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Original Article

Financial Management Strategies Employed by Public Primary Schools in Ensuring the Accessibility of School Feeding Program in Chamwino District Council, Dodoma-Tanzania

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This study investigated the financial management strategies used by public primary schools in Chamwino District Council, Dodoma, Tanzania, to ensure all pupils have access to school feeding during school days. A qualitative research approach was adopted, using a case study design to gain in-depth insights. Data collection involved interviews and focus group discussions with a total of 52 participants. These included four head teachers, twenty-four members of school feeding committees, and twenty-four teachers. Participants were selected using purposive sampling for head teachers and committee members, while teachers were chosen through simple random sampling. The data were analysed using thematic analysis, which helped identify key financial practices used to support school feeding programs. The study found that schools utilised several strategies to fund and manage the feeding programs effectively. These strategies included securing parental contributions, developing school budgets, organising fundraising activities, and identifying various potential funding sources. His study concludes that while schools have implemented several useful strategies, there is a growing need to enhance creativity and innovation in financial planning and resource mobilisation to sustain and expand these feeding programs. Furthermore, the research emphasises the importance of adhering to established guidelines that provide a structured framework for implementing school feeding initiatives. Based on these findings, it is recommended that stakeholders involved in the management and implementation of school feeding programs strengthen their strategic planning capacities and ensure consistent compliance with policy guidelines. Such measures would enhance the sustainability and effectiveness of school feeding efforts, ultimately improving student access to regular meals and supporting better educational outcomes.

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INTRODUCTION

Ensuring the accessibility of meals to all pupils during school days is something that countries across the World have been struggling for. This is due to the significant positive impacts the program has on the children's development. This assertion has been supported by findings from various studies relating to school feeding. The study by the World Food Program (WFP, 2022) suggests that the condition of children is one of the most powerful determinants of learning outcomes. Healthy and well-nourished school children learn better, have a greater opportunity to thrive and fulfil their potential as adults, and increase their earning potential. Furthermore, World Bank (2018) suggests that for many children, particularly those in low-income settings, the food served in schools represents their only regular meal of the day, making the school meal program relevant to achieving the second Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) of ending hunger. Additionally, Kruk et al. (2022) argue that health and education are interlinked, with healthy individuals more likely to be able to acquire and complete education and educated individuals more likely to lead healthy lives. The health and education sectors are often interdependent.

Moreover, Plant et al. (2017) suggest that attending classes hungry severely impacts children's and adolescents' abilities to learn, thrive, and realise their full potential. Lee et al. (2016) argue that

programs have an important role to play in fostering all five domains of adolescent well-being and can provide an extremely good return on investment. In addition to that, the study by Bundy, De Silva, Horton, Jamison, and Patton (2018) indicates that the school feeding program is a high-return investment to foster human capital development and local economies. In addition, Wall et al. (2022) found that the provision of meals to students in schools is important in enhancing students' academic performance. The study by Azubuike and Mbah (2019) suggested that active participation wholly depended on the food given to learners in school through the food program.

On the other hand, several countries have taken different financial management strategies to ensure the accessibility of meals to all pupils regardless of their status during school days.

Devereux (2018) conducted a study in South Africa with the purpose of investigating issues that were mostly debated by the participants during the National Workshop on School Feeding in South Africa. The findings indicated that one of the strategies employed by the government in ensuring the accessibility of school feeding is to invite private sectors and NGOs to deliver school meals in South Africa, including the Peninsula School Feeding Association, Joint Aid M, Lunchbox Fund, Add Hope, and Tiger Brands Foundation.

Additionally, Roothaert et al. (2021) conducted a study that intended to analyse the policy and organisational environment that enables or promotes home-grown school feeding approaches in the Meru district council and Babati districts in Tanzania. The findings showed that in public schools, the contributions from the parents were the major strategy that made the school feeding program operate. This was evidenced when a researcher found that while some schools had some form of school feeding operating after successful contributions from parents, the other few schools were still mobilising contributions from parents.

