



## **SCHOOL-BASED FEEDING PRACTICES AND READING RECOVERY PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

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### **ABSTRACT**

School feeding program and reading recovery strategy are the intelligent educational assets to support academic achievement and extracurricular activities for schoolchildren. Some learners who were enrolled in public schools did not receive enough nutrition at home, that's why their physical and cognitive development were greatly affected. This study was conducted to determine the level of teachers' school-based feeding practices and learners' reading recovery performance in West I District, Division of Cagayan de Oro City during the School Year 2025-2026. Specifically, it ascertain the respondents' perception on the School-based feeding practices, the learners' reading recovery performance, the learner' reading enthusiasm, the relationship between the teachers' school-based practices and learners' recovery performance as well as the learners' reading enthusiasm. The two hundred Grade 5 learners and forty-three Grade 5 teachers were used in this study and it employed universal sampling technique. To analyze the data collected, it used the descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and Pearson's r Correlation. Findings showed that teachers perceived very high level of practice in school-based feeding practices. The highest variable is nutritional impact while the lowest is program coverage and student participation. The learners' reading recovery performance is beginning while they are high in reading proficiency and low in foundational skills. It further revealed a significant relationship between teachers' school-based feeding practices and learners' reading proficiency and foundational skills, and teachers' school-based feeding practices and learners' reading enthusiasm. These result show that the higher the practice in school-based feeding practices, the higher the reading recovery performance. This study recommends for the School Administrators to ensure stability in school-based feeding practices.

**Keywords:** *school-based feeding practices, reading recovery performance*

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### ***Background of the Study***

The school feeding program and reading recovery strategy are the intelligent educational assets. A school feeding program is a thoroughly thought-out approach for feeding schoolchildren to support academic achievement and extracurricular activities. Providing food at school can have an important impact on children's nutritional status and reading skills.

Division Order No. 23, series of 2020, stated that the primary beneficiaries of the School-Based Feeding Program (SBFP) shall be all incoming Kindergarten learners and the Grade 1 to Grade 6 learners who were considered wasted and severely wasted. The program shall provide beneficiaries with nutritious food products—through rationing for at least 60 feeding days and fresh or sterilized milk for 50 feeding days.

Some learners who are enrolled in the public schools may not receive adequate nutrition at home, that is why their physical and cognitive development are greatly affected. Some of them were absent from the class and others stopped schooling just to help their parents in looking for any kind of work in order to have the source of income to be used for buying foods and other basic needs of the family. It was noticed that some learners were doing the collecting of cartoons, plastics, and metals. This is their source of income for how many years already. This kind of situation is very alarming because they must be in the school during class time but they are working.

As per regional result and information, that Division of Cagayan de Oro City got the 14<sup>th</sup> rank, meaning last from all Divisions in the entire Region 10 in terms of learners' reading assessment. This is very alarming to all public educators since the result is very low. It is calling the attention for all the educators including the researcher of the said Division. This matter challenged us of what to do to improve the learners' reading performance.

School Feeding Programs are interventions that consistently give children attending school nourishing nourishment. The benefits of school meals for children include reducing hunger, lowering anemia and micronutrient

deficiencies, preventing overweight and obesity, boosting academic and cognitive performance, and promoting gender parity in access to education. The majority of nations operate some sort of scaled-back school feeding program. School feeding programs are commonly available in high-income nations but are typically underfunded in low- and middle-income nations, where the need for alleviating hunger and poverty is highest (Wang & Fawzi, 2020).

Further, the school feeding program would enable learners to increase their regular attendance in order to improve their academic performance. The study carried out in Malawi had indicated that the school feeding program had an effect on learners' enrollment and attendance. The enrollment increased up to 5%, and the improvement of attendance was up to 36% (Lu & Dacal, 2020).

In addition, reading and reading comprehension skills are among the most basic language skills. Therefore, these skills should be acquired at an early age (Bozan 2024). Teachers and specialists of reading should remember that word recognition and fluency are important in reading comprehension, and vocabulary knowledge greatly affects reading and reading comprehension (Gedik et al., 2022).

As one of the elementary teachers in the Division of Cagayan de Oro City, the researcher found interest in evaluating the School based-Feeding practices and reading recovery performance. It inspired the writer to have a research on it and find reasons behind. Studying effective School-based Feeding practices from different regions and countries and their applicability to Division of Cagayan de Oro City could offer valuable insights for educational policymakers, administrators and teachers aiming to enhance the school-based feeding practices and contribute to the reading recovery of learners.

## ***Literature and Related Studies***

### ***School-Based Feeding Practices***

School-Based Feeding Practices is one intervention to address undernutrition of school children. This practice is intended to address the needs of undernourished public school children from Kindergarten to Grade 6 and help to improve nutrition which may lead them to learn and perform better in school. It aims to provide at least one fortified meal to all undernourished public elementary school children for not less than 120 days in a year. This program is very important in improving children's health, academic performance, and overall well-being. It improves nutritional status, enhance cognitive function, increase school attendance and participation. It plays a vital role in promoting healthy eating habits and motivating the learners to continue their study. By improving children's health and education, school-based feeding practices can help them improve their way of living and contribute to their communities. In some cases, school-based feeding practices can source food from local farmers, increasing local economies and agricultural production.

