

A CASE STUDY ON THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EXPERIENCES OF THE
CHILDREN OF THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE AT BERG AUKAS CAMP IN
GROOTFONTEIN, OTJOZONDJUPA REGION

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ABSTRACT

In 1990, when Namibia gained independence, about 43000 exiled Namibians were repatriated back home from different countries. Included in this number were soldiers and refugees including children who were born during the liberation struggle. These children have been called “*Exiled Kids,*” “*Returnees Children,*” “*Ex-War Children,*” “*SWAPO Children*” and so on. However, later on they were officially called *Children of the Liberation Struggle (CLS)* after they had come to prominence in the country through widespread demonstrations, demanding that the government provide them with jobs, better educational opportunities, national identity documents and vocational training. There is little documentation in the literature relating to the social and economic experiences of the CLS. Therefore this research addresses this lacuna.

The study applied qualitative research methods; with a mixed research design employing; narrative research and case studies. Data was collected by means of in-depth interviews with twelve (three males and nine females) CLS residing at Berg Aukas. A voice recorder was used to record the interviews with participants. The study found that the CLS grew up in children’s homes/shelters; they had never stayed with their biological parents, some had been brought up by their grandparents and after their death the CLS remained on their own, looking for family members, love, a sense of belonging and for a place they could call home. This situation made the CLS vulnerable and caused them to face various socio- economic challenges such as dropping out of school, falling pregnant at an early age, indulging in anti-social behaviour, having to move frequently, experiencing identity crises as well as social isolation, death and bereavement with

minimal psychosocial support. The study recommends clinical therapy, psychological support and counselling for all the interviewed CLS.

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DECLARATIONS

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.....

Date

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CLS	Children of the Liberation Struggle
GDR	German Democratic Republic
GRN	Government of the Republic of Namibia
LAC	Legal Assistance Centre
MYNSSC	Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture
NEKA	Namibian Exile Kids Association
PSS	Psychosocial Support
PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
SIPE	Social Integration Project for Ex-Combatants
SWA	South West Africa
SWAPO	South West Africa People's Organisation
TCKS	Third Culture Kids
UN	United Nations

DIAGRAMS, TABLES AND FIGURES

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CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

1.1 Orientation of the Study

The impact of apartheid, destabilisation and war in Southern African countries has had a severe impact on the future and life chances of not only children but all citizens in the region. Prior to 1990, a series of events changed the social and economic status of the southern Africa. As a result of massive disturbance and violence caused by apartheid and colonial policies, the welfare of many children in Southern Africa has been affected in tragic ways.

In 1884, Namibia, former South West Africa (SWA), was declared a German colony at a Conference in Berlin. In 1919, the country was handed over to South Africa (SA) as a mandated territory by the League of Nations. The United Nations (UN) established a trusteeship system to administer territories mandated to governments under the League of Nations. The League of Nation gave responsibility to the Union of South Africa to administer the land, which was known as South West Africa. Shortly, after when the UN informed SA that she should grant freedom to SWA, SA officials refused to grant independence to SWA arguing that the mandate had expired and that SA should be able to incorporate it into her territory as its 5th province. The UN refused SA's proposal, but was unable to force the SA government to place SWA under the trusteeship system (Brown, 1995).

This situation forced Namibians to leave their motherland, go into exile and form a liberation movement to set their country free from the colonial rule of South African

government. Through the Namibian liberation movement called South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) that was founded in 1960, "thousands of people in Namibia left their homes to go into exile in other Southern African countries e.g. Tanzania, Botswana, Zambia, Angola etc." (Dorian, 1996, p.14). The Namibians fought a liberation struggle both between 1884-1919 (during the German colonial regime) and between 1919 until 1990 (during South African regime). The armed struggle under SWAPO began in 1966 and lasted until 1989.

Prior to the independence of Namibia (former South West Africa) in 1988, a massive repatriation effort coordinated by the Repatriation Resettlement and Reconstruction Committee was set up to facilitate the process of welcoming and bringing Namibians back home (Kenna, 1999). Namibia gained independence on 21 March 1990 through a UN sponsored Resolution No. 435, (Dorian, 1996). The independence of Namibia marked the end of the decolonization process in Southern Africa. After over thirty years of the liberation struggle, SWAPO now faced new responsibilities as the first government of an independent Namibian state (Strand, 1991).

"At the dawn of the Namibian independence in 1990, about 43 000 exiled Namibians were repatriated back home to their motherland. Included in the 43 000 repatriated Namibians were children who had never set foot in their country of origin. They were born or raised by exiled soldiers and refugees of the liberation struggle in Cuba, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Angola, Germany and Zambia" (Nghiwete, 2009, p.45).

Since their arrival in Namibia, these children have been given names such as “*SWAPO Kids*,” “*Struggle Children*,” “*Ex-Exile Kids*” “*Exile Kids*,” “*Returnees Children*,” and so forth. This excludes those who were born in exile and then raised in former East Germany (known as the German Democratic Republic Kids) popularly called the GDR Kids (Kenna 1999). There have been neither documentation nor reports on how and where these “*Exile Kids*” survived and lived after they arrived in Namibia, their motherland.

It was not until the year 2008 when the “*Exile Kids*” made their first national headlines by gathering country wide in huge numbers to demonstrate, calling for the Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN) to listen to their plight and complaints. They demanded identity documents, jobs/ employment, better educational opportunities, vocational training, and financial assistance to improve their social and economic conditions (*The Namibian Newspaper*, 12th April 2010). *The Namibian Newspaper* also noted that the “*Exile Kids*” raised the concern with government that it had not catered for their needs or taken care of them, since some were orphans and others had no family connections because their parents had died in exile during Namibia’s liberation struggle.

During the countrywide demonstration, a large contingent of the “*Exile Kids*” camped and descended on the doorstep of the Ministry of Veteran Affairs in Windhoek (in the Khomas region) and in front of SWAPO party offices countrywide specifically in Otjiwarongo (in the Otjozondjupa region) and Oshakati (in the Oshana region). The

children camping out in Windhoek “refused to move from the building where they camped for almost three months until they were evicted from the premises with a High Court Order” (*The Namibian Newspaper*, 9th September 2009). The SWAPO Party Youth League arranged and facilitated their relocation to a SWAPO farm outside Windhoek to prevent the CLS from being arrested for defying an eviction order which had been issued to end their 80 day protest in front of the Ministry of Veterans Affairs premises in Windhoek (*The Namibian Newspaper*, 23rd March 2009).

In response to the plight of the “*Exile Kids*”, the (SWAPO led) Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN) made a Cabinet Decision, No. 17th /16.09/002 to use the term “*Children of the Liberation Struggle*” (CLS) to refer to these children instead of “*Exile Kids*.” It is from this decision that Namibian “*Exile Kids*” were officially called the Children of the Liberation Struggle (MYNSSC 2010, p.7-8).

In the same Cabinet Decision, No. 17/16.09/002, a joint ministerial committee was established. The Ministry of Youth, National Service Sport and Culture (MYNSSC) was tasked to chair and direct the registration process of all CLS and address their demands. The Cabinet also directed the Ministry of Finance to provide N\$2 million for the relocation of all the camping groups situated at SWAPO offices across the country to the farm Berg Aukas near Grootfontein. It is at this stage that all CLS countrywide were relocated from their places of demonstration to Berg Aukas near, Grootfontein in the Otjozondjupa region ((MYNSSC, 2010, pp.7-8). Another Cabinet Decision: No. 17th /15.09/002 was taken; the Office of the Prime Minister commissioned to task the

Ministry of Youth National Service Sport and Culture (MYNSSC) to set up a registration task committee with the aim of visiting all the thirteen regions of Namibia to register and verify all the CLS in Namibia. The total number of CLS registered and verified was 9119 (MYNSSC, 2010).

It is also reported that after all CLS had been relocated to Berg Aukas another group of twelve CLS were reported to have set a camp at the Windhoek Police station demanding answers from government about when they would be given jobs. The CLS threatened to return to Angola for good, should their demand for jobs not be addressed by government with urgency. *“If you are not going to give us jobs, we shall go straight to the Angolan embassy as we feel they would feel pity on us and give us a letter to go back to Angola because it feels like we do not belong here”* (*The Namibian Newspaper* 7th June 2012). *The Namibian Newspaper* further mentioned that “the group that calls “*SWAPO Party their mother and father*” complained of being tired of being promised jobs that never materialized and of eating from dustbins.”

Academic research related to Namibian CLS after the country’s independence as a social problem in the country is almost non-existent, and in particular there is no study of CLS born and raised in countries like Angola, Czechoslovakia, and Sierra Leone, Cuba, Zambia and Russia, excluding those born and raised in Germany. This lack of research on the CLS triggered the researcher’s curiosity to document the social and economic experiences of the Namibian Children of the Liberation Struggle. Therefore, the purpose

of this study is to trace these developments and uncover associated socio-economic experiences of the Namibian CLS based/ residing at Berg Aukas since their arrival in Namibia up to 2008.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There is little documentation in the literature relating to the social and economic experiences of the “*Exile Kids*” or CLS from 1990 until the year 2008. Therefore, this study investigated the social and economic experiences of the CLS during this period and up to date. The study further examined challenges and opportunities from the CLS perspective.

The Namibian CLS have been since 2008 demonstrating and camping at the Ministry of Veteran Affairs in Windhoek and several SWAPO offices country wide, demanding for job opportunities, better educational opportunities, identity documents, financial assistance to start businesses and be re-integrated back into the society. *The Namibian Newspaper* (12th April 2010) reported that “*Exile Kids*” “raised the issue with the government for allegedly not catering for their needs as some of them are orphans after their parents died in exile during the country’s liberation struggle.” *The Namibian Newspaper* further referred the CLS’s behaviour as a serious public concern and labelled them “*spoiled and undisciplined kids.*”

Therefore, issues investigated in this study pertain to those social and economic experiences of the CLS as well as the associated challenges and opportunities from their point of view.

1.3 Aims and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to investigate the social and economic experiences of the Namibian CLS from 1990 until 2008. The following objectives guided the study:

- To investigate the social and economic experiences of the CLS in Namibia.
- To assess the social and economic support received by the CLS.
- To document recommendations for improving social and economic conditions of Namibian CLS made by them.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study may assist the CLS to document their social and economic experiences and by so doing and putting their lives in perspective as well as to find healing. The study can be useful to the MYNSSC, policy makers and the GRN in responding to the plight of the CLS. Additionally, it may also provide useful information to the discussions and guidelines on how to respond to CLS's plight. On the other hand, information on social and economic experiences might further contribute to a deeper understanding of CLS's behaviour, attitudes and complaints. This study may serve as a fundamental tool to create awareness of how to deal with children born in refugee camps in other countries or who spend most of their childhood and thus may experience challenges related to resettlement and inclusion in their countries of origin.

1.5 Delimitation of the Study

This study focused only on CLS camping at Berg Aukas, near Grootfontein, in the Otjozondjupa region in November 2011. The thrust of this study was not to measure and quantify past experiences, but to explore their experiences, to determine how their environment influenced their lives and to determine what they went through upon their arrival in Namibia, before they engaged in countrywide demonstrations. However, it is important to note that findings and recommendations presented in this study relate to specific case studies of 12 of the CLS who were camping at Berg Aukas at the time of data collection in November 2011.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

Some of the limitations which the researcher experienced during the study were as follow:

- There was little local based literature with regard to CLS in Namibia, which affected the study's literature review. The researcher was denied information relating to the socio-economic support of the CLS from relevant GRN offices and institutions. This affected the study as the researcher could not give detailed information on certain topics of the study e.g. SIPE.
- Findings from this study were primarily generated from the CLS who were the focus of the study. Some experiences pertaining to social and economic situations have surfaced while CLS were still young. Many of the interviewed CLS arrived in Namibia at young ages and could not recall all the earlier social and economic experiences in country of their birth and upon their arrival in

Namibia. Despite this, what had been remembered by CLS was very useful because “stories are truths of our experiences and any story told has an element of truth in it (Riessman, 1994) cited in Creswell (2008).