Furthermore, Rector, Affifa, and Fawzi (2021) conducted a study that assessed the state of adolescent school-based nutrition interventions in Dodoma, Tanzania, with an emphasis on three particularly promising interventions, including school gardens, school meals, and nutrition education. The findings from the study indicated that where such programs exist in the study area, they were primarily run using monetary and in-kind contributions by parents, with additional materials such as cooking oil procured from local markets. In schools where gardening was practised, the produce from the gardens might also be used to supplement the meal program.

Despite the fact that the government has developed the National Guidelines on Feeding and Nutrition Services for Basic Education Students (NGFNSBES) which among other things directs schools in collaboration with parents to ensure that there is accessibility of meals to all pupils during school days, the assurance that school meal can be accessible to all pupils during school days in Chamwino district council remains a challenge. This was evidenced by the findings by Rector, Afifa, and Fawzi (2021), who found that out of ten schools that were involved in the study, only two schools had a school feeding program.

Furthermore, there have been limited studies conducted in the study area focusing on the financial strategies employed by schools to ensure the

accessibility of school meals to all pupils during school days. The majority of the literature focused on the impacts of school feeding programs. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to find out the financial strategies employed by schools in ensuring the accessibility of school meals to all pupils during school days in the Chamwino district council, Dodoma, Tanzania.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research approach under a case study design. Hennink, Hutter, and Bailey (2020) suggested that the qualitative research approach allows the researcher to examine people's experiences in detail using a specific set of research methods, such as in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, observation, content analysis, visual methods, and life stories or biographies. The study opted to use a case study research design. Creswell (2018) argues that a case study research design seeks to achieve a deep and involved understanding and description of individual cases. Furthermore, case study research design enables the researcher to deal with processes that take place in a unit and their interrelationships (Okendo, Atoni & Kitula, 2020).

The study applied heterogeneous purposive sampling to get four head teachers and twenty-four school feeding committee members. This technique was employed in order to access knowledgeable people about a particular issue by virtue of their professional role, power, and experience (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018). Simple random sampling was also used to get teachers. The technique is normally used where there is little or no information about the characteristics of the targeted population and can be done by drawing names out of the container until the required number is reached (Okendo, Aton & Kitula, 2020).

This study employed interviews and focus group discussions as the methods of data collection from a sample size of 52 research participants. An interview is a method of collecting data that

involves the presentation of oral-verbal stimuli and replies in terms of oral-verbal responses (Cohen, Maino & Marrison, 2018). It is a useful way of getting in-depth amounts of data quickly, where immediate follow-ups and clarifications are possible. Interview guide items were developed to address the research objective. The study used interviews to collect data from head teachers of four public primary schools. Moreover, this study used FGD whereby a group that consisted of six school food committee members and six teachers from each school were involved in a discussion whereby the research participants were free to use both languages, Kiswahili and English, so as to help them in expressing their opinions based on the objectives. It is accepted and enjoyable by the participants; helped to answer all questions that the researcher intended to ask; they were extremely good at accessing data from social groups, and ultimately, a larger amount of information was achieved much more rapidly and at a lower cost (Lune, 2017).

This study employed a thematic analysis method to analyse data. Content analysis is used to analyse information by sorting data and comparing different pieces of information to summarise it into meaningful information (Holsti, 2017). The study used this method as it agrees with a wide range of analytic options and interpretation of themes supported by the data.

Ethics in research is concerned with what a researcher ought to and ought not to do in the research and research behaviour (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018). Moreover, Sibinga (2018) defined ethics as the norms for conduct that distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Thus, consideration was given to the research ethics by obtaining a research permit letter from the Chamwino District Council before starting the data collection process. Precautions were taken to ensure the trustworthiness of the qualitative data according to the criteria of credibility, dependability and conformability.