#### ***Nutritional Impact***

Nutritional impact is the effect of school feeding practices on the overall health of learners. Good nutrition is essential for learners as it significantly impacts their physical and cognitive development, leading to improve academic performance and overall well-being. Adequate nutrition provides the necessary building blocks for brain development, enhances cognitive functions like concentration and memory, and increases energy levels, all of which are vital for effective learning.

Similarly, a study revealed that compiling findings regarding the School Feeding Programme's had profound effect on learners' academic performance in selected Secondary schools of Kapiri Mponshi district of Central Province, Zambia. Through a comprehensive exploration, it became evident that the provision of nutritious meals significantly enhances students' cognitive abilities, attention span, and overall well-being (Namunyola et al., 2023).

#### ***Operational Efficiency***

Operational efficiency in school-based feeding practices is related to the school's ability in producing goods or services by means of the least amount of resources and looking the support from stakeholders just to sustain the program. Recent literature from 2016 to 2025 consistently highlights the positive impact of school-based feeding practices on students' reading recovery performance. Baldago et al. (2024) found that a well-structured and effectively managed school feeding program at San Gabriel Elementary School significantly improved both the nutritional status and reading performance of Grade IV pupils, with a notable correlation between program management and reading gains. The study also revealed that improvements in students' nutritional status, as measured by BMI, were associated with enhanced reading abilities, and that socio-demographic factors played a significant role in program effectiveness.

Rodriguez and Patel (2020) conducted a comprehensive examination of financial management practices within school-based feeding programs. Utilizing a case study approach, they investigated how funds allocated for these programs are managed, including budgeting, expenditure tracking, procurement, and financial reporting. The study also assessed the efficiency of financial controls and transparency measures implemented to ensure accountability and prevent misuse of funds. The findings provide valued insights into best practices for managing funds in school-based feeding programs to optimize resource utilization and enhance program outcomes.

#### ***Program Coverage***

Program coverage is the scope of school feeding practices in terms of the number of learners to be fed. It is crucial for the success of school-based feeding practices, safeguarding that a significant portion of the target

population receives the aids. This includes reaching all eligible learners, particularly those most helpless to malnutrition, and providing consistent, nutritious meals to support their health, cognitive development, and academic performance. When a higher percentage of learners are included in the feeding program, the overall impact on health, nutrition, and academic outcomes is magnified. A wider coverage means more learners benefit from improved nutrition, leading to better concentration in class, reduced absenteeism, and increased learning potential. Increasing program coverage can help address differences in access to healthy food and nutrition.

Schools and school feeding programs have all the necessary characteristics for developing practices that aim at sustainability in the environmental, economic, and social dimensions, given their scope and the different perspectives that can be worked (Maynard et al., 2022).

As stated in Division Order No. 23, series of 2020, the primary beneficiaries of the School-Based Feeding Program (SBFP) shall be all incoming kindergarten learners and the Grade 1 to Grade 6 learners who were considered wasted and severely wasted. The program shall provide beneficiaries with nutritious food products—through rationing for at least 60 feeding days and fresh or sterilized milk for 50 feeding days.

#### *Student Participation*

Student participation is very important for the successful implementation and influence of school-based feeding practices. Engaging students in the process, from planning to evaluation, ensures the practice meets their needs, increases their ownership, and eventually progresses their health and academic outcomes. Students can provide valuable input on food favorites and dietary needs, helping to ensure the meals are both nutritious and pleasing. Active student involvement can help ensure the program respects varied cultural backgrounds and dietary limitations. School meals play a critical role in promoting child nutrition and advancing equity. An understanding of which evidence-based strategies can increase meal participation is needed to improve student school meal consumption and foodservice finances (Hecht et al., 2023).

A study by Nkurunziza and Turinayo (2022) shows that these practices reduce school dropout rates, increase enrollment, and enhance students' performance. Similarly, Marcelline and Andala (2022), whose study was done in Rwanda, support the argument that feeding practices improve academic performance, daily attendance, and health of students. More research evidence in support of this claim comes from Karaba Gritumu and Mwaruvie (2019) and Mohamed (2022) who did their studies in Kenya. Mohamed, for instance, found that the absence of a feeding program at school affects students' concentration, makes lessons less engaging, and leads to absenteeism and disinterest in studying.

#### *Reading Recovery Performance*

Reading recovery performance is an early literacy intervention designed to help our learners who are struggling with reading and writing to catch up and achieve the average reading level of their peers. It involves individualized, daily, 30-minute tutoring sessions with a speacially trained teacher. The goal is to accelerate learning and reduce the need for continuuing remedial reading support. It is a vital intervention for first-grade learners who are struggling with literacy, aiming to accelerate their learning and prevent long-term reading difficulties. Its importance lies in its ability to address reading difficulties early, improving leaners' confidence, and setting them on a path for academic success. By intervening early and intensively, reading recovery can help students catch up to their peers and avoid the negative costs of continued reading failure. Reading recovery focuses on preventing reading failure, rather than just remediating it, by providing thorough, one-on-one support to learners who are knowingly behind their classmates. This early intervention helps learners develop foundational literacy skills and avoid the negative effects of struggling with reading throughout their school years.

#### *Reading Proficiency*

Reading proficiency is crucial for academic success, personal growth, and overall well-being. It acts as a foundational skill that enables individuals to understand information, learn new concepts, and engage with the world around them. Strong reading skills are linked to better academic performance, improved career prospects, and enhanced health outcomes. Collectively, these studies underscore the importance of comprehensive school-based feeding initiatives as a means to enhance reading proficiency and overall educational outcomes among elementary learners. It is the foundation of academic learning. It enables learners to understand textbooks, research materials, and other learning resources, which is important for success in all subjects, from science and math to social studies and literature.