- During the data collection period it leaked out to participants that the researcher was a staff member for the MYNSSC (the Ministry responsible for taking care of CLS at Berg Aukas camp, November 2011). Because of the participants’ controversial relationship with MYNSSC in the past during the countrywide demonstration, rumours spread among participants that the researcher was a secret agent on an official mission sent by the MYNSSC with a hidden agenda to find out things for the Ministry. This happened on the second day after participants signed the consent form to participate in the study and the researcher has already started with some interviews. With the Camp Commander’s approval, the researcher gathered all participants together at a parade and explained her own motivation and the goals, objectives and benefit of the study for both the MYNSSC and participants. This misperception on the part of the CLS affected the study to the extent that participants were uncomfortable and hesitant to participate in the study.
- Some interviewed participants (CLS) were not free to discuss their experience for fear of intimidation believing that they were under investigation after the researcher confirmed being a MYNSSC staff member.

- Only 12 of the 450 CLS found camping at Berg Aukas during data collection in November 2011 were included in the sample. Thus the social and economic experiences of the other CLS based elsewhere in Namibia was excluded.

1.7. Definition of Terms

Children of the Liberation Struggle is defined as children of a veteran (as defined in the Veteran Act, Act no.2 of 2008), inclusive of the exiled children who until 21st March 1990 were under the age of 18 years (MYNSSC, 2010).

GDR Kids numbered about 450 and include eighty pre-primary children from a Namibian refugee camp in Angola who went to the GDR at the request of SWAPO in December 1979 to the former GDR government (during the time SWAPO was then struggling to liberate former SWA/Namibia from South Africa rule and wished to protect children from bombing raids and attack as had happened at Cassinga in May 1978). It is reported that in the following decades these children lived and were schooled in the regions of the GDR: Berlin/Zehna near Gustrow and Starfurt/ Loderburg near Magdeburg. These Kids remained in the GDR until August 1990; five months after Namibia had gained independence and shortly before the GDR was to be united with the Federal Republic of Germany (Kenna, 1999, p.34).

Meekulu (Grandmother) is a term used to describe a typical older woman in the community. They are respected for taking of children, for their compassionate nature, and for being knowledgeable about cultural norms and values. They are known as mothers to everybody in the community, whether they are actually related or not related.

Third Culture Kids are children who have spent a significant part of their developmental years outside their parent's culture, building relationships with other cultures, while not being completely immersed in any one culture. Although elements from each culture are assimilated into the TCK's life experience, the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of a similar background (Pollock and Van Reken, 1999).

Social experiences refer in this study to those social relationships and interactions that occurred in an individual's life; these may include parental guidance, family relationships, psychosocial support, educational opportunities, social setting etc.

Economic experience includes aspects of financial support, individual living conditions, economic status, employment background and level of individual income.

1.8. Summary of the Chapter

Chapter one provided a brief background, based on the origins of CLS and how they surfaced into a countrywide demonstration in 2008. The chapter gave a brief discussion on the definition of CLS. Chapter one also outlined the goals and objectives, significance of the study, limitations and delimitations of the study and definition of major terms in the study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

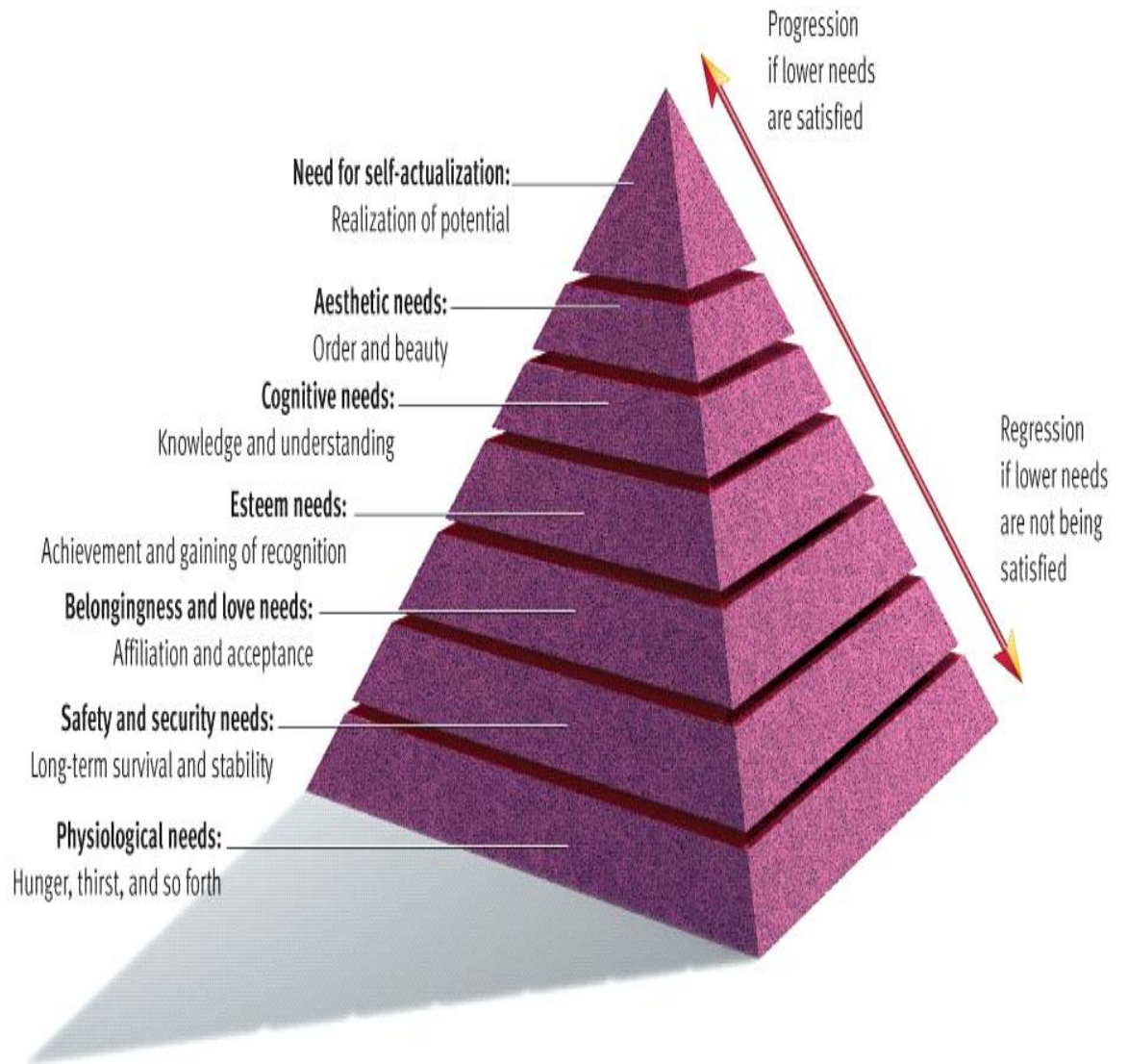
The first section of this chapter discusses the theoretical framework of the study. While the second section looks at the literature on children who have been displaced and affected by conflicts, poverty and displacement in Africa. It further reviews available documents and research on the social and economic experiences of the CLS in Namibia.

2.1. Theoretical Framework of the Study

Theories are proved hypotheses that help us to understand certain field of studies. When explaining human development, it is not advisable to rely on a single theory because human development theory has many interpretations. People need to give their own views and “clear presentation of logical frameworks from theories that are already developed” (Babbie, 2004). In general “human beings have a positive nature but their environment are capable of pushing people in the direction of self-realisation if the right social condition prevails” (Swartz, 2009).

The researcher selected the American psychologist and theorist, *Abraham Maslow* (Theory of Human Motivation, (1943), and his hierarchy of needs perception (1968) from Mwamwenda, 2004) as the theoretical framework for this study .The Ecological theory was derived from the ecological theorists *Urie Bronfenbrenner* from (Rochat, Hough, Mitchell and Jewitt, 2009). These theories are now discussed.

2.2 Maslow Hierarchy of Needs



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This diagram 1. Showing Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs was adopted from Thomson 2007.

According to Mwamwenda (2004), Maslow believed that human motivation rests on a hierarchy of five innate needs known as deficiency needs. Rykman (1993) cited in Mwamwenda (2004) defined deficiency needs as needs that must be gratified largely before an individual can progress toward self-actualisation. Both scholars (Mwamwenda, 2004) and (Rykman, 1993) support Maslow's view that the deficiency needs must be satisfied before higher needs can be felt and fulfilled, in order of significance. The deficiency needs include physiological needs, safety and security, belongingness and love, self-esteem and self-actualisation.

Cited in Mwamwenda (2004), Maslow maintains that individuals must satisfy the lower level of basic needs before progressing on to meet the higher level of growth needs. He further adds that once basic needs have been reasonably satisfied one may be able to reach the highest-level called self-actualisation. When lower needs are unmet individuals will not fully devote themselves to fulfilling their potential.

Mwamwenda (2004) further described Maslow's argument that to move toward self-actualisation and self-identity, individual basic needs should be fulfilled so that they will be free to pursue the high transcending growth needs. In the context of this study, the preconditions for the satisfaction of these needs are freedom to speak, freedom to do what one wishes to do without harming others, freedom of expression, freedom to investigate and seek information, freedom to defend oneself, justice, fairness and honesty. This study is primarily concerned with the socio-economic experiences of the CLS, and therefore the application of Maslow's hierarchy of needs was used to describe

and guide the socio-economic experiences of the CLS. For the purpose of this study, Maslow's hierarchy of needs is applied to assess and investigate the extent of satisfaction of the socio-economic needs of the CLS.

2.3. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory of Development.

As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, the researcher also used Ecological theory in order to help understand the social experiences of CLS. The study was grounded on the assumption that family, school, peers, church groups, the neighbourhood, the society, and anything which is part and parcel of CLS lives affect their behaviour and could contribute to their current social status. For example "aggression and other antisocial behaviours' are learned in response to circumstances in a child-socializing environment e.g. home, community and schools" (Bey & Turner 2006, p.34).

The model helps us to understand the variety of contexts that surrounds the child and that can have an influence on the child. "It is known as the *Theory of the Onion* as it has many layers which are interdependent e.g. if one layer of the onion rots over time, the whole onion will be affected. No man is an island and isolated on his/her own, every part of the societal system is crucial and may be affected by another part" (Rochat, Hough, Mitchell & Jewitt, 2009).

This also indicates that the child does not grow in a vacuum but is closely connected to his/her environment which has a strong influence on the child's conduct. "A person is inseparable from his/her environment and the environment can explain his/her behaviours" (Hamunyela, 2009, p.24).

Lawson (1991) asserts that the relationship between the child, family and the community is very significant in a way that these three influences one another and thus children behave the way they do because of the influence of family and community.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) cited in Richard, Killian and Hough (2009), identified factors concerning human development. They are mainly; *person, process, context* and *time*.

