



# Assessing School Meal Programmes' Impact on Academic Performance Among Urban Youth in Kenya: A Survey Study

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## Abstract

School meal programmes are an integral part of educational infrastructure in many countries to support student nutrition and academic performance. However, their effectiveness varies by context, particularly in urban settings where socio-economic disparities are more pronounced. The research employed a mixed-methods approach involving both quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews. Data were collected from over 1500 students across 20 schools in Nairobi, using standardised questionnaires designed by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. A significant proportion (78%) of respondents reported improved academic performance following the implementation of school meal programmes, particularly in subjects like mathematics and reading comprehension. Students also indicated higher levels of concentration during class sessions post-meal times. The findings suggest that school meal programmes play a crucial role in enhancing educational outcomes for urban youth in Kenya by addressing nutritional gaps and supporting cognitive functions critical to academic success. Based on the results, policymakers should consider scaling up these programmes while also focusing on integrating complementary initiatives such as health education and nutrition support to maximise their impact.

**Keywords:** *Kenyan, urban, socio-economic, stratified sampling, qualitative analysis, anthropometric measurement, regression analysis*

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