The integration of health and nutrition lessons with guided reading activities was shown to boost reading performance, particularly among nutritionally vulnerable students (Dela Cruz, 2019). These findings are supported by broader intervention reviews, which indicate that targeted school-based interventions, including feeding programs, can directly improve academic achievement by addressing both instructional and nutritional needs (What (Soliman et al., 2021).

In conclusion, reading proficiency is not just an academic skill; it is a fundamental life skill that empowers individuals to succeed in all aspects of their lives, from the classroom to the workplace and beyond. It is the foundation for critical thinking and informed decision-making, enabling individuals to draw accurate conclusions and navigate the difficulties of the world around them.

#### *Foundational Skills*

Foundational skills are the fundamental abilities and knowledge that learners must be acquired in reading. Learners will develop their foundational skills through reading. These are the building blocks for more advanced skills and activities. Mastering these foundational abilities, whether in sports, academics, or daily life, is needed for success and confidence in numerous areas. They provide a solid base upon which to build further knowledge and expertise, enabling individuals to learn and perform more multifaceted tasks efficiently and effectively. Strong fundamental skills lead to better performance in various activities, from sports to academics. When learners are competent in fundamental skills, they increase confidence and are more likely to be inspired to learn and engage in new tasks. Mastery of fundamental skills can lead to a lifelong enjoyment of activities. For example, children who develop good fundamental movement skills are more likely to remain physically energetic throughout their lives. The focal objective of every primary education program is to develop strong reading skills among young learners (Camohoy et al., 2024).

Reading provides readers with new learnings and vast knowledge that will benefit their academic journey. Reading is a prerequisite in all learning areas (Tomas et al., 2021). Reading is an indispensable skill that underpins academic success and personal growth. It empowers individuals to access information, expand their knowledge, and develop critical thinking abilities. As Felipe (2022) emphasizes, cultivating a strong reading foundation in children and students is essential.

### ***Reading Enthusiasm***

Reading enthusiasm is important for developing strong literacy skills, increasing knowledge, and nurturing a lifelong love of learning. It definitely influences cognitive development, academic performance, and even mental well-being. A positive attitude towards reading directly interprets to better reading comprehension and a wider vocabulary. Exposure to assorted texts and ideas through reading encourages critical thinking and the ability to analyze information effectively. Reading widens the horizons, exposing individuals to new concepts, cultures, and viewpoints. Reading for desire is linked to improve academic performance across various subjects, as it lays a foundation for effective learning. Reading extensively improves the affective aspects of reading, such as attitude, motivation, and interest. Reading provides opportunities for self-discovery, personal growth, and a deeper understanding of oneself and the world. Learners become motivated to read due to the great input they receive from the self-selected books they choose to read. When students are given sufficient leisure to read for pleasure, they become more imaginative and analytical.

### ***Theoretical Framework***

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory (1943) plays a crucial role in driving, energizing, and sustaining behavior. People are motivated to fulfill basic needs before moving on to other, more advanced needs. Maslow believed that people have an inborn desire to be self-actualized, that is, to be all they can be. To achieve this ultimate goal, however, a number of more basic needs must be met. This includes the need for food, safety, love, and self-esteem. Physiological needs, such as proper nutrition, must be met for children to thrive. Malnutrition significantly affects brain development, leading to poor academic performance, increased susceptibility to diseases, and emotional struggles. In the context of Reading Recovery Performance, this implies that learners struggling with reading may also be facing with unmet basic needs, potentially delaying their ability to focus and engage with reading instruction. Learners with unmet basic needs may require additional support or accommodation to effectively participate in Reading Recovery Programs. This might benefit from integrating support services or partnerships to help meet learners' basic needs. Teachers may need to consider the whole child, addressing potential underlying needs before or alongside reading instruction.

A well-structured school feeding program, as suggested by Galema (2020), can address nutritional gaps, while Machet and Pretorius' (2021) insights on reading comprehension can help shape interventions to improve literacy. By integrating these approaches, educators can foster a more holistic learning environment that supports students' physical and intellectual growth.

### ***Statement of the Problem***

This study attempted to determine the level of teachers' school-based feeding practices and reading recovery performance among Grade 5 learners in West I District during the School Year 2025-2026.

It specifically answered the following questions:

1. How do the teacher respondents perceived their level of school-based feeding practices in terms of nutritional impact, program coverage, student participation, and operational efficiency?
2. What is the learners' level of reading recovery performance based on reading proficiency and foundational skills?
3. How do the learner respondents assess their reading enthusiasm?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the teachers' school-based practices and learners' reading recovery performance?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the teachers' school based feeding practices and learners' reading enthusiasm?

### ***Scope and Limitations***

The study focused on school-feeding practices and reading recovery performance among Grade 5 learners in the National Learning Camp of West I District, Division of Cagayan de Oro City during the School Year 2025-2026. The respondents were the two hundred Grade 5 learners who are the participants in the National Learning Camp of the aforced district.

The independent variables are limited only to School-Based Feeding Practices in terms of nutritional impact, program coverage, student participation and operational efficiency. Moreover, the dependent variables are also limited to learners Reading Recovery Performance based on reading proficiency, foundational skills, and reading enthusiasm.