- **Person:** this includes the entire child as a person i.e. physical shape and size, temperament, health, way of thinking and personality, characteristics (out-going, clever, shy, etc.). Each child enters the world and interacts with the world in a special way, because of what he/she is like.
- **Process:** this refers to the system of human development, the forms of interaction or the relationship that takes place between the child and family members. This factor is relevant in this study because some CLS had loving and caring relationship with their “*Meekulu*,” (Grandmother) whereas some CLS had strict, harsh and cold relationship with their “*Meekulu*,” (Grandmother) and step-parents who mistreated them and had tension relationships.
- **Time:** this refers to the historical period of learning and development, the changes that happen over time as the child grows older. It also reminds us that we are shaped by our own history as life changes over time and across generations. Children at different times have different needs and respond to situations differently according to their stage of development. In the context of this study some CLS were left by their unemployed parents to stay with

“*Meekulu*” (Grandmother). Young CLS might not have noticed the absence of their mothers, but those that were three years or older might have reacted badly and cried for their mother every day because of different responses in their situations.

- **Context:** this means the environment that influences children; it may include families, communities, cultures, etc. The contextual factors are drawn as sequences of activities surrounding the child and affecting the child more directly than the more distant circles. Example of sequence activities in this study are deaths, emotional abuse, frequent family movements, family displacements, culture shock, dropping out of school, etc.

Richard et al., (2009) stresses that the perspective of the ecosystem theorist has the most important meaning for children’s development as it includes “four levels of structural environment: *micro-system, meso-system, exo-system and macro-system*”

The four levels of structural environment definition are defined by Richard et al., (2009) as follows: The *inner circle or micro-system*, is made up of day-to-day activities and the people in the children’s life i.e. parents, extended families, neighbourhood, church or religious settings, teachers, pastors, friends, etc. This differs from child to child. Some children are raised in loving families whereas others are raised in unloving families. The family is the first world where children experience a pattern of activities, roles and interpersonal relations.

The *middle or in between circle called meso-system* is a relationship and contact between the various micro-systems. It includes the ways in which family and school connect to one another, the family experiences and peer experiences. Children whose parents have rejected them during their upbringing may have difficulty developing positive relations with the wider society.

Richard et al., (2009) defines the *outside circle or exo- system* as a linkage of those parts of the child's life in which he/she does not directly get involved but it somehow affects his/her daily life e.g. work places, decisions by community leaders. In this study, this linkage is applied to understand how the CLS changed the pattern of communication with their parents when they went to look for employment in urban areas; this left the CLS in the care of their "*Meekulu*" (Grandmother).

The *societal circle or macro- system* refers to the broader environment in which the child is growing. These may include country's policies and laws, cultural beliefs, customs, international situations and ideologies; it is the culture and beliefs in which individuals grew up (Richard et al., 2009).

In this study the relevance of this social circle rest on explaining the CLS's experience of stigma and discrimination, family break-ups, deaths, war and conflicts, lack of policies on war veterans to benefit their parents and themselves, and lack of availability of care grants for CLS, etc.

Richard et al. (2009) mentioned that the *historical context or chronosystem* includes time factors in a person's live. The historical context or chronosystem is relevant

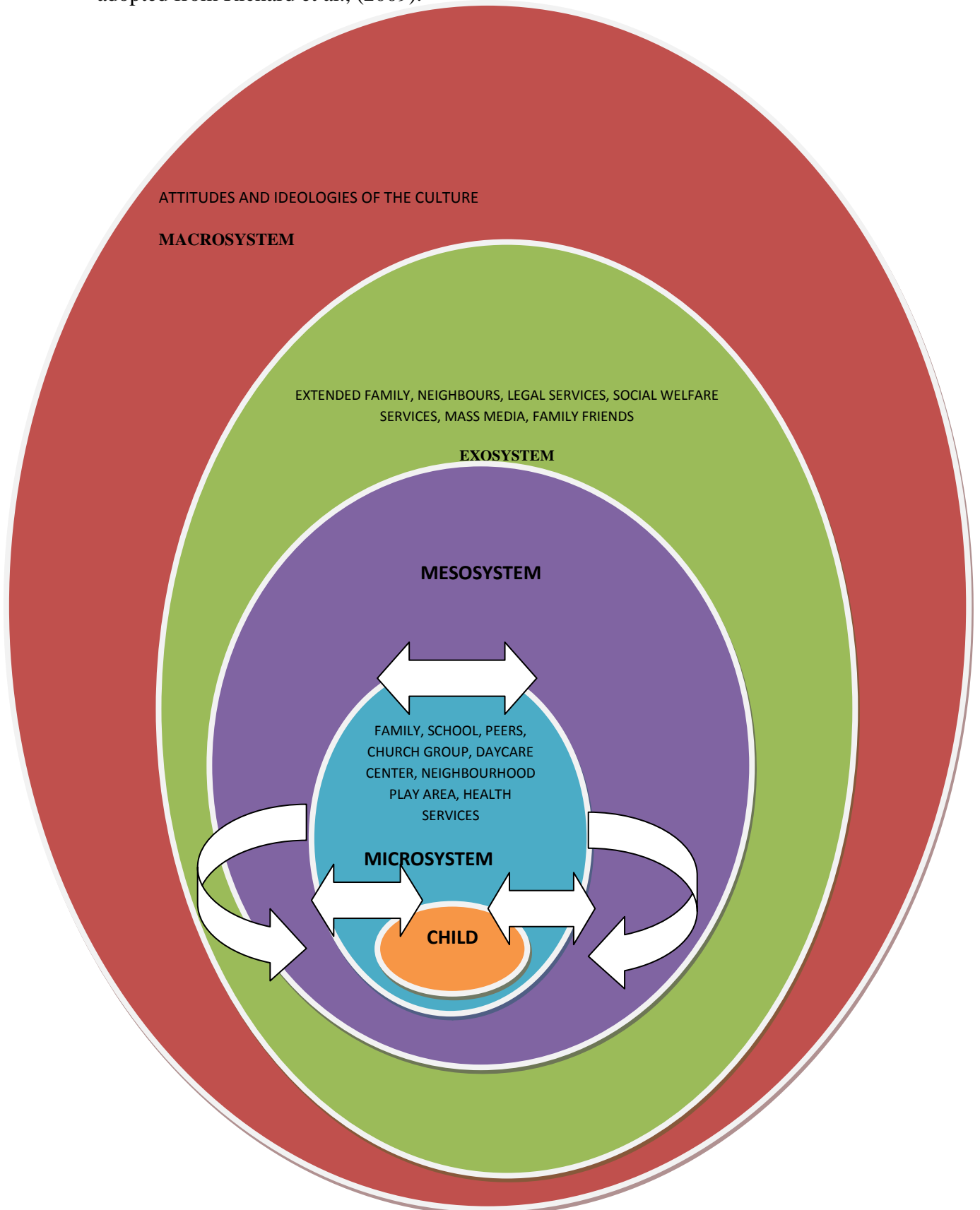
because it explains how those CLS raised in the middle of political conflicts and war or in the midst of an outbreak of disease such as HIV/AIDS are different from those raised in conflict-free zones. The patterning of environmental events and transition over life courses and socio-historical circumstances are part of the chronsystem. In this study, we may refer some of the transitions over their lives to CLS changing from life in the camps to staying with “*Meekulu*,” (Grandmother), family displacements, changing the culture of their country of birth to Namibian cultural norms and values. One may also mention that the time of arrival of the CLS in Namibia was one where the government was busy developing policies and other legal frameworks.

However, (the four levels of structural environment in Richard et al. outlined above are consistent with Schuster (1986), who discovered two human interacting forces that influence human development mainly: *biophysical endowment and psychosocial environment*. Schuster further noted that these two interacting factors shape lives before birth and are equally powerful.

The combination of these two theories (Ecological and Human Development) in the framework of this study demonstrates that both the psychosocial environment and the biophysical endowment play a powerful role in the life of the CLS. Variables such as the neighbourhood where their family lived whether urban or rural, economic level, basic attitudes and behaviours of their parents toward them (i.e. love, rejection, and acceptance), religious, orientation, educational opportunities, family structures, medical care availability and other factors can have a negative impact on the formation of the

CLS. This study indicates that persons are slaves of their past and one cannot ignore one' own life experiences. For the purpose of this study it is implicit that lived experiences of the CLS have shaped the lives they are living today.

Diagram 2. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory of Development. The diagram is adopted from Richard et al., (2009).



2.4 Experiences of Former Refugees Returning to their Country of Origin

“Feelings of acceptance by the receiving society will determine if the refugees drown or swim. If most of them found themselves in conflict with the new society without getting assistance, they would return to their former patterns of behaviour, thus hindering their development or eliminating the possibility of ever attaining a sense of rootedness and belongingness” (Gold, 1992).

Gold further suggests that the approach used by a society to receive and welcome its members subsequent to a war or conflict situation may affect the living standard of these newcomers. In many cases former refugees are not regarded as full members of their society in their homelands. This has been the case for many people who returned to Namibia since 1989 following UN Resolution 435. This fate creates a condition of social exclusion leading ultimately to a dysfunctional integration for these persons into the community, as they sometimes are barred from access to opportunities in their country of origin e.g. land, employment opportunities and rights.

Meyer (2008) mentioned that in countries like Canada, the obstacles for refugees who wished to be reunited with their families had a huge impact on the economic and psychological well-being of the families concerned and thus on their integration into Canadian society. Meyer further added that broken or disrupted families are indeed a major disincentive to the proper psychological functioning of the members concerned. In some cases, language and the absence of friends or family members were partly responsible for the difficulty respondents faced in finding assistance immediately upon arrival.

2.5 The Third Culture Kids (TCKs)

TCKs are children who have spent a significant part of their formative years outside their parent's culture, building relationships to many cultures, while not having full ownership of any. Although elements from each culture are assimilated into the TCK's life experience, the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of a similar background (Pollock & Van Reken, 1999).

In many cases TC's are children of diplomats, military officials, children of missionaries and individuals who attended international schools. Franke and Nicholson (2002) called them "citizens of the world, global nomads, and international travellers" The two scholars further explained that TCKs develop identities while living abroad by blending their home culture with the culture of the world that surrounds them

Useem (2001) described TCKs as children who accompany their parents into another culture and do not belong to the host culture that they live in (as it is deemed to be the second culture). These children feel that they belong to all of the cultures that they have experienced; therefore they developed a third culture of their own.

The facts that TCKs are exposed to different cultural norms means that their characters are not the same as adolescents who grew up in their home countries. "TCKs are internationally exposed; they have more international experience, parental and institutional education, are knowledgeable in the second language, and develop neutrality, open mindedness and flexible attitudes towards other systems and cultures, and respect and tolerance of other behaviour's (Hon Lam & Jan Selmer, 2004).

The exposure of TCKs to the international world often means being privileged to elite lives as their socio-economic lifestyles are likely to be higher due to expatriate status provided by companies, agencies or governments or conditions attached to relocation. Hon Lam et al., (2004) noted that the international experience gained by TCKs is very important to their mental development especially during the most important formative period of life such as adolescence. It also contributes to the children's amount of understanding and perceptions of how to deal with people from other cultures. Southerland (2000) added that TCKs are more likely to be successful in their careers since they have fundamental aspirations gained from an international upbringing. Many of them attend universities and obtain degrees. They are very mature in their social skills and in making decisions, and since they are enriched with cross cultural views they are often less prejudiced.

