

Example of research paper on does school lunch make our kids sick

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



Introduction

The twenty first century is one of the periods whereby many changes and developments have been recorded and seen in our day to day lives, particularly, in our social lives. Some of these aspects include how we relate with each other, our different and growing lifestyles, the clothes people wear, the kind of interactions that are established between different persons and the foods that people eat in our day to day lives. These are some of the aspects that have trickled down to people's day to day lives, such as workplaces, schooling institutions and other areas where people establish different forms of interactions. One of the most essential things to note in this case, for example, include the fact that the differences in our cultures is one of the aspects that have affected the perceptions that different people have towards various foods and this is one of the biggest debates the various schools across the nations of the world, since different people. Due to their differences in their perspectives, cultures and traditions, have different opinions towards various foods. This has led to varied opinion concerning the children's preference concerning the foods (Gunderson 67). One of the most essential things to note concerning the foods that children eat in schools in various regions and countries across the world include the fact that the respective schools' catering departments mainly focus on providing the stable and available foods around the region, and these include the foods that are easily found and grown in the regions across or around the schools. In some third world countries' schools, particularly in Africa and South America, various schools reserve parts of the schools' land, and grow foods in these regions, as well as rearing of animals for the

production of milk, meat and even poultry among other food products. This is common in most schools in the rural regions of the underdeveloped countries (Harper 12).

Consequently, through the introduction of various campaigns both in the United States and beyond, there has been the ongoing advocating for healthy, dietary balanced meals across schools, considering that due to the mass cooking and the quantity of food, the dietary consideration has not been put in place, especially in public schools and most schools in the underdeveloped countries. At the same time, other factors such as financial considerations have affected dietary balance in the foods that children take, particularly over lunch hour. One of the most consistent aspects that have been noted in the foods that are offered in schools, especially in the elementary and secondary levels across the world is foods rich in calories, such as rice. In the twenty first century, however, there has been a change in trend especially in the schools in the developed and developing countries, whereby, there has been a considerably notable decrease in the vegetable foods' portions in the meals, but an increase in fats and foods rich in fatty acids. Below are some illustrations of foods eaten by students and children in various areas across the world (Paul 13).

South Korea- rice, salad, kimchi, yoghurt, pork and tofu stew

Japan- Fish, vegetable soup, rice, milk and cucumbers

Sweden- Rice, raw carrots, tomatoes, cucumbers and meat balls made from beef or pork

Nigeria- Rice, vegetables, meatballs, breads, fruits and tea

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One of the most essential things to note from the above is the fact that the developed countries have focused more on providing equally balanced diets for the children in their schools. At the same time, however, it is also necessary to note the fact that there are fewer vegetables in their meals, but increased fatty food content. This is one of the factors that have led to complaints from various educational stakeholders, particularly the children's parents, who insist in most cases that these foods have diverse impacts on the children's health, both on the long term, as well as a short term view and perspective. At the same time, it is also necessary to note the fact that the foods have different impacts on the children and their education, especially, from a perceived and developed approach's view. Different children have been found to develop different perceptions towards school as a whole, especially the quality of their study and concentration, based on the type of food that they are offered in school. This is particularly the case in elementary and primary level schools. This has led to the development of various organizations to monitor the type of foods that the children have in schools, and these include the National School Lunch Program (Chris 34).

The National School Lunch Program

Benefits of the National School Lunch Program

- Food safety- One of the most essential areas that the National School Lunch Program through the National School Lunch Act of 1946 seeks to achieve is food safety, whereby, the program establishes programs, strategies and practices that ensure that the food that the children eat at the schools are not only safe, in terms of storage and cooking methods, but also in making

sure that they are uncontaminated, in order to uphold high health standards (Roark 56).

- Nutrition- Nutritive value of the foods that the children eat in the schools is one of the most essential and key areas to look at in this case, and this is one of the areas that various education stakeholders have consistently talked about, and that needs improvement. This has led to the establishment of various strategies, which in this case include the developed programs under the Nutrition Standards and Meal Requirements and that have been subdivided into phases, depending with the educational institutions. Through the National School Lunch Program, these play a key role in ensuring that the foods cooked and offered to the students and pupils in schools meet the required and advocated nutritive expectations.

- Grants- The national School Lunch Program also offers grants to various education institutions, especially the non-profit-making private institutions in various states across the United States, in order to make sure that the foods offered to the students are up to the required standards, from a nutritive perspective (Zand 76).

- Inspection- The national School Lunch Program inspects the foods that schools offer to the students, not only in order to ascertain quality, but also other factors and aspects such as the foods' nutritive value. After the inspection, the organization offers advice to these educational institutions, especially, on the areas that they need to improve on, in order to offer quality foods to the students.

Disadvantages of the National School Lunch Program

- In some cases, the systems applied by the National School Lunch Program have ended up affecting the general school systems, especially, in cases where there are changes to be made in the schedule or the diets that the children are used to in the schools (USA Today 11).
- There have been cases of friction, especially between the parents and the children concerning their children's diet, as a result of recommendations made by the National School Lunch Program.
- The National School Lunch Program has not been in a good position to establish a strategy through which it can balance the needs to all the children's dietary needs, for example, those that have allergies to various foods that the program recommends to be included in the school feeding systems. As a result, there has been poor balancing of the different foods between these children (USA Today 19).