RESULTS

Financial Management Strategies Employed by Schools in Ensuring the Accessibility of School Feeding

This section focuses on the results of the study on financial managerial strategies employed by schools in ensuring that meals become accessible to all pupils during school days, as per government directives through its guidelines. Data related to this objective were gathered from 52 respondents, including 4 head teachers, 24 School feeding committee members, and 24 Teachers through interview and focus group discussion, whereby the research participants were to respond on financial managerial strategies employed by schools in ensuring the accessibility of meals to all pupils during school days. Data shows that among the strategies that were mentioned and discussed by respondents included; Parent Contributions, Budgeting, Fundraising, and identifying potential sources of funds.

Parents Contributions

Data from both interviews and focus group discussion shows that 52 respondents (100%) acknowledged that the operations of the school feeding program in their schools are solely enabled by parents' contributions. During data collection, it was found that the program had been suspended in all four schools since January, and the main reason which was started by the respondents, was the failure of the parents to contribute as they always do, due to food insecurity faced in the area, which was caused by prolonged drought conditions. Thus, they had nothing to contribute to their children's meals since they did not have good harvests. In an interview, one head teacher had this to say;

Frankly speaking, I must admit that parents have been playing a critical role in the school feeding program in this school after the phasing out of the World Food Program. I'm saying this because most of the food items needed for meal preparation are contributed by parents.

However, the challenge here is that these contributions are always inadequate, and the major reason, in my opinion, is the poverty condition among parents, which is why you find that currently the program has to be suspended (Interview with HT-S1 on 18th March 2025)

The quotation from the interview shows that parents play a critical role in school feeding programs, as most of the food items needed are contributed by them. Respondent raised an issue of the inadequacy of parents' contributions in connection with poverty among the parents as a challenge. It seems that school feeding implementers are less creative as they solely depend on contributions from parents, since the government has provided a room for anybody who wishes to participate in the program can participate. This demonstrates the need for school feeding implementers to be more creative and innovative in finding other sources to finance, to supplement in case parents fail to contribute.

Another head teacher argued that;

In fact, parents are playing the essential roles in this program since almost all food items needed here are contributed by them, either in the form of in-kind or cash contributions, depending on the needs. However, what is always contributed is not enough, and in my opinion, one of the reasons is that these contributions are done in a local way. From this year, we have agreed to adhere to government guidelines during contributions (Interview with HT-S2 on 19th March 2025)

The data indicates that school feeding implementers in their operation were not following the guidelines relating to how much parents should contribute rather they were agreed locally in their meetings. This caused confusion among community members. For example, the guideline has stated clearly that for grain crops such as maize, millet, and rice, parents will need to contribute one bushel and a quarter of corn, rice, and millet per pupil per year. This implies that parents seemed to be reluctant sometimes

because school feeding implementers were conducting their operation locally, something which led parents to be less confident in what was agreed.

Another respondent during the focus group discussion stated that,

As a teacher, I must acknowledge the role of parents in school feeding. In fact, all food items tend to be contributed by parents. However, the big challenge, in my opinion, is over-dependency on parents' contributions by the school's feeding committee. In fact, as teachers, we have been telling them that they should not solely rely on parents' contributions since such contributions are not reliable, as you can see right now, the program is suspended (FGD with T-S2 19th on March 2025)

The other respondent during the focus group discussion added that;

As a school food committee member, I really appreciate what has been contributed by parents in supporting our school feeding. You know the government has clearly stated that the program will be operated in collaboration between parents and schools. Unfortunately, prolonged drought conditions faced in our area last year caused the program in our school to be inactive from January, and I think in our school we will have the program back in April (FGD with SFCM-S3 on 21st March 2025)

The quotations from FGD show that school feeding implementers rely solely on contributions from parents, which seemed to be unreliable. It is not well known why schools should rely on contributions from parents, while there are several financial strategies that could be employed. Furthermore, despite the fact that school feeding implementers in the study area are aware of the food insecurity faced community as a result of prolonged drought, they failed to find an alternative mechanism that could enable the operation of the school feeding program to avoid the suspension as it occurred. This implies

that there is a need for deliberate attempts to be taken by school feeding implementers in ensuring the accessibility of meals to pupils since school meals have proven to have several benefits to pupils such as alleviation of short-term hunger, increased attentiveness among pupils as a result this can have significant impacts on academic achievement of pupils.