However, despite that image of the world of TCK as fascinating, exotic, and very comfortable materially some scholars believe that TCKs have challenging developmental and psychosocial issues in their lives. This is revealed by Werkman (1972) when he mentioned that reports from reliable evidence declared that after returning to their home country TCKs find it difficult to re-adjust and may even become foreigners in their parent's countries.

Takeuchi, Marinova, Lepak and Liu (2005) identified the main challenges of TCK as "loss of relationships, loss of community including the entire world." TCKs have a problem of difficulties with commitment to people, places, religious, school systems,

governance as these constantly change. The frequent change of countries and homes makes them very rootless and restless. Peltokorpi (2008) also put it that TCKs are powerless in that they suffer from crisis of identity, severe culture shock, low self-esteem and low powers of decision-making because they always have no control over the events in their lives. Their sense of belonging is to everywhere and nowhere. They always feel very isolated and have difficulty in forming peer relationships in universities as colleagues always misunderstand them. This outline of socio-economic and psychological experiences, given above, is consistent with cases of the Namibian CLS interviewed in the study.

2.6 The Lived Experiences of CLS in Namibia

There has been sparse literature on studies about the socio-economic experiences of the CLS in Namibia. Literature on Namibian CLS has focused more on the socio-economic experiences of German Democratic Republic Kids (GDR) with a lesser focus on the socio-economic experiences of CLS from other countries e.g. Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Angola, and Sierra Leone etc. The arrival of CLS from other countries is further revealed by Nghiwete (2009, p.85) when she mentioned that after independence Namibia experienced “the arrival of *“Children born in Exile”* who were repatriated from countries around the world e.g. Czechoslovakia, Angola, and Sierra Leone and so forth.” There were no available studies on how these individuals survived and coped in their motherland after independence.

The lack of documentation on the socio-economic experiences of CLS from other countries was confirmed in *The Republikein Newspaper*, (11th January 2011). In this newspaper it was reported that “despite the fact that research has been done particularly in respect to children raised in the former GDR, studies and documents to determine reports on the impact of the war on children that grew up in countries where Namibian ex-soldiers lived during the liberation struggle are still lacking. There is also evidence about inadequacy of support programmes for such CLS during and after their arrival in Namibia.”

The “GDR Kids” include those eighty pre-primary children from a Namibian refugee camp in Angola who went to the GDR on the request of SWAPO made in December 1979 to the former GDR government (during the time that SWAPO was struggling to liberate former SWA/Namibia from South Africa rule). It is reported that in the following decade these children lived and were schooled in the regions of the GDR: Berlin/Zehna near Gustrow and Starfurt/ Loderburg near Magdeburg. These Kids remained in the GDR until August 1990; five months after Namibia gained independence and shortly before the GDR was to be united with the Federal Republic of Germany. The GDR Kids were then repatriated to a country many of them had never before set foot in. Some of them are reported to have been teenagers and were accompanied by three hundred and forty other Namibian children who in the course of the 1980s had also been taken to the GDR” (Kenna, 1999, p.34).

Socio-economic studies available on the experiences of GDR Kids report that these children have faced many challenges in Namibia. Some of the challenges include “finding schools, adjusting to a new living and learning environment, seeking opportunities for employment or further training, language barriers and obtaining official documents. The GDR Kids have suffered both temporary setbacks and permanent ones. Other additional obstacles faced by these children are teenage pregnancy, excessive consumption of alcohol and drugs, depression and suicide attempts and getting into conflict with the law” (Kenna , 1999, p.57).

Taking into account Kenna’s findings regarding the documented lives and experiences of Namibian CLS, it seems that the social and economic experiences of both the GDR Kids and CLS repatriated from other countries are full of traumatic incidents. Nambelela (1999, p.3) affirmed that “many “*Exiled Children*” bore the physical scars of the attack on Cassinga, while many others had suffered from the psychological scars of war, hardship and family separation, because they never experienced family love and belongingness.”

Nambelela further noted that the GDR Kids were not only uprooted and traumatised but they were also subjected to challenges of cultural identity confusion. Most of the staff that took care of them were young white East German women from a Marxist pedagogical background where corporal punishment was prohibited. However, when they came back home this prohibition was the opposite of Namibian cultural values in particular among the Owambo people. The Owambo are the majority tribe in Namibia situated 700km north of Windhoek the capital city of Namibia and they believe in the

philosophy of hitting children as the correct way of disciplining and keeping children on the right path.

Lucia Engombe, a former GDR Kid, cited in Nambalela (1999), explained that:

“We desired a great deal of attention from our favourite Erzieherinnen (caregivers).

They sacrificed a great deal of their free time not paying attention to when their official

hours ended. If one of us was sick or had problems they tucked us in lovingly and

sometimes gave us a good night kiss.” This demonstrates that the GDR Kids had a

loving upbringing in the GDR.

Although there were Namibians caregivers who kept GDR Kids in touch with their own culture and mother tongue, many of the GDR Kids were not exposed to the social order where, for example the family structure was defined by males with high control over women. They were used to the German social order where girls could speak up and get equal attention to boys. This practice was found strange in Namibia. The GDR Kids always caused conflicts among their peers when parents or relatives with Namibian traditional attitudes reprimanded them from what their former caregivers in the GDR had taught them (Kenna, 1999).

Many of the GDR Kids did not accept the conditions they encountered while staying with their own families on return to Namibia (Williams, 2009). “It was not easy for *'Exiled Children'* to adjust to living in huts without electricity or running water, gathering wood, cooking meal over open fire, fetching water on foot from a tap or from boreholes four to three kilometres distance in remote areas” (Dorian, 1996, p.7).

Other social and economic challenges experienced by CLS are reported in *The Namibian Newspaper* (3rd August 2010) in which Willem Konjore. (Former Minister of YNSSC) was quoted as saying that, “CLS are described as one of the 'special case'” affected youth in Namibia. Many of these young people grew up in an environment that was abnormal, lacking parental upbringing and guidance. Some of the youth do not know their parents, since (their parents) sacrificed their precious lives in the struggle for the liberation of Namibia. Life in refugee camps was difficult and had a negative impact on these young ones, even more for those that had no biological parents to look after them.”

Moreover, a narrative report compiled by the MYNSSC (2010) concluded that many parents of the CLS parents died during the liberation struggle while others passed on after independence. Some CLS became head of households, without financial income and professional qualifications needed to find employment. The report also showed that the neglect of the CLS by their own biological parents became a serious burden to grandparents, guardians and other relatives. The report also outlined that some CLS in the four northern political regions of Namibia (Oshana, Ohangwena, Omusati and Oshikoto), could not attend school as they became cattle herders and many are believed not to have continued with school after their arrival in Namibia owing to a lack of funding and improper parental guidance.

The task of the MYNSSC narrative report was mainly to determine the social needs, educational /training related opportunities, employment opportunity (attached read, Annexure 6 CLS registration form for 2008). The report from the MYNSSC has not

incorporated the social and economic experiences, real lived stories of CLS upon their arrival in Namibia from 1990 until 2008 before they engaged into the countrywide demonstrations, a gap that was filled by this study.

Benitha Nakaambo, public relations officer of the Namibian Exile Kids Association (NEKA) mentions that “*Exiled Kids*” faced a number of challenges upon their return to Namibia in 1989. She went on to say that “when we came back from exile, we were not prepared; our parents at least knew what they could expect. We had to adjust to a changed system, where we now had to purchase instead of receiving; and we felt that we were put on display because we were weird. Some of us have adjusted, and some simply refused to do so,” *The Namibian Newspaper* (26th November 2008).

The Namibian Newspaper also cited Nakaambo that “before independence action from SWAPO should have included psychological preparation for what CLS were to encounter upon their return to Namibia. We needed counselling, something to prepare us for the environment here. We were not prepared psychologically, emotionally, or economically. A transition phase was lacking and government was supposed to set up better structures in welcoming back children.”

Based on these reports, the history of Namibian liberation struggle cannot be separated from the issue of war veterans and “*Exiled Kids*” as their stories are the same as those of their fathers, sons, mothers and daughters. It is evident from the given development and reports that it was tough to adjust to different family settings, cultural norms, and socio-economic status. Despite the fact that there are many other CLS born and raised during

the liberation struggle that have grown up to be successful and well adjusted, many have not had such luck and have been left to their own devices.

“Simasiku Matongo ” a successful CLS whose case study was reported in the *Informante Newspaper* (15th September 2002) narrated “that many CLS found it hard to understand whether they were sent and born abroad for studies or for military training. Most of them were born in Angola at places such as Kwanza-Zul, some in Zambia, in Lusaka and so forth. At the tender age of four, they left for Czechoslovakia living in children’s homes without their biological parents, where they easily adopted the culture of the Czech.”

“*Informante Newspaper* quoted Simasiku as saying that “*we became African Czechs,*” “we paraded on a daily basis in full SWAPO attire and pioneer uniforms. We received military training as well as formal education. When Namibia got independence in 1990, they pressured us and politically convinced us to head back to our home country as the defeated enemy left everything for us to take. They told us of abandoned cars standing in the streets as well as empty houses waiting for us to occupy them. Yet, our Czechs teachers did not want us to leave before completing our studies. On numerous occasions, they warned us of hardships that we will face back in Namibia. However, the influence was so immense that SWAPO officials used to travel to the Czechs Republic to meet us. I remember as if it was yesterday when they told us not to pack many clothes and other items as most of the things were waiting for us in Namibia, with this belief, we all only took minor items with us.”

In the *Informante* Newspaper (of the same date), Simasiku mentioned that upon arrival in Namibia they were sent to a hostel at Usakos where they stayed and waited for their parents to pick them up one by one. The first to be collected were the grand children of the Founding Father (President Dr Sam Nujoma) as well as children of other high ranking officials. Simasiku also explained that no counselling was provided to them. “I remember being with the children of heroes such as Tobias Hainyeko, Peter Nanyemba, Nafidi Namala, Greenwell Matongo and many others. Their parent’s names are all over the country schools, clinics, and many of the locations are named after them. Children of high-ranked officials went back to complete their studies on opportunities not granted to all, until today we are fluent in the Czech languages.

When we reached our parents' homes, we faced harsh realities of true Namibian life. Food was difficult to accept as it differed a lot from what we were used to. Many of our parents thought we were pretending to be white and for many it negatively affected the relationship between our parents and us. At school, no one could understand the grading of our reports as they were written in Czech languages, and no one bothered to find out, so we were put at lower grades than we should have been, none of us was given his or her passport or SWAPO card or anything.”

On this issue in the *Informante Newspaper*, (of the same date) Simasiku concluded that many of them only came to realise that they had no parents, brothers, or sisters at a very late stage; nor did they know of their origins as everyone spoke Oshiwambo only. “Lots of us ran away from our houses as we found ourselves in an identity crisis. We felt

totally misunderstood by our parents and relatives. Most of us in the Czech Republic had neither a mother nor father since they were killed in the war.”

The argument of Simasiku (CLS from other countries not from GDR) is consistent with earlier mentioned conceptions of CLS who grew up in other countries as he mentioned that “the Czech lifestyle was and remained very different from the Namibian one and we were not given adequate time to adopt to this lifestyle, which led many of us to rebel against our parents, move out and live on our own. To date what we do not understand is; do they have any idea what we went through or how our lives were changed forever by not having fathers? I do not think so, not one of them does”.

