

# Supplementary Feeding Program: A Case Study of Children's Growth and Parent's Participation in an NCDC Barangay in Misamis Oriental

Angelie C. Abing\*, Dr. Ines V. Danao. RSW, MSSW

Graduate School, Lourdes College Inc., Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines

\*Corresponding Author

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2026.1304000110>

Received: 10 April 2026; Accepted: 15 April 2026; Published: 04 May 2026

## ABSTRACT

The Supplementary Feeding Program (SFP) is recognized as a vital community-based intervention that promotes improved nutritional status among young children while fostering parental involvement in early childhood development. This study examined the operationalization of the SFP in practice, the extent of family participation, and its effects on children's growth outcomes in a barangay under the National Child Development Center (NCDC) in the locality of Misamis Oriental, using a qualitative case study design. Key participants, including parents or caregivers, a Child Development Worker (CDW), a Barangay Nutrition Scholar (BNS), and a Barangay Health Worker (BHW), were purposively selected to provide comprehensive insights. Data were gathered through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), and document analysis conducted within the community. The collected data were transcribed, validated through member checking, and systematically analyzed to generate codes, categories, and seven themes emerged from the data collected. Supplementary Feeding Program (SFP) significantly contributed to improvements in children's health, behavior, and school participation in terms of (1) Collaborative Engagement, (2) Engagement in Nutrition and Sanitary Practices, (3) Physical Health Enhancement, and (4) School Engagement Improvement reflect the participants' experiences and interpretations. These were the types of how the Supplementary Feeding Program was structured, the amount of parenting activity, and the influences on the nutritional status and growth in children. It brings attention to how parents, caregivers, and barangay staff were involved and faced challenges to make the program work. In addition, the themes give better insight into how the feeding program benefits children's development, encourages parental buy-in, and facilitates collaboration in the community. They also indicate pre-existing problems and possible weaknesses in the application of the Supplementary Feeding Program in the barangay. The study highlights parental involvement the importance of strengthening parent's participation, enhancing continuous nutrition education, and reinforcing support from local government units and partner organizations to ensure sustainable and effective program implementation. These findings may inform interventions, policies, and programs aimed enhancing the nutritional well-being of the children enrolled in the centers.

**Keywords:** Case Study, Supplementary Feeding Program (SFP), Parental Participation, Children's Growth, Nutrition Program.

## INTRODUCTION

*"There are people in the world so hungry that God cannot appear to them except in the form of bread."*  
(Mahatma Gandhi, 1948)

The early years of a child, including the first six years of a child's life, are the most critical developmental period. Insufficient nutrition during these periods can produce lasting damage, such as subpar school achievements and disease risk. Thus, it is extremely crucial that young children are fed a variety of healthy foods to disrupt poverty and malnutrition. Without healthy nutrition, irreversible issues like stunted growth (and academic performance)

and increased susceptibility to disease can result. Providing adequate and nutritious food to the youngest to break the vicious cycle of poverty and malnutrition is critical. Subsequently, as part of the ECCD framework, the Supplementary Feeding Program (SFP) is undertaken by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). As (Gamao 2024) reported, child daycare facilities in the Philippines involved in the ECCD Program serve as a major social welfare program that looks after children's well-being. Daycare helps to nurture children in a safe, wholesome context, which contributes to the total development of children. Nutrition and childcare-related information can be learned and practiced in the hands of parents and caregivers through presentations and cooking skills offered by health professionals. Parents and other caregivers can now transfer these new skills in order to make healthy and inexpensive dinners for themselves and their children. This allows the 120-day meal program's benefits to be sustained, and so parents and guardians can practice good childcare and diet at home and in their communities. The researcher critically reviewed the program's benefits, challenges to program implementation, and improvement concerns with regard to the long-term health and development outcomes of ECCD children by using a case study methodology. The findings hope to supply policymakers, program implementers, and communities with information that can support the design and delivery of supplementary feeding programs in the Philippines.