Preparing and Presenting of School Food Budget

The qualitative data on budgeting demonstrates that 52 respondents (100%) acknowledged the tradition of the school to prepare and present the school food budget during parent meetings. The strategy seemed to be agreed upon by all research participants, yet it has little contribution in ensuring that all pupils have access to school meals during school days. Despite the presence of a budget, the school feeding was suspended in all four schools. The ineffectiveness of the budget seems to be attributed to several factors which can be seen in budget preparation, presentation, and perception among the parents, who majority of whom do not implement what was agreed. During an interview, one head teacher had this to say regarding the school feeding budget;

In fact, we always prepare a school food budget and present it to parents. In fact, this is our tradition since the budget enables us to predict costs and foresee obstacles. However, we have not managed to mobilise funds from the suggested sources, which are indicated in our budget. I think the reason is poor resource mobilisation skills among implementers. As you can see, right now the program has been suspended since January due to a budget deficit (Interview with HT-S4 on 22nd March 2025).

The data from the interview showed that schools are preparing the budget as a formality to satisfy parents rather than a strategy to get extra funds from the new funding resources that are normally suggested in the budget. This leads to the budgets that are prepared and presented to parents during school parent meetings to have less impact in complementing the

gaps. Data indicates that among the factors that seem to hinder is poor resource mobilisation skills among school feeding implementers. This implies that there is a need for training on resource mobilisation techniques among implementers. Furthermore, schools need to focus and reflect on their budgets so as to implement effectively what has been agreed upon during the budgeting process, rather than doing it in the form of business as usual, something which seems to greatly affect the accessibility of school feeding to all pupils throughout the school.

In addition, another respondent during a focus group discussion argued that;

We prepare and present the school food budget to parents during the parents' meeting, since it enables us to prepare in advance and predict the requirements of our school feeding program. However, it has not been helpful in filling the gap. In my opinion, the big challenge we are facing right now is poor coordination and cooperation among ourselves as implementers. This means we are not working as a team, which is one of the main reasons that has led the feeding program to be suspended (FGD with SFCM-S3, 20th March 2025).

The quotation indicates that respondents acknowledged the presence and importance of budgets in schools, although it has not been helpful in ensuring the accessibility of meals to all pupils during school days as it was found that the school feeding program in the study area was suspended since January and one school argued that the program would resume in April while the remaining schools expected on July. Data shows that among the challenges facing implementers are poor coordination and cooperation among school feeding implementers. This implies there is a need for school feeding implementers to strengthen coordination and cooperation among themselves.

Fundraising

Data demonstrates that fundraising has been given less priority as one of the financial managerial strategies employed by schools in ensuring the accessibility of meals to all pupils during school days. The strategy was acknowledged by 10(19.2%) research participants. However, those few who mentioned and discussed this strategy stressed that it was a time for schools to invest much effort in fundraising activities since other strategies such as parent's contributions have proven failure due to several factors something which has led the program to be suspended in all four public primary schools where data were collected. During the interview, one head teacher had this to say;

You know! We used to have fundraising activities, though the activities were conducted locally! In fact, fundraising is essential, especially in our area, where the weather is unpredictable. I have discussed with my colleagues from the school feeding committee to put much effort into fundraising activities, as we are experiencing a suspension of school feeding in our school since January. Thus, we plan to have a range of fundraising activities that I hope will be helpful in complementing our program (Interview with HT-S02 on 20th March 2025).