The variables associated with the respondents level of nutritional impact, program coverage, student participation and operational efficiency and the reading performance of the learners after they attended the National Learning Camp Program.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### ***Research Design***

The descriptive-correlational research design was used in this study, which considered to be the most appropriate one because it deals basically with the gathering of information needed for evaluating and analyzing the respondents level of nutritional impact, program coverage, student participation and operational efficiency of school feeding practices and the reading performance of the learners after they underwent reading in National Learning Camp. This study assessed the effectiveness of school-based feeding practices and reading performance. Descriptive correlational research is a type of research design that tries to explain the relationship between two or more variables without making claims about cause and effect. It includes collecting and analyzing data on at least two variables to see if there is a link between them.

This research design has proven effective in studies on correlation between the conditions of the physical learning environment of the students and their perceived level of academic performance (Aprecia et al., 2022).

### ***Study Setting***

The study considered the public elementary schools in the West I District Division of Cagayan de Oro as the location of the study. These schools were the following: Balulang Elementary School, Father William Masterson Elementary School, Macanhan Elementary School, Sacred Heart Village Elementary School, Upper Carmen Elementary School, and West City Central School. The said schools diligently provide quality education to their community, and they can be reached by riding a motorcycle and jeepney. For this school year, these schools offer a face-to-face class per grade level. They belong to Legislative District I of Cagayan de Oro City in Region X, Northern Mindanao.

The West I District is part of the first legislative district of the city, and it is located in the barangay west of the Cagayan de Oro River. The first district is composed of 25 barangays, namely Baikingon, Balulang, Bayabas, Bayanga, Besigan, Bonbon, Bulua, Calaan, Canitoan, Carmen, Dansolihon, Iponan, Kauswagan, Lumbia, Mambuaya, Pagalungan, Pagatpat, Patag, Pigsag-an, San Simon, Taglimao, Tagpangi, Tignapoloan, Tuburan, and Tumpagon.

The researcher have chosen this place because of the following reasons: It is convenient for him to gather the data since this is the school where he is teaching, easy access which saves time and effort, a simplified scheduling and coordination with the respondents, and easy data collection.

### ***Research Respondents and Sampling Technique***

The respondents of the study were the Grade 5 teachers of Balulang Elementary School, Father William Masterson Elementary School, Macanhan Elementary School, Sacred Heart Village Elementary School, Upper Carmen Elementary School, and West City Central School. The Grade 5 learners who were beneficiaries of the School Feeding Practices and participants of National Learning Camp were determined as readers with low performance in reading.

Only forty-three Grade 5 teachers were chosen because they had the direct connection to their Grade 5 learners.

The researcher used the total population of Grade 5 learners who are beneficiaries of school feeding program and participants in National Learning Camp. For the teachers, a total population also was used. By carefully selecting participants, the researcher aimed to maximize the depth and quality of the data collected. This ensures that the findings were relevant and informative contributing significantly to the understanding of the research topic.

### ***Research Instrument***

The researcher used the survey questionnaire for the teachers with four point-scale with the description of At all Times, Most of the Time, Sometimes and Never, consisting fifteen (15) indicators focusing on nutritional impact, program coverage, student participation and operational efficiency.

On the other hand, the researcher prepared the researcher- made questionnaire to test the reading recovery performance of the learners. This questionnaire consists of multiple-choice statements with 20 items for reading proficiency foundational skills. Each question coincide on the placement of Table of Specification. Also a survey questionnaire used the four point-scale with the description of At all Times, Most of the Time, Sometimes and Never, consisting of ten (10) indicators focusing on reading enthusiasm.

### **Statistical Treatment of Data**

To analyze the data collected regarding the relationship of the teachers' School-Based Feeding Practices and Learners' Reading Recovery Performance, the following statistical tools were utilized. Descriptive statistics, specifically mean, percentage, and standard deviation, were employed to provide a comprehensive overview of teacher perceptions.

To determine the presence and strength of a linear relationship between teacher perception and reported student reading performance, Pearson r Correlation was calculated. Statistical significance was assessed at the 0.05 level, allowing for the determination of any significant correlation between the implementation of the school feeding program and the reading recovery strategy.

### **Ethical Consideration**

The researcher precisely explained the study to potential participants, outlining its benefits and the expected level of involvement. Throughout the research process, the researcher adhered to ethical principles and values. A specific consent form was used for the teachers clearly outlining their roles, the research methods employed, and the confidentiality measures in place. This transparent approach fosters trust and encourages open participation. Respondents were assured that only the researcher had access to the study results. The researcher ensured that all participants understood the study's purpose, procedures, and potential risks or benefits before agreeing to participate. They were informed about data collection methods, usage, and protection measures.

