

The study will adopt the qualitative research design. According to Saunders et al. (2017) qualitative research is conducted when enough is not known about a phenomenon and a problem has not been clearly defined. Hence, its theme is to tackle new problems on which little or no previous research has been done. Moreover, the study is qualitative in nature as two themes will be used in exploring the impact of government school feeding policy on school enrollment in Bauchi metropolis.

However, this study adopted purposive sampling technique. A purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling that is selected based on in-depth experience and understanding of the issues by the participant. Purposive sampling is also known as judgmental, selective or subjective sampling. Using purposive sampling technique four (4) informants will

be purposively selected. The research will select 4 informants as they can provide the required information for the research work. Moreover, the 4 informants comprised of 1 School Teacher, 1 Parents, 1 pupil as well as 1 policy maker (Member representing Bauchi) which are considered relevant to the topic under study. In selection of these informants the researcher will visited the area of the study for preliminary observation to explore the nature of the people as well as set a guideline for the selection of the informants. Furthermore, the informants will be selected based on their knowledge regarding the subject of the study.

Therefore, in the case of data collection, the method is concerned with the specific procedures of gathering information for the study. In this study both the primary and secondary methods of data collection were used. The primary data was collected through in-depth interview which the researcher will conducted with informants selected for the study.

While the secondary data will be obtained through journals, magazines, textbooks, newspapers, encyclopedia, previous thesis, seminar paper presentation and any other secondary sources that may be relevant to the study. Moreover, information was obtained from relevant electronic websites and international organization official documents. This secondary method complemented the primary method.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected through the interview and secondary sources will be transcribed, reduced into categories and

themes to answer the research questions. Thus, the data from the study will be thematically content analyzed.

4. Results and Discussion

The result obtained from the interview was thematically content analyzed. The major aim of the study is to assess government school feeding policy on school enrollment in Bauchi local government area of Bauchi state. The analysis was carried out in two themes in which they were later corroborated with the empirical literatures review in previous chapters. The themes developed for the study was shown in table below:

The result gotten from the interview conducted was discussed under two themes and supported by literatures below;

The impact of school feeding policy on school enrolment in Bauchi metropolis

The study revealed that that school enrollments in Bauchi metropolis increase gradually as adoption of School Feeding police have led to increase in enrollments in some schools due to its consistency. One of the informant confirm that with the introduction of school feeding policy in primary schools of Bauchi metropolis there is high increase in school enrolment as parents send their children to school with the expectation that the children will be fade as well as be educated. Thus, school feeding policy is a blessing to Bauchi state, as they are reduction in out of school children as enrolment figures is increasing daily. This corroborated with the findings report of In addition, the International Food Policy Research Institute (2020) found that the school feeding policy raised school enrolment rates by 14.2%, reduced the probability of dropping out of school by 7.5% and increased school attendance by 1.3 days a month. Similarly, Oyeniran (2014) observed that schooling and institutions regulating access to enrolment in developing countries, to some extent, contribute to the class and social divide in urban areas. In the last few years, SFPs in Bauchi state have enjoyed massive support and attention from international organizations and many development partners; this can be attributed to the multi-faceted role of this social intervention (education, health, agriculture) in achieving development objectives in

many countries and a ‘perceived’ demand for the programme. In its multi-faceted role, SFPs can be linked to several of the MDGs namely; eradication of extreme poverty, hunger, achieving universal basic education, promoting gender equality and women empowerment, developing a global partnership for development, hence, the use of SFPs in the developing countries is a significant intervention to be considered (Birdsall, 2015).

In addition result from the secondary sources and interview show that School Feeding Policy have impacted positively in Bauchi local government as retention and enrolment increased by more than 33% in just 1 year. In support of the study findings Ahmed (2014) argues that SFP increases enrolment, attendance and retention and decreases the number of children who drop out of school. It has been observed that parents who otherwise could not have afforded additional meal a day, by sending their children to school are able to do so because of the SFP. Also, Kumar (2019) assert that when food was provided to pupils, short-term hunger was alleviated, especially in malnourished or otherwise well-nourished children thereby increasing their attention and concentration in class which also reflects on their level of cognitive function and learning outcome.