Another respondent during the focus group discussion asserted that;

Mhhh! We have been conducting fundraising, though it was informally. We used to approach businessmen whom we thought could help us and ask for their contributions. This way of raising funds could not give us the expected results, which is why we have currently agreed to be more committed to fundraising. We have started to organise football matches and talent shows for our pupils, where we expect to invite people from different places within our district as a way of raising funds. (FGD with SFCM-S3 on 21st March 2025).

The quotations indicate that schools in the study area have not made much effort to ensure that fundraising, as one of the strategies, contributes to complementing and filling the gap that has been left by other strategies. Because not many efforts have been made, this has led the fundraising activities to have less impact since no tangible results or significant impacts have been produced. Successful fundraising activities need an approach that will create confidence among people who are expected to participate in fundraising activities, people with convincing power to attract as many people as possible to participate in contributions. From these findings, it implies that the need for regular training sessions for the key implementers of the program is of paramount importance.

Another respondent added that;

We plan to strengthen fundraising activities since other strategies have proven to be failures. I'm saying this because we have been relying on parents' contributions and budgeting for years now, but the assurance of accessibility of meals to all pupils throughout school days remains a challenge! We know that the government is not funding the program, but at least it can help us with awareness campaigns. It should not focus on academic issues while if the feeding program is strengthened can (FGD with T-S2 on 19th March 2025)

The quotation from the focus group discussion indicates that the government is less involved in school feeding programs rather, it puts much effort into academic issues. The involvement of the government is needed, especially in creating awareness among the community, since there are some parents who think that participating in school feeding is an option. This demonstrates that there is a possibility of some challenges, such as misconceptions among parents on the fee-free education policy, to be minimised if the government participates in providing clarification.

Identification of Potential sources of funds

This is another financial strategy that is being employed by school administrators in the study area in trying to look for food assurance for all pupils during school days. The strategy was mentioned and discussed by 27(51.9%) research participants. The strategy was acknowledged by research participants that if the strategy could be implemented, there was the possibility of reducing dependency on solely on sources that are not reliable.

During an interview, one head teacher stated that;

Yes! We have started to discuss with non-profit entities, corporations, and local communities to consider joint prospects for financing the feeding program. As you know, establishing healthy alliances grounded in common values and an objective tends to draw monetary assistance, knowledge, and supportive networks. But lack of commitment and cooperation among implementers is a challenge (Interview with HT-S4 on 22nd March 2025)

The qualitative data from interview indicates that research participants acknowledged the necessity of identifying the potential source of funds so as avoid dependency on one source, since depending on one source can pose serious challenge like what has happened to the four schools where the school feeding was suspended since January due to failure of parents to contribute. This shows that commitment and cooperation among implementers are inevitable in ensuring the accessibility of school meals to all pupils during school days.

Furthermore, another participant during the discussion stated that,

“Sure! We have plans to determine and pinpoint potential funding sources so as to avoid dependency on a single source. I think if we are going to be more determinant in identifying potential sources of funds, we will expand the range of financial resources accessible for

backing the program” (FGD with a SFCM-S4 on 22nd March, 2025).

Another respondent argued that;

You know the issue is not identifying the potential sources of funds. I think there is a need to be more focused and determined with the identified sources of funds. I’m doing this because it is the issue of identifying those potential sources of funds, we have been trying to identify several times, but the issue of assurance of accessibility of meals to all pupils remains a challenge in our school(FGD with T-S4 on 21st March 2025)

The quotations from the focus group discussion seem to acknowledge the necessity of identifying the potential source of funds. However, the most important thing that is emphasised with respondents is for school feeding implementers to be determined and focused on this strategy. This implies that it is possible to have good strategies in papers, but if the implementers are not determined and focused, it is difficult to have tangible results in whatever strategy is going to be employed.