### **Research Questions:**

This study intended to answer the following research questions:

1. How is the Supplementary feeding program implemented?
2. How are the parents participating in the SFP?
3. How is the SFP contributing to the growth outcomes of the children?

### **Data Collection Procedures**

The interview protocol and focus group discussion guide were prepared based on the study objectives and were reviewed and confirmed by specialists in child nutrition and social research.

The interviews and focus group discussions were conducted in Cebuano, allowing the subjects to express their thoughts. Before each workshop, the participants received request letters and informed consent forms. Each participant was given an explanation of the study's objectives and their rights as participants before each session. At this point, they were given the choice to participate if they had consent. Additionally, all sessions were audio-recorded with the participants' consent for analysis and were transcribed afterwards. Records of weight and height growth monitoring from the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) program were also reviewed.

### **Data Analysis**

To assist the researcher in sorting and analyzing all data, a Data Matrix was created to gather and analyze the data based on the study's research questions. The Data Matrix helped the researcher establish a foundation for identifying themes and patterns that emerged from the participants' responses, including inconsistencies and areas where they responded similarly.

Comparative analysis of in-depth interviews, focus groups, documents, and observations was also conducted to achieve a deep, meaningful, and nuanced understanding of the data collected. By utilizing multiple methods of data collection, the researcher validated (or verified) each other's data, leading to greater validity (trustworthiness) of the research findings. Furthermore, to substantiate the validity of these insights, a comparative analysis was also implemented comparing the ECCD Growth Monitoring Records and the literature regarding ECCD Growth Monitoring. The Intrinsic Case Study methodology (Stake, 1995) was adopted in this study, focusing on the specific use of the Supplementary Feeding Program (SFP) in the given community. The data were systematically analyzed based on the interviews among Child Development Workers (CDWs), Barangay Nutrition Scholars (BNS), Barangay Health Workers (BHWs), as well as parent participants, focus group discussions, and home visitation reports to meet the study objectives.

---

## RESULT, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings revealed that the Supplementary Feeding Program (SFP) significantly contributed to improvements in children's health, behavior, and school participation. Seven key themes emerged from the data, including Collaborative Engagement, Engagement in Nutrition and Sanitary Practices, Physical Health Enhancement, and School Engagement Improvement.

### **RQ1. How is the Supplementary feeding program (SFP) implemented?**

Collaborative Engagement highlights the importance of cooperation among parents, Child Development Workers (CDWs), and community health workers in ensuring effective program implementation. This supports the study of Epstein (2011), which emphasized that strong school–family–community partnerships enhance children's development and academic success. Their viewpoint emphasizes that strong collaboration with the stakeholders will improve program effectiveness (Sagad, 2025). The program operates through shared responsibilities among Day Care Workers (DCWs), Barangay Nutrition Scholars (BNS), and parents or caregivers, ensuring that tasks such as food preparation, feeding, and monitoring are carried out efficiently. Key stakeholders, including children and their parents, play crucial roles in these collaborative efforts in the implementation of the program (Alzahrani, et.al 2024).

### **RQ2. How are the parents participating in the SFP?**

Engagement in Nutrition and Sanitary Practices reflects improved hygiene behaviors and dietary practices among children and parents. This is consistent with the findings of Bhutta et al. (2008), which showed that nutrition interventions combined with proper health practices significantly improve child health outcomes.

### **RQ3. How is the SFP contributing to the growth outcomes of the children?**

Physical Health Enhancement was evident through weight gain, improved nutritional status, and better overall health, as supported by ECCD Growth Monitoring Records. This aligns with the study of (Grantham-McGregor et al. 2007), which found that adequate nutrition plays a crucial role in children's physical growth and cognitive development.

School Engagement Improvement demonstrated increased attendance, participation, and attentiveness among children. This finding is supported by Adelman and Taylor (2008), who emphasized that health and nutrition programs contribute to improved school engagement and learning readiness.

