The study was conducted to determine the effects of the school lunch program on the nutritional status and academic performance of primary school children. Gatuyaini and Munaini primary schools in Othaya division of Nyeri district were selected for the study. Simple random sampling was used to select a total of 120 participants and 120 non-participants of the school lunch program from the two schools. Sixty in Standard 6 in each school. The sample in each class consisted of 30 boys and 30 girls of which half were participants and the other half were non-participants of the school lunch program.

Average test scores of three terms for the pupils were computed. The analysis of these marks showed that the participants of the lunch program had significantly (P > 0.05) higher average marks than the non-participants of both schools.

Weight and height measurement of all the pupils in the study were taken. The weight/height indices were used as indicators of the nutritional status of the pupils. The indices revealed that non-participants had higher mean weight/height indices, but they were not significantly (P > 0.05) different from those for the participants of the lunch program.

The pupils in the sample fifty parents and forty-eight teachers from the two schools expressed their opinions of the school lunch program by responding to the attitude questionnaires. Analyses of the responses to these questionnaires showed that the majority of the pupils, parents and teachers were in favour of the school lunch program. However, they expressed the need for improvement of the school lunch both qualitatively and quantitatively.