DISCUSSION

This part critically discusses the data collected from the four public primary schools in Chamwino District Council, Dodoma, regarding financial Strategies Employed by Schools to ensure that food is accessible to all pupils during school days as directed by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology through the National Guidelines on Food and Nutrition Services for Basic Education Students (Mwongozo wa Kitaifa wa Utoaji wa Huduma ya Chakulana Lishe Kwa Wanafunzi wa Elimu msingi). The discussion is based on the findings, which were collected through interviews and focus group discussions from head teachers, school feeding committee members, and teachers from four primary schools in the Chamwino District, Dodoma.

The government, through its National Guidelines on Food and Nutrition Services for Basic Education Students (NGFNSBES), has made clear that the schools, in collaboration with parents, shall find the best way to ensure that primary school pupils are provided with food through the school feeding programs at their expense. This means the government is not providing any grant or donation for the feeding program for day scholars; it is all to be done by the parents in collaboration with schools. The role of the government is to maintain a conducive environment for the provision of food and nutrition services for actors to participate in the process (MoEST, 2014). This way has propounded several efforts to be employed by the primary school administrators in collaboration with parents in this course.

From the findings, it was discovered that the schools use different strategies to support their financial well-being, allowing them to try to have assurance of the school feeding programs in their schools. This objective was accompanied by one research question: What financial strategies are employed by school administrators in ensuring feeding programs in your school? Among those strategies, the common strategies mentioned and discussed by research participants were parents' contributions, budgeting, fundraising from different stakeholders, and identifying potential sources of funds.

Parent's Contributions

The findings revealed that 52 (100%) research participants mentioned and discussed that parents play significant roles in facilitating the accessibility of food in schools through their contribution, which can be in-kind or cash contributions. The findings further show that all food items needed for the program to operate come from parents. These findings concur with the findings from MoEST (2019), which found that in the schools where there was a feeding program, the primary source of food items came from the contributions of parents, guardians, and communities. The findings of the

current study are also in agreement with the findings from Rector et al. (2021), who were assessing the state of adolescent school-based nutrition interventions in Dodoma, Tanzania. The findings from the study indicated that where such programs exist in the study area, they were primarily run using monetary and in-kind contributions by parents, with additional materials such as cooking oil procured from local markets. In schools where gardening was practised, the produce from the gardens might also be used to supplement the meal program.

Moreover, findings from this study show that dependency on parent's contributions by the primary schools in running the school feeding program in Chamwino district council is 100% and this was narrated by research participants arguing that the suspension of the school feeding program in the study area it was due to failure of parents to contribute as they normally do, as a result of prolonged drought which faced the area. Again, these findings align with findings from Roothaert et al. (2021), who analysed the policy and organisational environment that enables or promotes home-grown school feeding approaches in Meru and Babati public schools. The findings show that the contributions from the parents were the main source that enabled the operation of the feeding program. This was proved when results showed that the majority of schools had some form of school feeding operating at the time when the researcher visited the area of study (2–3 weeks after school opened from long year-end holidays), with an exceptional of few schools where the program was yet to start since schools were still mobilizing contributions from parents. This shows that in the absence of contributions from the parents, school feeding cannot be operated.

Budgeting

The findings from the current study show the acknowledgement from the respondents on the presence of the budgeting process in their schools as one of the major financial management strategies

employed. But also, the respondents agreed on the importance of preparing budgets for the feeding programs, since among several advantages, it enables to maximisation of the money to be used in the school feeding program since the budget tends to show the sources of finances. But also, budgeting tends to enhance accountability and transparency in resource utilisation. The findings are in agreement with the findings from Hanin and Sirous (2019), who argued that the primary goal of budgeting in schools is the maximisation of the money for education. Moreover, these findings concur with the findings from Chukwu et al. (2019), who argued that Principals' budget implementations enhance the administration of secondary schools in South-East states, Nigeria. For instance, both the male and female teachers agreed that the implementation of planned budgets enhances secondary school administration. Maintenance of buildings and furniture every year, with the money mapped out for such work, enhances secondary school administration.