Results indicate that the SFP is an effective intervention not only in addressing children's nutritional needs but also in promoting holistic development. These findings are consistent with existing literature, reinforcing the importance of integrated health, nutrition, and community-based support programs in improving child outcomes.

## METHODOLOGY

### **Case Study Design**

The current study seeks to investigate the implementation of the Supplementary Feeding Program (SFP), the extent and mechanisms of parental participation, and how these aspects affect the growth of children in a specific barangay. These goals call for a nuanced analysis of the processes, beliefs and perspectives of stakeholders, such as parents, Child Development Workers (CDWs), Barangay Nutrition Scholars (BNS), and Barangay Health Workers (BHWs).

A qualitative case study design is the most suitable for this study because it provides an in-depth and contextualized analysis of a particular initiative within its natural environment. Unlike quantitative research designs, in which numbers are what counts, the more qualitative the case study, the better the researcher can get at how and why the program works, what it means to participants, and what motivates its achievement. Moreover, the utilization of data collection approaches including KII (Key Informant Interviews), IDI (In-depth Interviews)

and FGD (Focus Group Discussions), underpins this design, allowing for the gathering of thick and detailed data from multiple vantage points. Thus, we can triangulate the information which raises the trust in our findings of the data. The institutional context includes the formal structure and policy that regulates the SFP and the administration by ECCD staff, barangay health workers, and other program implementers. Following the lead of Stake (1995), the objectives of this study will be to explore the specific features and intricacies of the SFP's role in terms of child nutrition and growth. Furthermore, interviews will be conducted with the caregivers, ECCD workers, barangay health workers and program implementers among other informants to provide a comprehensive picture to the matter.

### **Research Setting**

Research will take place at NCDC locality of Misamis Oriental. School Feeding Program (SFP) is implemented in child development centers in this region. It is a diverse socio-economic area; mainly it's made up of households that do fishing, small enterprises and informal work. It was chosen for the widespread utilization of ECCD Programs and availability of participants.

### **Participants and Sampling Procedure**

This study specifies the participants of the Study including parents/guardians, Child Development Workers (CDWs), Barangay Nutrition Scholars (BNS) and Barangay Health Workers (BHWs), who implement Supplementary Feeding Program (SFP). As the study sought to achieve detailed information from those who are directly involved with the program, purposive sampling suits this research well.

This approach enables the researcher to select participants deliberately, who are knowledgeable about the research and those in relevant positions to provide rich data conducive to accomplishing their aims.

This method of sampling is appropriate in a qualitative case study design where one does not want to generalize findings to the wider population, but in fact, one intends to obtain a more holistic and comprehensive view of the context in which to study - implementation of SFP within a selected particular barangay. These key informants (CDWs, BNS, BHWs) and parent participants ensure that the evidence presented in the study represent multiple perspectives, aiding in triangulation of data and enhancing credibility of findings. This study will consist of, 1 CDW and 5-8 care givers or parents.

Participants should be four to five years old; after the enrolment in the NCDC for school year and continuing program for time period 2025-2026, they are selected according to the following criteria in order to determine the growth outcomes of the children.

The following dimensions of Supplementary Feeding Program should be met by the parents: 1) they are the ones who perform the most frequent cooking responsibilities, 2) have the highest attendance of cooking demonstrations (2.1); participated in nutrition education sessions (2.2); and they attended parent meetings called by the Municipal Nutrition Action Officer and Barangay Nutrition Scholar (2.3). They should also have practiced the program's lesson plans in preparing nutritious and easy meals utilizing food produced by local sources (vegetables, fish, mung beans, etc.) that can easily be grown in their backyard (based on BNS home visitation reports). Recruitment will persist until the desired number of participants or the ceiling of accruals is reached.

The focus on a focused sample is suitable for a qualitative case study in which it will enable in depth exploration, ensures data saturation, and the representation of multiple perspectives for triangulation but also realistic as resources and site are available.