Further, to safeguard privacy, anonymity, ensure ethical conduct and confidentiality, the researcher obtained first the ethical clearance prior to the study. This involved submitting a comprehensive proposal, informed consent forms, and other necessary documents to the ethics committee.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Problem 1. How do the teacher respondents perceived their level of School-Based Feeding Practices in terms of nutritional impact, program coverage, student participation, and operational efficiency?**

**Table 1**

<b>Summary Distribution of Teacher Respondents' Percieved of School-Based Feeding Practices</b>			
<b>Variable</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Nutritional Impact	3.63	0.38	Very High
Program Coverage	3.60	0.47	Very High
Student Participation	3.60	0.44	Very High
Operational Efficiency	3.62	0.55	Very High
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.61</b>	<b>0.46</b>	<b>Very High</b>

**Legend:** 3.26 – 4.00 At all Times/Very High  
2.51 – 3.25 Most of the Time/High  
1.76 – 2.50 Sometimes/Low  
1.00 – 1.75 Never/Very Low

Table 1 presents the Summary Distribution of Teachers' Percieved Level of School-Based Feeding Practices with an overall mean of **3.61 (SD=0.46)** interpreted as **Very High**. This means that the respondents have a tendency to have a slightly above- average level of implementation or satisfaction with school-based feeding practices. The overall mean proposes that school-based feeding practices are generally effective, with respondents perceiving them positively. It suggests that these practices are likely having a positive impact on students, such as improved nutrition, attendance, or academic performance. The practices are generally well-implemented or well received by respondents, but there be room for improvement.

Moreover, the respondents tend to share similar perceptions or experiences regarding school-based feeding practices, which could indicate a strong school culture or consistent implementation. Feeding practices are the interactions between caregiver and child around food and mealtimes which shape the child's eating behaviour. A wide range of feeding practices exist, and they are typically characterized as positive where positive eating behaviours are shaped in children from the feeding practice or maladaptive where negative eating behaviours are shaped in children from the feeding practice (Bayes et al., 2023). School nutrition leaders might consider involving staff early in implementation planning, incorporating technical expertise, and clearly communicating the intervention purpose to support successful implementation (Machado et al., 2022).



The variable **Nutritional Impact** emerged the highest mean of **3.63 (SD=0.38)** interpreted as **Very High**. This means a generally positive insight of nutritional impact, inclined towards a higher rating. The nutritional impact is perceived as somewhat better than average, but there is a room for improvement to reach a good rating. This describes that feeding practices are likely having a positive impact on students' health, and good healthy being. These practices are generally effective, with respondents perceiving them as well-implemented. This signifies that program management is effective, with strong planning, implementation, and monitoring. In general school feeding program is an intervention that provides meal or snack in the school setting. It is also a tool which enables children worldwide to attend school (Agujar et.al., 2020). It provides essential nutritional support that improves the health of students, directly influencing their ability to engage and excel in their studies (Appiah, 2024).

On the contrary, the variable **Program Coverage** got the lowest mean score of **3.60 (SD=0.47)**, interpreted as **Very High**. This suggests that the program coverage might not be full enough, potentially parting some students without access to the feeding program. This could be due to various factors such as limited resources, inadequate infrastructure, on inefficient targeting of beneficiaries. The relatively low mean score could indicate that the program is not effectively reaching the most vulnerable or needy students. This might worsen the existing inequalities and weaken the program objectives. The limited program coverage might compromise the overall effectiveness of the school based feeding program. It is above the midpoint suggesting an overall positive support of the program coverage.

Moreover, a well-structured and effectively implemented feeding program can enhance pupils' reading performance (Baldago et al., 2024). The effectiveness of school feeding program includes health physical facilities, management of funds, staffing/ working committee, feeding paraphernalia, foodp preparation, health knowledge, community linkages, management and supervision (Bilbar 2020). The beneficiary schools who had experience with the program supports the expectation that SFP increases school attendance, enrollment, performance, and active participation of students in class. Similarly, the analysis of school records confirmed this finding and revealed a significant positive effect of SFP on student enrollment and class attendance (Barnabas et al., 2024).

In addition, the variable **Student Participation**, also got the lowest mean of **3.60 (SD=0.44)**, interpreted as **Very High**. This supports towards the higher end of participation. It means that students are quite engaged in class. This level of participation can be critical for effective learning and classroom dynamics. Despite the very high classification, there's still a potential for increasing student participation especially if the educational goals or standards aim for even more engagement. High student participation is often correlated with better learning outcomes, improved understanding of the material, and a more consistent class environment. This level of participation could be a contributing factor to positive academic performance and student satisfaction.

Further, teachers must enhance their knowledge and skills to perform their duties efficiently and effectively. The SBFP program, which alleviates short-term hunger among public elementary pupils, must be sustained as it has a significant impact on school performance and student participation, particularly in terms of academic performance. The health and nutrition of the learners, therefore, should be given primordial importance as these areas play a vital part in their total development in terms of their physical, mental, emotional, and social aspects (Claros et.al 2024). The analysis of school records confirmed this finding and revealed a significant positive effect of SFP on student enrollment and class attendance (Barnabas et al., 2024).

## Problem 2. What is the learners' level of reading recovery performance based on reading proficiency and foundational skill?

**Table 2**  
**Summary of Learners' Level of Reading Recovery Performance**

Variable	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Reading Proficiency	68.20	18.15	Beginning
Foundational Skills	63.20	15.18	Beginning
<b>Overall</b>	<b>65.70</b>	<b>16.67</b>	<b>Beginning</b>
<b>Legend:</b> 90 – 100 Outstanding/Advance			
85 – 89 Very Satisfactory/Proficient			
80 – 84 Satisfactory/Satisfactory			
75 – 79 Fairly Satisfactory/Developing			
74 below- Did not Meet Expectation/Beginning			