Furthermore, primary school administrators use budgeting as a suitable mechanism to facilitate the school feeding programs. Through making budgets, they are able to make informed decisions about resource allocations and how the money collected from the stakeholders is going to be effectively utilised in the feeding program. These findings concur with the findings from Nath, Chowdhury and Hassan (2022) argued that in order to run the school feeding program effectively, a budget and nutrition-aware food menu generation scheme is required along with proper monitoring, student feedback, and real-time attendance facilities.

However, during the discussion, some respondents raised the issue of not having enough knowledge and skills required in preparing and presenting the school food budget, something which poses a big challenge. This inadequate knowledge led to have budget that does not reflect the real situation, as a result, they are always facing a budget deficit. These findings are consonant with the findings from

Kpedor (2019), who found that the school board members lacked the requisite skills in budgeting, something which led the compliance with budgetary requirements to be a tall order, as budgets were set without giving attention to budgeting requirements.

The findings correspond with the system theory, which is the fundamental philosophy of this study concerning the financial managerial strategies employed to ensure the accessibility of the feeding program. This theory acknowledges that any administration is a single, unified system of correlated parts or subsystems. Each part of the overall system is dependent on the others and cannot function optimally without them. The creation of the budget and presenting the same to the community for decision-making not only complies with the notion of system theory but also manifests its efficacy in terms of approval from the surrounding community for the utilisation of the money resource the school receives.

Fundraising

The findings showed that despite the fact that the strategy was unpopular and unfamiliar in the study area, those respondents who discussed the strategy acknowledged that fundraising activities are the driving force of all other financial managerial strategies that need to be employed by the schools to facilitate the school feeding programs for primary school pupils. Fundraising activities are dependent on stakeholders such as community members, the corporation through corporate social responsibility activities, local and international organisations, as well as community member-based cooperative societies, which provide food donations directly to the school food committees. The findings concur with the findings from Banda (2018), who was studying the head teacher's management practices of the school feeding program in selected primary schools in Zambia asserted that support from fundraising activities facilitates the achievement of the feeding program in the primary school in Lufuyama District. The findings revealed that 75%

of the primary school management in Zambia obtains grants and aid from fundraising activities, which enhance the sustainability of feeding programs. What Banda observed correlates with our field data where the majority of the respondents agreed that fundraising can be a strong financial strategy that can be utilized to boost the assurance of the feeding program in the primary school in Tanzania, specifically the Dodoma region despite the fact that the implementation of what they were stated remains a challenge due to less commitment.

Furthermore, findings of the current study show that the contribution of fundraising by the primary schools in ensuring the accessibility of school meals to all pupils, especially from private organisations, is the lowest of all the financial management strategies used by the schools in the study area. These findings concur with the study conducted by Kiilu and Mugambi (2019) on the Status of school feeding program policy initiatives in primary schools in Machakos County, Kenya, whereby the findings showed that all three categories of respondents who were involved in the study agreed that the private sector played a minimal role.

Fundraising activities as an input of financial strategy can be processed through effective management to provide different outputs such as cognitive development and hunger alleviation for students in primary school, since the money or material obtained from those activities would be invested in the feeding program. Different respondents believe that fundraising activities would help the process of increasing school enrolment, attendance, and retention, improving academic performance, and decreasing malnutrition among primary school students through feeding programs.

Although system theory can be integrated with this activity in terms of organisation and control of the whole process, the cognitive system fits this activity. Thus, the best mechanism for schools is contingent upon the situation at hand. The fundraising activities do not guarantee how much

the school will obtain, as it depends on the accumulated donations and grants. This shows it is difficult to set the system for utilising the resource, which varies in time. Therefore, it is best to use what is obtained at the current time.

Identifying More Potential Sources of Funds

Besides, the respondents during interviews agreed that financial managerial strategy is strengthened with the imperatives of potential sources of funds. The affinity of equitable sources is addressed through non-profit entities, companies, local and international organisations, and the community. The rationale for the identification of potential sources of funds is to reduce the dependence on a single source of funds to run the school feeding program. Having a variety of sources of funds not only assures the accessibility of meals but also strengthens its potential to cover all the needed pupils.