More so, the study found that the school feeding is a means by which enrolment, academic performance; cognitive development of pre-school children is enhanced. School feeding policy in Bauchi metropolis have a positive impact on school participation, including enrolment for children not enrolled prior to the introduction of school feeding, and on morning and afternoon attendance. Small effects on age at entry and reduction in grade repetition were also identified for both types of school feeding modalities, though no effects were found on progression to secondary school. School Feeding Policy contributed to increasing absolute enrollment in Nigerian schools by 28% for girls and 22% for boys in just one year.

The influence of school feeding policy on school enrolment in Bauchi metropolis

The study found from the interview conducted as well as the reviewed literatures that School Feeding Policy

in Bauchi metropolis has influenced student enrolment as well as their performance as it enabled them attend school regularly and studied more effectively. One of the interviewed maintained that:

"I observed that pupils population during the school feeding policy trial in our school here in Bauchi metropolis increases; the programme also encourages punctuality and the reduced truancy rate among the pupils. It is a welcome innovation or idea but the Federal Government should extend it to Schools in rural areas; it is good in that it encourages pupils to come to school early and also minimize the rate of late coming from breakfast at home".

Moreover, the study found that the school feeding policy has influenced the attendance and enrolment rates over the years in Bauchi State as between 2002/2003 and 2005/2006 session before the introduction of HGSFP, the highest enrolment figure was 97,010; but after the introduction there was an upsurge in the enrolment which has since been maintained up to year 2010 and in 2010 the enrolment went as high as 130,000. This is in tandem with the Development Activity Proposal (DAP) 1997-2001 on enrolment, the average number of children enrolled per program primary school has increased from 52 – 219. In support of this finding Sachs (2015) maintained that SFP exclusively benefited poor children by creating incentives to enroll and attend schools as well as improve general attentiveness and capability to learn. School-based food distribution in Bauchi increased enrolment to 20 percent at a time when enrollment at non-participating schools was 2 percent as (Musa, 2019) reports. Moreover, one of the key informants maintained similar view that:

"School feeding policy motivate us to go to school, I like it because if I go to school I will benefit from two things, food and education". I Myself and my friends come to school regularly because we don't want to miss the meal".

In addition, along with influencing enrollment, School Feeding Policy also help to adjust the age at entry by attracting children during their right age. In poor state like Bauchi, children may begin primary education much later than the recommended age for various

reasons. For instance factors such as lack of funds, lack of childcare and little awareness about the benefit of enrolling children during the recommended age are some of the causes for late entry. Attendance increased from 73% to 95% among participants. The programme also claims to put additional food into the hands of mothers and serves as a contact between mothers and teachers on distribution days. This is in line with the findings of Osei-Fuso (2011) observed that school feeding policy and other school-based nutrition and health policies influence as well as motivates parents to enroll their children in school and to see that they attend school regularly. Repot of WFP (2020) advocated that school meal has significant positive effect on such indicators as primary completion rates, continuation to secondary and exam scores. Specifically, enrollment is higher, particularly in early grades in the schools that offered school meals.

The study further revealed that while 70.1% of children in Bauchi metropolis attend school throughout the week as a result of meals quality and quantity, as much as 63.2% of pupils attend school once a week due to negative perception about the quality and quantity of 28 foods prepared in school. This implied that the quality of food prepared for pupils should be enhanced so as to boost enrolment and high attendance in the area. This study sought to establish whether the kinds of food provided to children in school have influence on the attendance.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study assessed government school feeding policy on school enrollment in Bauchi local government area of Bauchi state. Based on the two developed themes as well as the research questions, the study found that school enrollments in Bauchi metropolis increase gradually as adoption of School Feeding policy have led to increase in enrollments in some schools due to its consistency. This signifies that School Feeding Policy have impacted positively in Bauchi local government as retention and enrolment increased by more than 33% in just 1 year.

So also, findings from the study indicates that school feeding policy is a blessing to Bauchi state, as they are reduction in out of school children as enrolment

figures is increasing daily. Findings from the second theme shows that School Feeding Policy in Bauchi metropolis has influenced student enrolment as well as their performance as it enabled them attends school regularly and studied more effectively. In addition,

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