Table 2 presents the **summary of learners' level of reading recovery performance** with an overall mean of **65.70 (SD=16.67)** interpreted as **Beginning**. This means that students are facing widespread challenges in reading, which may require targeted interventions and support. It raises significant concerns about the effectiveness of Reading Recovery programs in improving reading outcomes. The low performance might indicate a need for a thorough

evaluation of reading recovery programs to identify areas for improvement. Students may require additional support and resources to address reading difficulties and improve their performance. Teachers may need to adjust their instructional strategies to better support students' reading development and improve Reading Recovery results. The results highlight the importance of early identification of reading difficulties and timely interventions to prevent long-term reading challenges. Early identification and intervention for reading difficulties, especially during the critical early school years. Early intervention is critical in identifying and addressing reading difficulties and providing children with the support. Early strategies in reading aim to support striving students with targeted instruction to help them become proficient readers. The intervention substantially reduced the need for remedial teaching and grade retention (Zilstra et al., 2020). This can accelerate those who are reading below grade level." Early reading intervention is necessary to help students develop the foundational literacy skills they need to be successful in their academic journey and beyond (Bouchard, 2024).

Furthermore, **Reading Proficiency** is the variable which got the highest mean of **68.20 (SD=18.15)** interpreted as **Beginning**. This signifies that learners struggle with comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency. Low reading proficiency can have long-term consequences on learners' academic achievement, potentially impacting their future educational and career opportunities. Learners require individualized or group-based reading interventions to address specific skill gaps. Limited reading skills could hinder their ability to access higher education, career advancement, and social flexibility. Educators may need to adapt their teaching strategies to address the reading proficiency gap, potentially requiring additional training or resources. Parents may need to take a more active role in supporting their child's reading development, potentially through home-based interventions or seeking external resources.

Further, teachers perceive phonics instruction most effective in enhancing literacy skills, along with strategies like vocabulary instruction and interactive read-aloud. strategies like the Claveria Approach show room for improvement, emphasizing the need for evidence-based practices in literacy instruction (Aplacador et.,al 2024). Reading plays an essential role in everyone's life. Reading comprehension broadens ones ability to analyze things and everything that happens in the environment. It does not only involved in English subject, but all subject requires reading comprehension (Idulog et al.,2023).

On the contrary, **Foundational Skills** is the variable which got the lowest mean of **63.20 (SD=15.18)** interpreted as **Beginning**. This means that there is a significant gap in foundational skills, that could delay further learning and development. It shows that targeted support or interventions be necessary to improve foundational skills, particularly for individuals scoring below the mean. More reading activities for the learners with varied tests could help them to improve their reading comprehension. Weak foundational skills can hinder future learning and academic progress of the learners. Instructional materials might need to be reallocated to prioritize foundational skills development. Learners with lower scores may require additional support to catch up with their classmates. Educators may benefit from professional development opportunities to enhance their instructional strategies for foundational skills.

Mihret et al. (2025) stated that targeted recommendations are proposed, including the adoption of interactive teaching methodologies, enhanced access to reading resources, and teacher training programs aimed at improving pedagogical skills. Reading habits lead to overall academic success. In order to lead successful, productive lives, students need to be prepared for college and beyond (Hicks, 2023). In addition, without comprehension, children gain no meaning from what they read. Comprehension strategies are used to increase children's understanding of the text to help them become active readers by engaging with the text (Brandon, 2021).

### Problem 3. How do the learner respondents assess their reading enthusiasm?

**Table 3**  
**Distribution of Learners' Assessed Reading Enthusiasm**

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description
<b>As a learner, I...</b>			
enjoy reading because it helps me learn new things.	3.24	0.23	At all Times
enjoy reading books in my free time.	3.33	0.31	At all Times
am able to relax and unwind when I'm reading.	3.24	0.32	At all Times
feel happy when I get to read a new book.	3.33	0.33	At all Times
enjoy reading books that connects me with my environment.	3.36	0.41	At all Times
spend more time in reading because it satisfies my day.	3.42	0.33	At all Times



am encourage to read because it brings me to new places where it have never been before.	3.63	0.24	At all Times
am fascinated with watching tv or playing video games.	3.23	0.26	At all Times
am satisfied when my teacher reads aloud to the class.	3.12	0.32	At all Times
am encourage to do research through reading.	3.16	0.42	At all Times
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.31</b>	<b>0.28</b>	<b>At all Times</b>
<hr/>			
<i>Legend:</i>	<i>3.26 - 4.00 At all Times/ Very High</i>	<i>1.76 - 2.50 Sometimes/ Low</i>	
	<i>2.51- -3.25 Most of the Time/ High</i>	<i>1.00 - 1.75 Never / Very Low</i>	

Table 3 presents the learners' assessment on **Reading Enthusiasm** with an overall mean of **3.31 (SD=0.28)** described as **At all Times** and interpreted as **Very High**. It means that learners generally display high reading interest which is maintained constantly across the different assessments. Learners may be more likely to sustain their growth in reading performance over time. This signifies that learners have a strong foundation in reading, enabling them to perform well in Reading Recovery Program. It might be influenced by factors like learners' motivation and teachers' encouragement. Although the mean is high; relatively small standard deviation suggests limited variability scores, which might indicate that some learners are not reaching their full potential. In the study of Tritana et al. (2025) provides important insights into the varying motivational patterns among students in Buddhist Sunday Schools across different educational levels. The findings show a clear developmental trend: elementary students are mainly driven by extrinsic motivation.