Both FGD and interviews facilitated in this study show that the respondents have a good understanding of the advantage of having different sources of income in ensuring the availability of the school, as the best financial strategy. Strategically, the identification of different sources of funds is the best approach toward strengthening the potential for feeding programs. This is technically in agreement with the findings of the study conducted by Machocho (2011), who studied the management of home-grown school feeding programs and their implications on access and retention in primary schools in Kenya. In his study, it was revealed that having multiple sources of funds is a catalyst for successful feeding programs in primary schools. This was agreed by 80% of the respondents he interviewed.

However, there are many challenges in identifying potential sources of funds, like disorganisation, disunity and lack of awareness among the community members who are the potential stakeholders in this campaign. These challenges not only delay the effective implementation of the

programme but also contribute to the failure of effective control of resources through dependency on a single source of funds.

The insights that were created to foster this activity included stakeholder meetings, leasing of farming areas and collecting rent, owning farming and crop cultivation, equity and trade. In Chamwino district, where the four primary schools the data was collected, prove that there is a huge need for the identification of multiple sources of funds for feeding programs. The researcher observed that, apart from funds from the parents of the primary school children, the administrators still have not identified or utilised another mechanism that will work together with the money and materials collected from the parents. This alone suffices the decline of the feeding programs in the primary school in Chamwino District since the funds and materials collected from the parents and guardians of the children are inadequate to sustain the availability of food throughout the Academic year.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The research findings, as presented and interpreted, clearly reveal that the assurance of the accessibility of school meals to all pupils during school days in the study area remains a challenge. Among several factors that have led to the unsustainability of the program are low creativity and innovative capability among key implementers, less commitment of the stakeholders, and misconceptions about the school feeding among the community. There is a need for key implementers to improve their creativity and innovative capability during the implementation of the strategies since the government has provided room for schools in collaboration with school feeding committees to look for the best strategies that can be employed during the implementation of the program instead of solely relying on a single financial strategy which has proven to be unreliable in ensuring the accessibility of school meal to all pupils during the school days.

There is a need for school feeding implementers to be flexible during the implementation of different strategies, rather than continuing to be static with their mechanisms, which have proven failures. Furthermore, a need for all school feeding stakeholders to strengthen cooperation with the local community. The findings show that the respondents have great knowledge of the imperatives needed to foster the school feeding program. This is to say, they acknowledged the importance of strengthening financial strategy, since, in order for the school feeding to be accessible to all pupils during school days, financial aspects such as funds are inevitable. However, they don't know how to implement those strategies due to poor cooperation between key implementers and the general local community.

Moreover, the study recommends that school feeding implementers should adhere to different guidelines since these guidelines tend to indicate the responsibilities of each school feeding stakeholder, something which was observed to be a challenging issue in the study area. Additionally, the study recommends the need to strengthen awareness through awareness campaigns to parents/community, using the meetings and welfare school-organised events. This is because parents and the community were observed to be reluctant to cooperate with the schools on the issue of contributing food to their children during school days. This signalled a poor understanding of matters relating to school feeding among the local community.

The study recommends that the key implementers need to be more committed and dedicated to implementing the school feeding program. There was an indication that school feeding committee and head teachers were less committed especially in fundraising activities despite the fact that they knew the importance of raising funds from different sources still fundraising activities were given less priority in the study area something which has contributed to the suspension of the program simply

because parents could not contribute due to food insecurity condition that faced the area.

The study recommends that the district council government through its food and nutrition department to strengthen monitoring and evaluation of the program. This is important despite the fact that the government does not fund the program but there is a need to have strong monitoring of the food which is used by pupils during school days, and the quality of food, but also the local government can be involved in enacting by-laws which will at least force local community to participate in the program.

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