Data collection from our chosen participants includes qualitative interviews, focus groups and review of home visitation reports to facilitate in-depth understanding of SFP uptake and implementation. However, this small selective sample is scientifically suitable for a qualitative case study because it emphasizes depth of view, is a sample of limited sample sizes, allows for data saturation, and yields perspectives of key participants immediately engaged in the SFP.

---

## Implications

The results of this paper have significant implications for policy decisions for public policy, practicability, and future scholarship in relation to the use of the SFP. The positive effects of children's nutritional status and school participation are consistent with that, indicating how the program is successful in tackling short-term hunger and promoting early child development. Such a finding implies the continued development and expansion of SFP that investment and support will be made in order to sustain and expand the impact that it has, especially in malnutrition-prone communities.

Another result is that parental participation represents the crux of the program, with programs that should focus on the provision of food but also involve parents (as partners) in the implementation. This approach encourages both nutritional education and community participation to better sustain sustainable outcomes by strengthening healthy behaviors in the home environment. On a larger scale, the findings suggest that program implementers and community government units will require enhanced coordination, improved monitoring, and targeted capacity-building to deliver these programs better.

There were challenges and obstacles, among them was the lack of resources and time constraints, which must be dealt with to make the program stable and effective. Lastly, the study highlights the role of multi-modal intervention (i.e., nutritional assistance, environmental reinforcement, and behavioral change) in fostering holistic child development.

All the factors mentioned in this report will contribute to ensuring future research and intervention enhancements to make SFP as effective as possible.

## CONCLUSION

This paper shows that collecting data but about understanding what people's lives are really like. The people in the Supplementary Feeding Program taught me that making a difference often comes from small consistent acts of kindness like making meals going to meetings and helping kids grow. Their stories show that they are strong and committed and they reminded me that the real impact comes from empowering communities and recognizing how important they are, in making sure kids are healthy. The Supplementary Feeding Program participants showed me that we should focus on helping communities and that is what will really make a difference in the lives of their children.

According to one of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, the program effectively met the basic physiological needs of children by providing nutritious meals, which laid the necessary groundwork for learning, social belonging, and self-esteem.

The SFP also highlights the role of the microsystem and mesosystem level of environmental and social factors supporting the effectiveness of the program, and how the policies and institutions of the exosystem and macrosystem make the program sustainable through the framework of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory.

The Empowerment Theory illustrates the necessity of parental involvement by establishing that parents as co-inducers positively affect child development trajectories and foster parents' skills to be actively engaged with their children's development and to work within their communities.

Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory also supports the importance of modeling and observational learning that children adopt food behaviors that were consistently rewarded when parents and caregivers involved in the child's life model these behaviors on a regular basis. The SFP, in summary, is positively associated with children's dietary status, psychosocial development, and school engagement, but there is an absolute need to foster home involvement, create supportive environments and empower families to achieve sustainability outcomes as indicated. Conversely, barriers (e.g. resources, time, coordination) need to be overcome to facilitate consistent program delivery. These findings are significant as an opportunity to develop the SFP in such a way to sustain holistic child development and improve its impact.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The researcher would like to express her heartfelt gratitude to the administration of Lourdes College in Cagayan de Oro City, led by the School President, S. Ma. Miraflor A. Bahan, RVM, and Dr. Judith C. Chavez, for their full support and for having confidence in the ability of the researcher to reach her full potential and earn her graduate degree;

Dr. Ines V. Danao for her invaluable guidance and unwavering support throughout the development of this study. Your insightful suggestions and constructive feedback have significantly enriched this work, and it would not have been possible without your exceptional oversight;

Dr. Judith Chavez, her external auditor, whose meticulous nature and sharp attention to detail were vital in maintaining the accuracy and the overall credibility of the research findings. The researcher is thankful for her pursuit of excellence and her helpful recommendations;

Dr. Miguela Napiere, for her unwavering support and for being a wonderful companion throughout this process. Her positive energy and kindness turned even the most difficult stages of this study into meaningful memories. The researcher is honored to have learned from such an exceptional colleague;

Dr. Judith C. Chavez, Dr. Noel Pit, and Dr. Revina Mendoza, the members of the defense panel, for their belief in this study and for sharing the deep knowledge necessary to polish this final paper;

To the researcher's beloved mother, who is now in heaven. Although you are no longer physically present, your love, sacrifices, and wisdom continue to inspire her daily. This accomplishment reflects the values of devotion and perseverance that you instilled in her.