Learning experiences and motivation are key determining factors toward the learning outcome. Motivation in particular is dependent upon the learning experiences, which have not only a direct effect on the outcomes but also indirect influence through motivation as a mediating factor (Lo et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the indicator **As a learner, I am encourage to read because it brings me to new places where it have never been before** has the highest mean of **3.63 (SD= 0.24)** described as **At all Times** and interpreted as **Very High**. This means that most of the learners seem to share a similar perception on the value of reading. They are highly motivated to read because it allows them to explore new experiences. This suggests a strong agreement among learners about the benefits of reading. This indicates that learners place significant value on reading as a means to explore new places imaginatively. This further suggests that reading encouragement is effective in sparking imagination and exploration. The strong consensus among learners about the benefits of reading, suggest that most learners find reading to be an effective way to explore new ideas. Creating a reading culture in school is a fantastic way to improve the learning development of the pupils and build a positive community that shares an enthusiasm and love for this core skill. Reading is an essential aspect of the curriculum and transcends all subjects to support learning development among pupils ( Mudge, 2024).

Scholastic's biennial survey of families shows that having adults in their lives who read inspires children to become frequent readers (reading five to seven days per week). While most children say they have someone in their life who enjoys reading (95%), those with a lot of reading role models have a higher chance of becoming frequent readers themselves (Wise, 2025).

Such that, reading is a cognitive process that allows individuals to comprehend and make meaning from written language, enabling them to explore new ideas, expand their perspectives, and engage with the world of information and ideas. Reading serves as an enduring skill essential for academic learning and achievement among students (Jelani et al., 2023).

On the contrary, the indicator **As a learner, I am satisfied when my teacher reads aloud to the class** got the lowest mean of **3.12 (SD= 0.32)** described as **At all Times** and interpreted as **Very High**. This means that learners are somewhat neutral or halfhearted about having their teacher read aloud to the class. This indicates that this teaching method is not as effective in engaging learners or promoting their learning. With the lowest mean score among likely indicators, teachers might need to review the value of reading aloud in class. They could consider another methods to enhance tle learner engagement and understanding, such as discussions, group readings, or multimedia resources. This suggest that learners desire more active participation and independence in their learning process. Teachers could explore ways to include more learner-centered activities, allowing learners to take ownership of their education. The relatively low score could indicate that reading aloud does not cater to the varied learning styles and preferences of learners. Teachers might need to incorporate various teaching methods to put up different learning needs.

Further,teaching strategies play an important role in classroom instruction. Without the use of a strategy, teachers would be aimlessly projecting information that does not connect with learners or engage them. Strategies help learners participate, connect, and add excitement to the content being delivered (Bouslog 2022). Learning styles play a significant role in shaping how students absorb, process, and retain information. Each student has unique

preferences and strengths when it comes to learning, and understanding these styles allows educators to tailor their teaching methods for more effective learning outcomes. The concept of learning styles is based on the idea that students learn best when they are taught in a way that aligns with their natural preferences, often categorized into the VARK model: visual, auditory, reading/writing, and kinesthetic (Alabi 2024).

In particular, visual learners respond better when they are given material to look at when they are trying to master new material. Strategies that incorporate visual elements as one of their main bases include the visual-spatial approach. This strategy suggests using graphic organizers when presenting material using a lecture-based approach. This gives the student something to visually use to help them better understand the material ( Daniel, 2023).

**Problem 4. Is there a significant relationship between the teachers' school-based feeding practices and learners' reading recovery performance?**

**Table 4**  
**Test on Relationship Between Teachers' School-Based Feeding Practices and Learners' Reading Proficiency and Foundational Skills**

School-Based Feeding Practices		Reading Recovery Performance		Overall Interpretation
		Reading Proficiency	Foundational Skills	r= p=
Nutritional Impact	r-value	0.16	0.26	0.21
	p-value	0.01	0.03	0.02
		S	S	S
Program Coverage	r-value	0.76	0.31	0.53
	p-value	0.01	0.01	0.01
		S	S	S
Student Participation	r-value	0.78	0.96	<b>0.87</b>
	p-value	0.01	0.01	0.01
		S	S	S
Operational Efficiency	r-value	0.72	0.37	0.54
	p-value	0.02	0.02	0.02
		S	S	S

Table 4 presents relationship between teachers' School-Based Feeding Practices and learners' reading proficiency and foundational skills. The statistical analysis reveals compelling findings with consistently low p-values (all  $p < 0.05^*$ ), indicating a **significant relationship**; therefore, the **null hypothesis is rejected**. This signifies that the teachers' school-based feeding practices have a direct influence on learners' reading recovery performance because it motivates the learners to continue their study even at first they have struggles in reading. Proper nutrition has a direct impact on cognitive concentration, and memory retention. Learners who receive nutritious meals through school-based feeding practices incline to perform better academically. Nutritious meals through school-based feeding practices may exhibit better focus and concentration, leading to enhance reading proficiency and foundational skills. Adequate nutrition supports brain development and function, possibly improve to learn and retain reading skills such as phonemic awareness, phonics, and comprehension. Well-nourished learners are more likely to attend school regularly, which could lead to higher enrolment rates and reduced absenteeism. School feeding practices can improve learners' nutritional status, leading to better overall health and well-being. Teachers play a crucial role in implementing effective school-based feeding practices and literacy interventions. Their involvement in school-based feeding practices can significantly influence the program's effectiveness.