Lunch meals in schools

As a result, the foods that the children have been eating have been high on calories, as well as fats. These include foods such as rice and pork among other foods, and considering the fact that the children are involved in minimal exercise activities compared to their active class sessions, this has been leading to a gradual accumulation of calories and fats in their bodies. This has both short term, as well as long term negative impacts on the children.

At the same time, from studies carried out, especially across various public schools in the United States, most of the children have opted to purchase

foods from the school canteens, as well as other areas, which are mostly dispensed from vending machines. These include meals, snacks and drinks such as milkshakes, which are characterized by high-fat level, as well as poor nutritive conditions. As a result, most of the kids have been consuming imbalanced diets over time, especially in schools, and this has affected their eating, as well as other nutritive balances in their bodies, resulting to undesirable outcomes, such as illnesses, obesity and poor health among other outcomes. According to the National School Lunch Program, accumulated intake of junk foods has led to undesirable outcomes and impacts on the children, whereby resulting factors include the above mentioned conditions, such as obesity. Consequently, this is one of the challenges that have contributed to the consistently increasing levels of obese people in the United States, which currently stands at 67% of the total American population (Green Food 10).

However, considering the fact that the National School Lunch Program has been working hand in hand with the schools to improve the quality of the foods that the children eat in their day to day meals, there are several aspects that should be noted concerning the state of these foods, as well as the goals that the National School Lunch Program seeks to achieve. For example, one of the most essential things to note in this case include the fact that the National School Lunch Program seeks to ensure that every school under its jurisdiction offers dietary balanced meals to the students, with consistency and variation in the food components. At the same time, it seeks to ensure that it reduces the amount of fast that the students eat, and instead, increase on the amount of organic foods that these students eat.

This will play a major role in ensuring that the schools improve the condition of these foods, as well as encourage the children to focus more on eating the foods offered in the schools, consequently, reducing on the amount of junk foods, for instance from the vending machines, that the students eat during school time. By reducing the amount of foods that the students and children purchase from the vending machine, this plays a major role in ensuring that the amount of fats that the students eat on a daily basis is highly reduced (Green Food 6).

Children diseases associated to unhealthy eating

As a result of feeding on these unhealthy foods, there are various outcomes that have been related to the same, and these include both unhealthy habits, as well as dietary diseases related to the same. Depending on the age of the child and the type of food that they have been feeding on, there are different conditions that are related to the same, and which are the consequent outcome for eating the foods.

- Obesity

Obesity, for example, is one of the aspects that have been noted to affect the children in schools, from as early as 4 years old. Obesity is one of the conditions that have resulted from foods that are high in sodium, fats and sugar. At the same time, considering the fact that the students have fewer alternatives as substitutions for these meals, it has been hard for them to change their diets in terms of the foods that they consume, and this is one of the factors that have led to this condition.

- Protein-Energy Malnutrition

This is yet another risk that the students have been exposed to through the meals that they have been eating, and this is also a major factor that might adversely affect the children's health, especially in future, due to the fact that the foods they have been eating is high on fats and calories, and low on proteins. Considering the fact that proteins are essential and key building blocks to a balanced diet, failure to include the same or include minimal and insufficient amounts of the same is one of the ways through which children's health might be affected.

- Diabetes and high blood pressure

There are various chronic illnesses that are associated with eating of junk foods, and these include diabetes and high blood pressure. Diabetes and high blood pressure are two major sources of concern that has drawn the parents' attention to the type of foods that the children have been eating in the schools. For example, considering the fact that the foods are prepared in large quantities, some of the resulting impacts include the lack of specific consideration of various necessary building blocks for the foods, and some of the most essential nutrients that have been noted to conspicuously lack from the foods include zinc and iron. These are some of the possible causes that lead to high blood pressure, especially, considering the fact that the foods are high on sugars and calories.

Conclusion

In conclusion, there are several aspects that are necessary to put into consideration, and that will assist the schools in establishing a way through which they will relate with the students from a dietary perspective, as well as

create a linking understanding between the school and other educational stakeholders, such as the parents. For example, it is necessary to note that the foods that the children eat at school do not only physically and physiologically affect them, but also affects them psychologically (Benner 33). This is due to the fact that the perception that a child develops towards a given product or food is likely to grow into them from an early age into his old age. This is one of the reasons why the National School Lunch Program has found it necessary to develop a strategy through which the children will not have any negative perception towards any food product, and they have achieved this by encouraging the schools through the catering department to develop food menus whereby the unpopular food ingredients are cooked or served with the popular foods, in order for them to complement each other.

At the same time, by developing healthier ways through which the children will eat their foods in schools (for instance through reviewing of the food ingredients in the menu and developing and reviewing the portions of each of the foods in the menu), this will play a major role in also addressing the health problem that has been dominant in many schools across the United States, as well as other regions across the world. Addressing this problem is one of the most essential things that the federal government, through liaising with the county government, can do, in order to not only improve on the quality of diet that the children have in schools, but also other factors such as concentration in school, and consequent performance of the students (Ben 45).

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