He concluded that it is a pity when he sees his former colleagues, who had the potential to become engineers, doctors, and teachers now hanging around the Zoo Park and other places in the capital. “Let it be known to all that we are not kids anymore we are parents as well. Now that we are adults, we still ask ourselves; why did they not leave us to complete our studies? What was the aim of sending minors to grow up in Europe and only to come back and be titled “spoiled and undisciplined” kids by the very same people who sent us there?

2.7 Social and Economic Support Provided to CLS from 1990 - 2008 in Namibia.

Kenna, (1999) mentioned that although in 1990 the GRN agreed to treat all “*Exiled Kids*” equally (including the GDR Kids) documents revealed that projects that promoted “*Exiled Kids*” solidarity and communications only targeted the GDR Kids. She explained lack of programmes to integrate CLS and unequal treatment of CLS from

other countries by articulating that, after independence many exiled children returned from special schools in exile, for example, Czechoslovakia (up to two hundred), Zambia (over two thousand), and Cuba, Angola and Yugoslavia (one hundred each). Nothing extraordinary was undertaken to ease their re-entry into the Namibian education system. They all had to make their own way. There were no ready-made Spanish-teachers, Slovak materials or a community organisation ready and willing to assist them. These children were in more need of integration and support than the GDR Kids.

The well known Social Integration Project designed for Ex-combatants (SIPE) was the only mechanism to create employment for ex-fighters and to support those CLS whose parents died in the liberation struggle. However, it emerged that the establishment of the institution only offered temporary solutions to the problems of the ex-combatants and their dependants.

Problems such as unemployment and poor social counselling continued surfacing among these individuals after their repatriation to Namibia in 1989 until in the late 2000s. Increasing lack of permanent jobs became too evident in 1998, when ex-fighters staged country-wide peaceful demonstrations demanding jobs. At one point the ex-combatants stood their ground in the Government Office Park near the Statehouse demanding to see His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Namibia, Dr. Sam Nuyoma. It was highly probable that promises made had failed to materialise within a specific time (Afunde, 2008).

Poor support programmes for former soldiers/ex-combatants and their dependants were also mentioned by Nicky Iyambo (current Minister of Veteran Affairs) reported in *The Namibian Newspaper* of 20th June 2006). There he emphasised poor ex-combatant support stressing that “even though in monetary terms the Namibian government spent millions of dollars on ex-combatant programmes during the period between 1990 and 2006, the achievement of these programmes in supporting the veterans remained largely unknown to the wider group of ex-combatants and the public. Following the poor intervention programmes for freedom fighters, “veterans’ needs were unattended, both complex and sensitive needs. Some remained poor, unable to make ends meet not only for themselves but for their families too.”

The Namibian Newspaper (of the same date) further quoted Iiyambo that “during the earlier years of independence, the GRN did less or tremendously nothing, to integrate and support former Namibian freedom fighter (CLS parents). Apart from the failures of the intervention programmes of Namibian freedom fighters, at the early years of independence, the SWAPO led Government did not recognise the urgent need to address the welfare of the freedom fighters.” Various attempts made by the Government of the Republic of Namibia to address the plight of veterans in Namibia by introducing several programmes intended to uplift their living conditions never materialised.

The following reasons were identified by Iyambo, cited in *The Namibian Newspaper* (same edition) as reasons and answers to why many the programmes for ex-combatants programmes were not successful.

- The programmes were very expensive per capita basis and ended up benefiting few freedom fighters in Namibia leaving the majority unattended.
- The programmes have been poorly coordinated involving a multitude of organisations and lacked clear organisational mechanisms.
- Some programmes had unclearly defined goals, outcomes and outputs which are difficult to measure, lack of basic data on aspects of number of males and female veterans, their location, levels of education and skills and their needs. Without such information, meaningful programmes could not be designed to support veterans.
- The coordination of these programme activities was very poor. There was no single focal entity to coordinate all the efforts of the government aimed at addressing the plight of veterans in the country and evaluate the effectiveness of the government initiatives and its longer-term viability.

When one analyses in depth these above mentioned weaknesses in the programmes established to support former ex-combatants, one can easily justify that CLS are no exception to the situation of their parents.

Projects that targeted GDR Kids only and sidelined the rest of CLS from other countries were revealed by Kenna, (1999). In her study, Kenna (1999) disclosed that the German nationals in Namibia and abroad initiated projects to improve the living conditions of the GDR Kids in Namibia. The initiated projects included the Association of GDR Kids established early in 1991. The aim was to discuss issues involving the Namibian children who returned from Germany. Members of the association were GDR Kids'

parents and guardians, GDR Kids, Social Workers, and other Education Officers from the Ministry of Education. Kenna also stated that late in 1991 the First German Ambassador to Namibia established another GDR Kids' organisation; a project that ran until the end of 1996.

Apart from these organisations, Kenna revealed that many individuals in the German's speaking community helped the GDR Kids. These included the Special GDR Committee in Windhoek, the Otjikondo Village School Foundation, the Namibian Children's Home, Kinderhilfe in Namibia, the Bavarian Radio (Munich), and the Deutsch-Namibische Hilfsfonds Quanut. If all these were efforts for the GDR Kids by the German speaking community, they still had challenges. The question that remains to be answered is: what are the socio-economic experiences of the other "*Exiled Kids*"?

2.8 The Unruly Behaviour of Namibian CLS

Certain scholars have described the unruly and arrogant behaviour of CLS in the community. According to Jason (2001) the community perceived the CLS as disobedient and recommended that misbehaviour is the only thing they possess in their lives. *The Times of Namibia* (7th May -1991) quoted in Jason (2001) confirmed that, "the behaviours of many young returnees have been a source of consternation to older members of the community."

The upsetting misbehaviour of CLS was also highlighted in *The Namibian Newspaper* (3rd August 2010) when it stated that "*struggle children*" who were sent to Berg Aukas to wait for possible employment in various government departments after having

allegedly been attacking, insulting, swearing at, robbing residents and causing havoc in Grootfontein. The newspaper also quoted an anonymous resident in Grootfontein who declared that, “everybody is complaining about these kids. We are sick and tired of them. Maybe they do not care about their lives Grootfontein residents could not enjoy their weekends as they are now like foreigners in their own town.”

The misbehaviour of the CLS were also noted to have emerged when CLS retaliated and confronted the public for labelling them as undisciplined, disrespectful, and unruly and issued statements calling on the public not to label all of them with the same brush because of the mistakes of the few, *The Namibian Newspaper* (1st March 2009). *The Namibian Newspaper* (of the same edition) reported that CLS allegedly raised the issue with the public for being accused of terrorising residents in the Mix Camp settlement (the SWAPO farm situated few kilometres from Windhoek, the capital of Namibia) to where the CLS were moved by the SWAPO Party Youth League in order to avoid their arrest, had they ignored a High Court eviction order.

The *Namibian newspaper* (of the same date) concluded by quoting “*Salomo Shinedima*”, a spokesperson for the CLS group who declared that, “in the first place we want to state that we are children of SWAPO and have been born in SWAPO. We are disciplined, respectful, committed and patriotic young Namibians. After seven months of being patient and disciplined to wait for the promises made by the government we cannot be accused of impatience and indiscipline.” This development triggered the researcher’s interest to explore the socio-economic experiences of the CLS to understand

why their manners and demeanour behaviour have not been culturally accepted in the community, despite growing up in the society where there are set norms and principles.

2.9 Children's Homes and Frequent Family Displacement

A study on children who have been displaced in Africa by Hundeide, 1991, Alfredson, 2002; Sommers, 2002, Richter et al., (2006), as cited in Rochat, Hough, Mitchell and Jewitt (2009), defined children who grew up in children's homes as children who have been moved away from their parents or native places as a result of poverty, conflicts, war, unemployment, illnesses, HIV/AIDS, death in the family, etc.

Rochat et al. (2009) added that family displacement and frequent family movement of children are among dangerous characteristics which jeopardise children's lives through sequences of risks. Rochat et al. noted that at each series of risks, displaced children go through certain stages e.g. losing their own biological parents and all sources of safety and security, which may lead to the risk of loss of shelter and food security, as well as loss of connection to social and family groups.

These researchers further mentioned that the biggest risk for children who have been displaced is being moved away from their regular supports and structures. Displaced children often lose access to their educational resources, because they are frequently removed from school during the process of displacement and/ or their access to schooling becomes limited as a result of displacement.

When the development of adolescence is interrupted, e.g. going to school, by moving them to other places and families in the middle of the school year, it may increase the possibility of completely dropping out of school. At a later stage, it may lead to loss of access to education, which means becoming vulnerable and losing a chance for structured encouragement and opportunities to learn, a critical aspect to emotional and social development of adolescents. Rochat et al. concluded that the displacement of children results in the loss of social learning opportunities and social networks of friends, teachers and parents. It has a negative impact by taking away an individual's dreams, aspirations and failing to maintain his/her identity as many individuals will develop feelings that they have no future, or sense of belonging and feeling part of something that has no meaning to their lives. During family displacement, many children lose their identity since every time they relocate to a new family they have to copy the norms, principles, values and behaviours of those families (Rochat et al., 2009).

The negative impact of children who were displaced was also acknowledged by Killian, Nicolson and O'Neill (2009) who stressed that both displaced children and children who grew up in children's homes because of war, alcoholism, prostitution, illness, poverty etc. suffered from social isolation. "Social isolation is the opposite of belongingness; whereas belongingness is a multidimensional social construct of relatedness to persons, places, or things and is fundamental to personality and social well-being. Social isolation is a loss of place within one's group. When people are socially isolated, they are accompanied by feelings related to loss or marginality, loneliness, anger, despair, sadness, frustration, or in some cases, relief" (Biordi & Nicholson, n.d.).

The above definition on social isolation is consistent with the study of Killian et al. (2009) who found that when children lived in children's homes, they are socially isolated; and distanced from their immediate relationships, i.e. parents, family members, friends and society. Even if they are provided with food, shelter, medical care, clothing and proper education, the experience of children's homes has a long term impact on children's life. They hardly cope well with life nor do they fit into the society well as they subsequently develop physical, emotional and behaviour problems. In some countries children's home were closed down as people realised how bad they were for children's emotional and social well-being. Children's homes lead to greater difficulties for the children, families, and the communities. Research that compared children who grew up in children's homes with those one in the community, found that children who grew up in such homes never felt family love; they lacked social belongingness and inner emotional development" (Killian et.al. 2009, pp.34-35).

In the same study Killian et al. found that children, families and communities affected by conflicts, war, poverty and displacement suffer from the negative impact of worries and bad memories that hardly go away after these calamities; as these persons are more likely to suffer from long term psychological effects. When there are long-term effects, persons may suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The PTSD condition arises after severe stress and it may include physical and emotional symptoms. Those affected include "soldiers, survivors of criminal actions including rape and assault, and all those who have been tortured, and survivors of natural and manmade catastrophe (who all) suffer long-term effects" (Killian et al., 2009).

Moreover, *The Namibian Newspaper* (29th May 2012) reported the study carried out by the Legal Assistance Centre (LAC) in Namibia about the relationship between stepparents and stepchildren. Results of the LAC study indicated that although there is a perception that stepparents should take responsibilities for stepchildren, it does not necessarily take place in Namibia. The study concluded that there is lack of legal clarity in Namibia on the nature and roles of step parenting. Major problems identified in this relational arrangement are abuse, neglect, and discrimination, all faced by stepchildren. Additional problems identified are the unequal and unreasonable burden of household work, lack of adequate food, prohibition of going to school, lack of money and other basic amenities. The LAC study also discovered that stepchildren are disproportionately vulnerable to physical, emotional, economic, and even sexual abuse.