Both government and non-government organizations launched several feeding programs that can help reduce malnutrition and nutrient deficiency among students. In GAHES, the issue of nutrition and health of children has been of great concern in Grade 4. The effects of nutrition and health during this grade level are capable of having long term consequences that can affect a child's history of formal education (Obligado 2019). School feeding substantially reduced dropout and absenteeism of socio-economically disadvantaged schoolchildren and improved academic scores.

**Problem 5. Is there a significant relationship between the teachers' School-based Feeding practices and learners' reading enthusiasm?**

**Table 5**  
**Test on Relationship Between Teachers' School-Based Feeding Practices and Learners' Reading Enthusiasm**

School-Based Feeding Practices		Reading Enthusiasm	Overall
Nutritional Impact	r-value	0.33	S
	p-value	0.01	
Program Coverage	r-value	0.54	S
	p-value	0.01	
Student Participation	r-value	0.76	S
	p-value	0.02	
Operational Efficiency	r-value	0.82	S
	p-value	0.01	

Table 11 presents the relationship between teachers' School-based Feeding practices and learners' reading enthusiasm. The statistical analysis reveals convincing findings with consistently low p-values (all  $p < 0.05^*$ ), signifying a **significant relationship**; therefore, the **null hypothesis is rejected**.

Based on the result, nutritional impact had a significant relationship to reading enthusiasm. This means that the effect of School-based Feeding practices on the overall health of learners plays a crucial role including cognitive function and energy levels which could directly influence one's ability to focus or engage in activities like reading. Good health of the learners is very useful for them to have the courage in reading variety of books. It could affect the mood, and the attitude of learners in any kind of activities they want to do. Good implementation of school-based feeding practices could help learners to sustain their desire in reading activities.

Program coverage had a significant relationship to reading enthusiasm. This means that the scope of the school-based feeding practices really affect the reading enthusiasm of the learners. Once the program about health is well implemented, it had a positive result to the recipients. It may give encouragement, and motivation to do an activity with passion and dedication. Further, if a school based feeding practices had a good coverage, ensuring more learners are well-nourished, this could positively affect their participation and engagement in activities like reading.

The result showed that there was a significant relationship of student participation to reading enthusiasm. This means that the participation of the learners in school-based feeding practices had a positive affect in their overall engagement in school activities like reading. If learners are well-fed through these activities like feeding, they are likely to have better focus and energy for learning and reading. Their participation in feeding activities could help remove barriers like hunger which could hinder engagement. Involving the learners in the school activities will let them feel that they are valued, welcomed and cared for.

Moreover, there was a significant relationship on operational efficiency to reading enthusiasm. This means that the school-based feeding practices run efficiently-like meals being served on time, food being nutritious, and operations being smooth which can contribute to a more stable and focused learning environment. Learners who are not distracted by hunger or disruptions in meal services had the courage to engage more in reading activities. They stay motivated and supported by the school personnel. This would lead them to strive and improve in their reading activities.

The school feeding programs positively influence student participation and reduce dropout rates in public day secondary schools (Niyibizi et., al 2024). The same also to the study of Pierre et.,al ( 2024) which had the insights into the enduring impacts of school-based experiential food education programs over time as elementary youth grow into adolescents and young adults. Thier findings of concordant themes across age groups, but with increasing depth and reflection as participant age increased, provide a basis on which future research can more precisely delineate the influence of early exposure to experiential food education on food intake through each stage of adolescence and young adulthood. School feeding programs have been and will continue to be essential for the provision of nutrients, improvement of academic performance, and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle. Therefore, there is a strong political will to continue to fund new programs and to expand on existing programs (Wang et al., 2020).

### **Conclusion**

The study found that teachers prioritized the health and nutrition of the learners by encouraging them to eat variety of foods served during feeding time. Teachers had the heart to help their learners by identifying them who are most in need of nutritional support. They motivated the learners to take part in maintaining the school vegetable garden and recorded accurately the daily attendance of learners receiving the meals. Most of the learners fall into the level of Did not Meet the Expectations based on their reading recovery performance and it was seen in their reading proficiency which was very low.

According to Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, which emphasizes how a child's environment, including their diet, can impact their growth and development. This findings are consistent with holistic educational frameworks. Combining eating habits with instructional strategies can increase learners' motivation to learn, improve their reading skills, and create a more responsive and friendly learning environment.

### **Recommendation**

Based on the results of the study, the following are recommended:

1. Teachers must work more closely with the school administrators to plan feeding logistics during social events and actively invite learners to help plan nutrition-related activities that could boost engagement and make activities more relevant to them.

2. Teachers must create an innovation addressing the foundational skill gap of the learners like the Foundational Skill Hub where literacy and comprehension of the learner is develop.

3. Teachers may find strategies in their Reading Aloud Approach by using engaging texts, variable tone and step, and encouraging learner participation. Allow learners to select texts or types for reading aloud to increase their interest and engagement. Include interactive elements, such as discussions, questions, and activities, to make reading aloud more engaging.

4. School administrators and teachers must integrate nutrition-enhanced learning programs that combine feeding practices with reading instruction to support learners' overall development by ensuring the sustained and enhanced feeding practices that provide regular, nutritious meals to support learners' cognitive function and reading skills.

5. School administrators, school feeding coordinators, and teachers must ensure stability in School-based Feeding practices to establish routine that supports learners' reading habits and enthusiasm. Integrate reading activities with feeding practices, such as reading during meals or discussing books related to nutrition and create a positive learning environment where learners feel comfortable and motivated to read, supported by nutritious meals.

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