To the researcher's father for his encouragement and assistance throughout her life journey and career; this milestone is also a tribute to you.

To the participants of this study for their openness and willingness to share their experiences. Your valuable contributions greatly enhanced the impact and informativeness of this research.

To the NCDC teacher Ma'am Fienly Sinogoya for providing her with the opportunity to conduct this study, along with the necessary resources and support.

To the researcher's family for the unconditional physical, emotional, and psychological support your love, patience, and understanding illuminated her path during this journey.

To the researcher's friends who stood by her during difficult times when anxiety and weariness threatened to overwhelm. Your encouragement, presence, and support kept her moving forward.

To the God Almighty for His unfailing grace, wisdom, and strength that guided her on this journey. He provided her with resilience through challenges and faith that enabled her to see this endeavor through to completion. All glory and honor belong solely to Him.

## REFERENCES

1. Alzahrani, Khaled Bkeet Abdullah, et al. "The Role of Interdisciplinary Healthcare Teams in Mitigating Malnutrition Among Vulnerable Populations: Review of Collaborative Strategies Among Dietitians, Pharmacists, Dentists, and Social Workers." *Journal of Ecohumanism*, vol. 3, no. 8, Dec. 2024. DOI.org (Crossref), <https://doi.org/10.62754/joe.v3i8.5929>.
2. Bandura's Social Learning Theory: "Modelling, Reinforcement and Classroom Application. <https://www.structural-learning.com/post/social-learningtheory-bandura>. Accessed 7 Apr. 2026.
3. Bhandari, N., Pradhan, R., Singh, S., & Kumar, S. (2018). Effectiveness of supplementary feeding on growth and anemia among preschool children in India: A randomized controlled trial. *Maternal*

- & Child Nutrition, 14(3), e12613. <https://doi.org/10.1111/mcn.12613> Bot Verification. <https://www.focusonkidspeds.com/info-articles/environmentalfactors-that-affect-child-development/>. Accessed 7 Apr. 2026.
4. Brooks-Gunn, J., & Duncan, G. J. (2022). The effects of poverty on children. *The Future of Children*, 7(2), 55–71. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1602387>
  5. Carreon, J. R., Gonzales, M. L., & Soriano, K. (2021). Strengthening student beneficiaries' engagement in school-based feeding program through nutritional model approach. *Philippine Journal of Development Studies*, 46(2), 78–95.
  6. Catubig, M. E., Dungog-Cuizon, R. M., & Maglente, J. F. (2015). The impact of government feeding programs on day care children: A case study in Mindanao, Philippines. *Asian Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, 4(3), 102–112.
  7. Gamao, V. S., & Napiere, M. B. (2024). Work-life balance and socio-emotional competence as predictors of teachers' performance in the Early Childhood Care and Development Program. Graduate School, Lourdes College, Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines.
  8. Grantham-McGregor, Sally, et al. "Developmental Potential in the First 5 Years for Children in Developing Countries." *Lancet* (London, England), vol. 369, no. 9555, Jan. 2007, pp. 60–70. PubMed, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(07\)60032-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(07)60032-4).
  9. Joyce Epstein's School-Family-Community Partnership Model | Education | Research Starters | EBSCO Research." EBSCO, <https://www.ebsco.com>. Accessed 7 Apr. 2026.
  10. Sadag, May Dee D. "The Extent Implementation of School Based Feeding Program: An Assessment among Elementary Schools in Kabugao District II, Philippines." *Journal of Education, Society and Behavioural Science*, vol. 38, no. 4, June 2025, pp. 60–76. DOI.org (Crossref), <https://doi.org/10.9734/jesbs/2025/v38i41401>.