2.10 The Crisis of Identity

Rummens (2001) established that the term identity originated from the French word "*identité*" which finds its linguistic roots in the Latin adjective "*idem*" meaning "*the same*." Based on this Rummens defined the term identity "as the distinctive character belonging to any given individual or shared by all members of a particular social category or group." She also confirmed that identity is one of the fundamental aspects in human nature as it highlights the sharing of certain relationships with others in a particular area or on a given point. Kruger (1989) described the concept of identity as the balance between self and others. He highlighted that the major core foundation of identity rests on the "*self*," "*ego*," "*I*" and "*me*." This implies that our personal

identities differentiate us from other people in our daily life and represent the centre of who we are in life.

According to Santrock (2008) the answer to the following questions reflects the identity of an individual. “Who am I? What am I all about? What am I going to do with my life? What is different about me? How can I make it on my own?” He further explained identity as a collection of aspects about a certain individual. These may include family identity, town identity, career identity, political identity, religious identity, relationship identity, achievement and intellectual identity, cultural and ethnicity, interest identity and so forth. “Personal identity refers to the result of an identification of self, by self, with respect to others. It is in other words self- identification on the part of the individual, in contrast to social identity, that others describe as the outcome of an identification of self by others and identification accorded or assigned an individual by another social actor” (Rummens 2001).

Mwamwenda (2004) argues that the search for identity is regarded as a continuous process from infancy to adulthood. The childhood and adolescence stages are identified as more crucial for identity establishment. Erickson (1963), quoted in Mwamwenda (2004, p. 298), stressed that “both past and present social settings have an effect on the development of personality. Individuals’ social settings include the society in which they grow up and the important persons in their life, such as their parents, teachers and friends.”

Kruger (1989) noted that identity formation relies on the way society identifies individuals and recognises them as somebody who had to become the way he/she is and who is acknowledged for being the way he/she is. Kruger (1989) explains that identity formation does not emerge during adolescence, but rather evolves through earlier stages of development and continues to shape itself throughout the life cycle of the person. Erickson (1977) and Kruger (1989) further suggest that the description of identity formation is a practice that depends on the interplay of what a young person at the end of childhood has come to mean to him/her and what he/she now appears to mean to those who become significant to him/her.

According to Santrock (2008), the concept of identity should encompass that part of the world or country and region from which they originated. Santrock (2008) is of the opinion that a person should intensively identify his or her cultural heritage identity. “Sometimes the biggest struggle for most people on identity definition is not because they have no education or enough money, but the biggest struggle for most people is that they have a serious identity crisis. Due to many broken and defragmented lives and families, stricken poverty, marital problems and other social evils surrounding the society, this ruined the behaviour and mindset concerning our identity” *The Villager*, (30th March 2012).

Based on the above, *The Villager* identified five basic reasons why people suffer identity crisis:

- They do not believe in themselves and have a low self-esteem.

- They do not focus on their strengths but on their weaknesses.
- They do not know their potential; only their problems.
- They do not know their destiny, only their failures.
- They do not develop their character; but focus only on their personality.”

Closely linked to identity tragedy is the psychosocial theory of Erik Erickson (whose works span the time period 1950 to 1968), cited in Santrock (2008), who defined identity crisis as a time of intensive analysis and exploration of ways of looking at oneself in childhood.

Erickson, cited in Santrock (2009, p.245), defined identity as “a subjective sense as well as an observable quality of personal sameness and continuity, paired with some belief in the sameness and continuity of some shared world image.” Erickson also explained identity as a quality of self-conscious living, magnificent in young people or persons who have found their communality. In him, identity is a “unique unification of what is irreversible given that body type and temperament, giftedness and vulnerability, infantile models and acquired ideas with open choices, possibilities, values offered, mentors met, friendship made and first sexual intercourse.”

In Erickson’s theory of psychosocial development, the emergence of an identity crisis occurs during the teenage years in which people struggle between feelings of identity versus role confusion. The theories of identity by Erickson (1963) cited in Santrock (2008), stipulate that although people without proper identical definition have developed

sense of their own identity, many remained ignorant of what they really want to do in life and are rather unsure. They feel out of place, socially, and believe themselves to be worthless and unimportant not only from their own point of view but from the society too. Identities are divided into positive identity and negative identity. A positive identity is based on what has been reinforced and the negative one is on what has been punished in a person's past (Mwamwenda, 2004).

Marcia (1966, 1976 and 1980) cited in Santrock (2008) has also expanded Erickson's initial theory of identity, by maintaining that the balance between identity and confusion lies in making a commitment to identity. Cited in Santrock (2008) Marcia (1966, 1976 and 1980) has also developed an interview method to measure identity as well as four different identity statuses. The method looks at three different areas of functioning: occupational role, beliefs and values, and sexuality.

As per Marcia's suggestion cited in Santrock (2008) "the four statuses of identity are:

- *Identity achievement*; this occurs when an individual has gone through an exploration of different identities and made a commitment to one.
- *Identity moratorium*; this is the status of a person who is actively involved in exploring different identities but has not made a commitment; however these individuals are in the midst of a crisis but their commitments are either absent or are only vaguely defined.
- *Foreclosure*; this is the status when a person has made a commitment without attempting identity exploration.

- *Identity diffusion*; this occurs when there is neither an identity crisis nor commitment. Individuals in identity diffusion are not only undecided about occupational and ideological choices, they are also likely to show little interest in such matters.

Santrock (2008) stressed that “children who successfully coped with conflicting identities emerge with a new sense of self that is both refreshing and acceptable”, while those who do not successfully resolve this identity crisis suffer from what Erickson (1970), cited in Santrock (2008), calls identity confusion. The confusion takes one to two courses: individuals withdraw, isolating themselves from peers and family or they immerse themselves in the world of peers and lose their identities in the crowd. Mkhize (2004), quoted in Rochat et al. (2009), concluded that “Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu” which means a human being is being a human being because of other human beings.

2.11. Lack of Psychosocial Support

The term psychosocial support (PSS) comes from the following term:

PSYCHO – The term ‘psycho’ comes from the Greek and can be used as a prefix. It simply means psychological, mind, and feelings or emotions. It is a way of helping individual’s feelings. Generally, people need love, care, respect, kindness and consideration, in psycho individuals, especially children, are guided and encouraged to cope, accept, and understand their bad experiences. The psycho part of PSS also refers to our awareness of our feeling and our self- esteem. Children need help to be able to express their feelings in ways that helps them to feel better and improve their esteem (Rochat et al., 2009).

SOCIAL – Rochat et al. (2009), defined social as the way we relate to others and the way individuals connect to one another. He further reported that children with difficult experiences in their families find it difficult to relate to others, because of lack of trust in other people. These academics emphasised that for a person to find happiness and fulfilment they need to learn how to give and receive trust, respect and intimacy. They also need to learn to behave in order to accept social situations. They can only learn this if they grow up in healthy social relationships.

SUPPORT – “is the ways in which children are supported to grow to develop healthy ways. Despite (the fact) that individual, societies and cultures have their own unique ways of giving support to children; we all need to show care, acceptance, respect and the right to participate in decisions that affect children to grow to their full potentials” (Rochat et al., 2009).

Merging the three terms together, psychosocial support is about kindness, relationship of respect, and valuing individuals in the society. Providing people with food, blankets, shelter, money, accommodation, school fees, and other basic needs does not constitute psychosocial support, but being there for a person by caring and behaving toward them prosper is a definition and example of psychosocial support. Psychosocial support involves feelings, thoughts, and relationship of the person, and is about finding ways of building the person up from the inside (Santrock, 2008). Rochat et al. (2009) also concluded that “children who went through difficult times in life e.g. poverty, violence,

displacements, and illness, needs to be properly taken care both by physical needs (food, clothing, shelter) and psychological ones.’’

2.12. Grief, Loss, Death, Bereavement and Suicidal Attempt

Mwamwenda (2004, pg.67) described “bereavement as the experience of a loss of a loved one through death. Symptoms of bereavement include crying, distressing thoughts about the loss, sadness, yearning for the dead, a need to talk about the person who has died and intrusive thoughts about the person who has gone.” Bereavement is a very painful feeling that follows the death of loved ones, thus it is “commonly viewed as a major life stress accompanied by physical symptoms and a variety of intense emotions including anger, sorrow, anxiety and depression” (Newman, 1991). Mwamwenda (2004) divided bereavement into grief and mourning. Grief is the emotional response to one’s loss while mourning is the actions and manner of expressing grief. Mwamwenda (2004) divided grief into two parts; anticipatory grief, which occurs before the person dies based on the knowledge, that the person is dying and actual grief which occurs when a person died.

Santrock (2008) defined grief as the emotional numbness, disbelief, separation, anxiety, despair, sadness and loneliness that accompany the loss of someone and it has multiple dimensions. He also suggests that grief is experienced when a close person dies, an outward expression of love, thus it should be treated with respect. Santrock (2008) added that when a person lost a loved one, pining and yearning occurs, and a person reflects an intermittent, recurrent wish or need to recover the lost person. Grief may involve despair and sadness, which include a sense of hopelessness and depression symptoms, apathy,

loss of meaning for activities that used to involve the person who is gone and growing desolation.

Seifert et al. (2000), and Schaie and Willis (2002) in Mwamwenda (2004), identified the five stages of death and grief which they considered to apply to the grieving process after the loss of loved ones.

- The first stage is *denial* “*Not me*” when the grieving person/victim learns that a mother, or father (parents) are sick, physically abused, aging and terminally ill and denies the fact that death is about to happen in that person’s life.
- *Anger* “*Why me*” occurs at the second stage where an individual objects and protests to the fact that others of their age are living happily with their loved ones while their loved ones have died. Santrock (2008) explained that God and other superior power which people believe in remains a special target of anger during this stage. The Almighty or ancestral powers are regarded as arbitrarily imposing the death sentences on people or loved ones.
- The third stage is *bargaining* “*Yes me*”, the person pleads with God, ancestors or any superior being they believe in to allow more time so that the person can accomplish something important including being more religious than he or she has been in the past.

- The fourth stage is *depression* “*Yes me*”, the impending death is acknowledged and the person mourns the impending loss, deeply regretting the inevitable departure and separation from those who are dear to him or her.
- Finally, *Acceptance* “*My time has come and its fine.*” This is neither a happy or unhappy stage and marks the end of the struggle with the reality of death or the persons trying to accept the death of their loved ones.

Davis (2001) and Feldon (2003), cited in Santrock (2008), suggested that long term grief can mask and predispose individuals to become depressed or even suicidal. Good communication in the family can help reduce the incidence of depression and suicidal thoughts. The harder individuals fight to avoid the inevitable death they face, the more they deny and the more difficult they will find it to accept death in a serene way. Lindsay and Elsegood (1996) supported the view that bad news which is disclosed in a sensitive and caring manner can lessen the intensity of an individual’s distress and may reduce any sense of disbelief, sadness, anger, guilt, shame inadequacy, vulnerability and hopelessness that the person might be feeling.

Schoka and Hayslip (1999) found out that family members who communicated poorly about the death of their loved ones had more negative grief reactions than those who communicated effectively with each other.. Those who have poor communication skills may experience complicated grief reactions that may lead to sadness and even disbelief or inconsiderable anguish. The study also noted that the survivors are more likely to be negative about their future, and function incompetently in their lives. They have

difficulties accepting and moving on with their lives, they feel numb or believe that their lives are empty without the deceased, and feel that their futures have no meaning. The study highlighted that the impact of death on surviving individuals is strongly influenced by the circumstances under which the death occurs.

“Deaths that are sudden, untimely, violent or traumatic are likely to have more intense and prolonged effects on surviving individuals and make the coping process more difficult. Such deaths are often accompanied by posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms such as intrusive thoughts, flashback, nightmares, sleep disturbances, problems in concentrating and others” (Santrock, 2008).

Seifert et al. (2000), quoted in Mwamwenda (2004, p.79), found that “the death of a parent or caretaker is a major problem for adolescents as compared to adults. While adults can eventually find another source of comfort and support, this may not be so with adolescents, as they have not learnt survival skills and adjustment. When adolescents and children witness death, there is often a tendency to live in the present and deny death.” Santrock (2008) emphasised the need for adults to reassure children after the death of their loved ones that they are still loved, and will not be abandoned. Being sensitive and sympathetic encourages the children to express their own feelings. The death of a parent is very difficult for children and adolescents in particular. “After a child loses a parent or main caretaker, school performances and peer relationship often worsen. For some children as well as adults a parent’s death can be devastating and

result in hypersensitivity about death, including fear of losing other close to the individuals” Santrock (2008, p.334) concluded.

Lindsay and Elsegood (1996), cited in Santrock (2008), that the death of a loved one, particularly a head of the family, to children under the age of 16 would be accompanied by further losses and trauma in their lives such as shock and disbelief, dismay, protest, apathy and a continuation of unusual activities. He noted that children who did not get proper counselling and support to cope with the loss of their loved ones show a whole range of long-term grief responses. Common manifestations may include: anxieties, sadness, anger, guilt shame, rebel, disorganisation, searching, sleep disturbances and other physical symptoms. The exposure to death, whether by natural illness, violence or suicide, relates to current suicidal ideation. Individuals who had made a suicide attempt were more likely to have been exposed to death by suicide and less likely to have been exposed to death from acute diseases (Jeglic & Pirelli, 2009).

Furthermore, a nested case-control design research carried out by Christopher, Houck, Lescano, Pugatch and Brown (2008) to examine the association between the death of a biological parent, caretakers and subsequent suicide attempts by young people (aged 10-22 years) and to explore other socio-demographic factors revealed that young people develop serious social and psychological problems. The findings of the study indicated that young people who had lost one biological parent showed a significantly increased risk of attempting suicide (relative risk = 1.71, 95% confidence?).

Bowlby (1980), cited in Christopher et al. (2008), confirmed the results with the psychological attachment theory. Losing a parent is expected to be one of the most serious, stressful life events that can happen to a child or an adolescent and it may have a great impact at multiple levels on the adolescent's social ecology. The study recommended social support from the family, specified family cohesion and family adaption as a protective factor against suicide attempts.

Other major motives behind suicidal attempts include "hopelessness in life, hostility, self- negativity and social isolation. Hopelessness is defined in this context as when individuals become very depressed and frustrated with life, not seeing any hope and seeing suicide as the only option to end the means' (Behrendt, 2004).

Afunde (2008) further stated that the social contribution factor leading to suicide in Namibia is high expectation from the government. In his study on *Absurdity and Morality of Suicide in Namibia*, Afunde (2008) declared that "there was no doubt that in Namibia the suicide rate among youth has increased more after the country's independence. Many young people in Namibia had rising expectations brought about by independence, democratisation, removal of racism in education, and equal opportunities. Political parties have also promoted rising expectations. Some leaders promised heightened affirmative action, better housing and greater employment as natural results of independent development."

Afunde (2008) concludes that some years after Namibian independence, political promises made for a better future could not be kept, young people's dreams of an

independent Namibia could not be realised and hopes for better conditions were dashed leading them to commit suicide.

This review of the literature relates to many aspects, such as death, loss, grief, bereavement, suicide, abuse, identity crises, post traumatic stress syndrome, poor psychosocial support, all of some of which may have affected the CLS, the core group being studied in the current research.

2. 13. Summary of the Chapter

Chapter two gave the theoretical framework that influenced the study. The Chapter gave a general discussion on available literatures and challenges faced by children and young people returning to their country of birth after the liberation war. It also looked at the experiences of TCKs and challenges facing them in their lives. The study further gave a general background of available information on the socio-economic experiences of all Namibian CLS, explicitly the GDR Kids.

CHAPTER: THREE: Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The main aim of this chapter is to describe the methods that were used in the study to collect and analyse data. This chapter discusses the research design and methodology, population, the sampling techniques, data collection procedures, ethical considerations, and methods of data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

Research methodology is the overall approach to the research process from the theoretical foundation, to collection and analysis of the data (Collis & Hussey, 2003). This study adopted qualitative research methodology to enable the researcher to seek and explore diverse human experiences, feelings, views and subjective positions (Bryman, 1988). The study used a combination of case study and narrative research design.

3.2.1 Case Study Approach

According to Leary (2005) the case study is a method of studying elements of the social cases through comprehensive description and analysis of a single situation or cases. Creswell (2008) defines the case study as an in-depth exploration of a bounded system (i.e. an activity, event, process, or individuals) based on extensive data collection. A bounded system means the case under investigation is contained in terms of time, place, events, or some physical boundaries.

Creswell (2008) further outlined that “the case may be individual, several individuals separately or in a group, a programme of events, or activities.” He outlined three types of cases:

- **Intrinsic cases** – are selected because they are unusual and have merit in themselves.
- **Instrumental cases** - are selected or studied because they serve the purpose of illuminating a particular issue and
- **Multiple cases**- known as collective case studies selected to provide insight into issues.

This study is, however, based on multiple cases because it studied 12 CLS cases residing and camping in Berg Aukas to provide insight into an issue or a theme which in this study is social and economic experiences or factors in the lives of these 12 individuals.

Many scholars acknowledge case study research design as a very useful one that “researches real world problems, digging into context and trying to handle rich experiences of individuals” (Leary, 2005, p.67). The purpose of employing the case study method is to gain richness, depth and holistic understanding of the CLS socio-economic phenomena. A case study “helps us to understand the uniqueness and idiosyncrasy” (Huysamens, 1998, p.168) of the CLS in their complexity.

As indicated in Chapter One (*1.3 aims and objectives of the study*), the researcher sought to develop an in-depth understanding of the CLS to provide insight into their social economic experiences through case studies. This study is consistent with the views of David and Sutton (2004) that case studies are very useful to explore topics where there

has been little knowledge or understanding. There has been little knowledge or information about the lives and experiences of CLS; therefore, case study is deemed an appropriate research design.

In highlighting how cases are used, Creswell (2008) state that the context of a case involves situating the case within its setting, which may be a physical setting, or social, historical and/or economic setting. Therefore, this study is based or is situated in a social and economic setting.

Using case studies in social science research saves time in gathering rich information in a very short time and helps to study human behaviour in a naturalistic setting (Mwamwenda, 2004). This method was very useful in this study, as it fitted the circumstances of collecting data in two weeks. Despite the sensitivity of the study in the CLS environment, it managed to reflect the nature of the behaviours observed and understand the causes of the true characters portrayed by the persons (CLS) being studied.

When using cases, Collis and Hussey (2003, p.70) recommended the following stages to be followed:

- Selection of a case (stage one)
- Preliminary investigation (stage two)
- Data collection (stage three)
- Data analysis (stage four)”

This study followed these four; firstly the study carried out a preliminary investigation based on the researcher's curiosity, previous experiences and interest with CLS behaviour. The researcher's interest with the CLS was motivated by CLS behaviour and attitudes during the first countrywide demonstration in the year 2008 that surfaced in front of the Ministry of Veteran Affairs in Windhoek. It was in the same year that the CLS issue was highlighted on national news, specifically on TV and newspapers, and came to the attention of the public at large in Namibia.

The researcher's interest on the socio-economic experiences of the CLS was strengthened when she became involved in the registration and verification of the CLS organised by the MYNSSC (where the researcher is a staff member) in the Oshikoto region (one of the northern regions of Namibia) in 2009. The CLS involved in this study are some of those who participated in the countrywide demonstration. During this period the researcher kept making preliminary investigations on the behaviour of these individuals. However, the empirical data was collected when the researcher decided to go into the real world of practice to interview the CLS based at Berg Aukas in November 2011. Stage four transpired when the researcher analysed data (in Chapter four) for the results of the study.

This study acknowledged the convenience of the participants' accessibility, the importance of building of a good relationship and an understanding of participants' (CLS) behaviour. The researcher found it convenient to visit and spend time 14 days

with the participants “that saved time and money and efforts at the expense of information and credibility” (Creswell, 2008, pg.119).

3.2.2. Narrative Research Design

The study used narrative research design as the vehicle for sharing the socio-economic experiences of the CLS. “Narrative research design is a naturalistic, exploratory inquiry which finds its strength and veracity in the thick description characteristic of much of qualitative field research. This design is useful to identify the reality of life stories through examination of smaller truths from individuals and events” (Zappulla, 1997, p.324).

Schwandt (1997) explained that narrative research inquiry is a means of generating data in the form of stories, means of interpreting that data and means of representing it in a narrative or storied form. Byrne, Armstrong, Higgs and Horsfall (2001) maintain that in telling a story or using narrative approach the researcher develops or may classify what they want to say or need to say by connecting the stories and events that took place using imagination and creativity to select and organise events and facts findings. Connelly and Clandinin (1990), quoted in Creswell (2008, p.512), concluded that narrative research design is a ‘tool whereby researchers describe the lives of individuals, collect and tell stories about people’s lives and narrates individual experiences’.

This study applied narrative design because “human beings are the only species who tell stories and feel compelled to explore nature and people through anecdotes.” (Zappulla, 1997, p.321). When people narrate stories, it keeps individuals alive, it maintains their

experiences of human existence and it provides a dynamic account of humankind's history. This study regards narrative design as a useful means to document individual thoughts, feelings, and experiences as it keeps one alive in the hearts and minds of future generations. Given that the CLS stories are documented in this study, even if one dies physically, the spirit will live on in the narrative long after the death. "If we live by telling stories, we also remain alive in the stories that have been told. In this sense, the creation of narrative is a continuous living process" (Zappulla, 1997, p.324).

This study being qualitative research used narrative research design to facilitate the process of the respondents (CLS) to tell their real socio-economic life stories, "using time sequences or chronology of events" (Creswell, 2008, p.518) and to explore how they contributed to their present life. The data for this research are the lived experiences; such experiences are human and lend themselves naturally to the rendering of stories. This at a later stage developed a process of translation, re-presentation and creation of meanings which could be written up for the study.

Connelly and Clandinin (2000, p.89) also stress that in using narrative research design "there are tensions and dilemmas in studying the parade of which we are a part." Tensions and dilemmas in this study were the anticipated unruly behaviour of CLS (as discussed in *Chapter Two*), shedding of tears and emotions when speaking of the past, and the anger and sadness in some of the stories. Despite these tensions and dilemmas, the researcher established a close relationship with participants for two weeks, "If

enquirers do not become fully involved in the experience studied, they can never truly understand the lives explored” (Connelly and Clandinin, 2000, p.90).

Being involved means that the researcher becomes attached to participants, accepts similar beliefs, and tolerates the respondents’ manners, Connelly and Clandinin (2000) recommended that becoming fully involved may cause the failure of objectivity. The two scholars suggest that a “narrative enquirer might fall in love with his or her objects which destroys objectivity. They called it, *“falling in love is a major threat to narrative enquirers.”* However, in this study, the researcher was very careful over the above dilemma and tensions. Besides observing the CLS’ social activities at their camp in Berg Aukas, the researcher tried hard to fit in and listen to the undocumented life stories of these individuals.

De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, and Delport (2002) maintain that the quality of data is enhanced if good relationships are maintained with all participants throughout the project. The relationship should be built on mutual trust, cooperation, and the knowledge that the relationship will be terminated at some stage or other when the enquiry has been completed.

Neumann and Newman (2000) advise researchers to not be too involved with respondents. However, the objective researcher should try to make participants feel comfortable in the researcher’s presence.

As per Creswell’s (2008) suggestion, narrative research is the best tool to use when stories told follow a chronology of events through time or years, as they provides a

qualitative approach in which a persuasive form is applied. This study's stories were not told in a clear sequence of events. Some CLS could not recall events that happened in their lives in a chronological way as some events occurred while they were young. "It is from the living and telling of experience that narrative enquiries locate what represents the sense of respondent's experience" (Connelly and Clandinin, 2000, p.89).

3.3 Population

The population frame of the study was all CLS in Namibia excluding those from the GDR. The studied populations were only CLS camping in Berg Aukas camp, Grootfontein in the Otjozondjupa region under the MYNSSC's care during November 2011.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Procedures

Purposive sampling means selecting a sample based on knowledge of a population and convenience sampling denotes selecting a sample based on the convenient and availability of the population (Babbie, 2004). Matthew and Sutton (2004, p.3) explain that in purposive sampling the "units are selected according to the researcher's knowledge and opinion about which ones they think will be appropriate to the topic area." Convenience sampling and purposeful sampling were used to select the sample of this study while purposeful sampling was used based on the purpose of the study (Babbie, 2004). The study applied convenience sampling "for the purpose of saving time and money" (Creswell, 2008, p.119). As described in section 3.2.1, the researcher's interest in the lives and experiences of CLS was aroused by observing CLS during their countrywide demonstration in 2008. The applied samples were also convenient for ease

of access, as participants in the study reside in the same location under the care of MYNSSC, where the researcher is a staff member.

Before the selection of the participants, the researcher compiled an inventory sheet to note certain characteristics of respondents such as *age, gender, orphanages, country of birth, region of origin, parental care, highest qualification*, etc. The aim of the inventory sheet was to give a balance of the above-mentioned characteristics. The sample failed to have a fair representation of the population characteristics (as indicated in Chapter One, some participants withdrew from the study while some were not present in the camp during data collection). The study targeted 15 respondents; however, the researcher managed to interview 12 respondents. Some participants pulled out and some were not interested in participating. Gender balance was one to three with nine females and three males.

3.5 Research Instruments

The study used two research instruments namely, the interview guide with structured and semi-structured questions and the observation check list for field notes. The structured questions in SECTION A and part of the inventory sheet covered *personal background information; age, date of birth, gender, parental guidance, country of birth and the highest qualification*. In SECTION B are the semi-structured questions consisted of open-ended questions designed to meet the objectives of the study stipulated in (*section 1.3. Chapter one*). The observation checklist guided the field notes during the

contact sessions. The study used a voice recorder to record stories narrated by the participants.

3.5.1 Unstructured Interview

Qualitative studies typically employ unstructured or semi-structured interviews. Unstructured interviews are known as “*in-depth questions*” or “*interviews*” Collins (1998, p.10). The unstructured interview with open-ended questions as interview guide is the main research instrument used in this study. The unstructured one to one interviews referred to as the “*in-depth interview*”, extended formalized conversations as they are referred to by Collins (1998) or conversations with a purpose. In this study, the researcher carefully arranged and worded a set of interview questions with an intention to minimise differences in questions posed to participants. Similar interview guide questions were used for all participants.

However, King (1994, pp.33-35), outlined the following limitations and challenges to using unstructured interviews:

- They are time-consuming
- They require high concentration on both sides (the interviewer and the interviewee)
- They lack objective data
- They creates an overload of data

However, the disadvantages of unstructured interviews benefited this study. Overload of data through narrative/ story from CLS provided the research with rich data, giving an

understanding of participants' lives and experiences; which is a "crucial aspect in qualitative research to present the complexity of the issues researched" (Babbie and Mouton, 2006, p.270 and Mayer, 2008, p.100).

De Vos et al. (2002) noted that the purpose of the unstructured interview is not to get answers to questions or to test the hypotheses, nor to evaluate in the usual sense of the term. The interest is to understand the experience of other people and the meaning they make from that experience. Unstructured interviews are useful to determine individual perceptions, opinions, facts, reactions to initial findings and potential solutions (Collins, 1998).

The structure of open-ended questions comprised the following personal details (*biographical information*) in order of sequence: *gender, age, original country of birth, region of origin in Namibia, status of biological parents, highest level of education completed and reasons for dropping from school*. The interview was made up of the following six main interview questions.

Question 1: *Please briefly narrate your physiological needs experience at the time you arrived in Namibia?* This question served for CLS to explain their experience in Namibia, physiological needs definition included; food, shelter, blankets, warmth etc.

Question 2: *How were you supported socially and psychosocially since you arrived in Namibia?*

The question intended to find out the type of psychosocial support or counselling given to CLS after their arrival in Namibia that helped them to become integrated in their motherland.

Question 3: *How were your safety and security needs secured in a new environment that you call home?*

The question required the CLS to narrate the status of their safety and security. Safety and security included: needs for security, protection, structure, law, order, limits, freedom from fear, anxiety, and chaos.

Question 4: *How would you explain love and feeling of belongingness Namibia?*

This question intended that CLS would explain how they grew up as far as belongingness and love needs are concerned. This included friendship, family life, family structure, support and affection, relationships, rootedness and identity, national identity documents, guardians, family structure, role models, societal perception towards the CLS, etc.

Question 5: *If you are to reverse your life, what will you do differently concerning your life experiences in Namibia?*

This question sought to discover CLS past regrets and worries, and uncover what are the CLS's ideal wishes, hopes, and aspirations for their lives.

Question 6: *Is there anything that you would want to share concerning your life experiences as a Child of the Liberation Struggle in Namibia?*

The purpose of the question was to allow CLS to add additional and relevant information that they considered not addressed during the interview and formed part of their socio-economic experience in Namibia.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

Permission to access Berg Aukas Camp was sought from the MYNSSC Permanent Secretary, the Head of Centre at Berg Aukas and Camp Commander (*Annexure Four - permission letter from the MYNSSC - Office of the Permanent Secretary*). Before collecting the data, the Head of Centre at Berg Aukas introduced the researcher to the Camp Commander, Captain, Sergeant and other senior officials working with CLS in the camp. The Camp Commander introduced the researcher to CLS at the parade and briefed them about the goals and objective of the study as outlined in Chapter One.

Gaining access in this way revealed that “visitors, family members or even friends were not allowed to enter the camp where CLS stay. It is further noted that, because of the uncooperative behaviour of the CLS (as indicated in Chapter Two), the efforts of numerous institutions and individuals to carry out research on the lives of CLS have never materialised” (K. Shindombe, personal communication, November, 10, 2011). However, the researcher has objected to these allegations about the CLS, since throughout data collection, unruly behaviour among CLS rarely occurred.

During the first stage of data collection, the researcher won the trust and honesty of the CLS by building closer relationships. Parts of the activities involved were: driving out of

the camp with participants to Grootfontein (20 km from Berg Aukas camp) in the morning to do window shopping with participants. In the evening the researcher accompanied participants to social evening events clubbing and even hanged out at certain bars with participants. The researcher slept over in accommodation provided during the night and joined CLS for lunch and dinner. While conducting the research, the researcher participated in some activities within the camps while sharing life stories and listening to challenges encountered in their day to day activities.

Owing to the sensitivity and nature of the conversations i.e. traumatic experiences and labels associated with CLS, it took them a great deal of courage and trust to open up their pain to an outsider. Irrespective of an assurance of confidentiality from the researcher, (*Annexure Two - consent form*) it should also be noted that these stories are not based on a scientific laboratory style investigation but on a profoundly human interaction between the researcher and the participants. Subsequent to a good relationship with CLS, the researcher distributed informed consent forms to each CLS and explained the goals and objectives of the study.

With permission from the participants, Permanent Secretary, Camp Commander and Head of centre at Berg Aukas the interviews were conducted face to face. A voice recorder was used to capture all the discussion. At the beginning of interview sessions, we met in a private room for CLS to maintain confidentiality. Later on CLS requested the researcher to interview them in the car, to avoid walking from the campsite to the

private room (situated about 1km from the campsite). Interviews took more than an hour, depending on the length of the individual life stories; some stories took three to four hours to tell and it took (14 days) two weeks to collect the data. Interviews were conducted in participants' indigenous language. This study demanded nothing other than the researcher's full empathy, compassion and full attention. Interestingly or amazingly the researcher's personality seems to have excited CLS, which seems to have led the researcher to have increased confidence in the data collected.

3.7 Data Analysis

The researcher employed a case-oriented analysis through qualitative content analysis to produce an in-depth description of a case (Mayer, 2008). What defines qualitative data is the ability to extract meaning from its content. The process of qualitative data analysis is the attempt to identify the presence or absence of meaningful themes, common and/or divergent ideas, beliefs and practices (David and Sutton, 2004). In this study, analysis of data started during interview sessions with emerging words.

“Qualitative Content analysis is the process of identifying, coding, and categorising the primary patterns in the data and coding category is the process by which patterns, words and meanings in the data are identified, coded and categorised” (Patton, 1990, p.378).

The application of coding helped the researcher to analyse data by separating words into main themes and sub-themes that share some common aspect (as demonstrated in Chapter Four Table One). The units of separation depended upon the focus of the study and the data collected. This study made no assumptions regarding the themes or patterns that might emerge from the collected data. The researcher kept focusing on answers and

narrated stories to search for patterns without becoming too abstract or theoretical. This also helped the researcher to judge what is important and significant in the data.

Case-oriented analysis means, “writing a case study report standing alone to allow the reader to understand the case as unique, a holistic entity, and an idiosyncratic manifestation of the phenomena of interest” (Patton, 1990, p.387). In context of this study, all raw data from the voice recorder were transcribed as narrated by respondents in a reporting manner and each case study was transcribed and narrated on its own.

The process of data analysis in this study started firstly with the transcriptions of the respondents’ socio-economic experiences from the voice recorder, where the researcher listened to identify key elements of the story. Secondly, the researcher drafted CLS stories following the logical sequences of activities in the CLS lives. Thirdly, the data was coded from different stories into themes, patterns and categories that emerged looking at events that kept appearing in each case study most. Even though CLS’s stories are unique and personal, the patterns and words that emerged from all of their stories were almost the same and had common scenarios that formed main themes for the study. The identification of themes provided the complexity of an in-depth description of cases; add depth to the insights, understanding to individual experiences for creating meanings, recommendations and results of the study (Creswell, 2008).

3.8. The Role of the Researcher

The researcher's interest in the CLS was motivated by CLS behaviour and attitudes during the 2008 first countrywide demonstration in Windhoek that surfaced in front of the Ministry of Veteran Affairs. In 2008, the CLS were discussed and highlighted on the national news, specifically on TV, and newspapers and the public at large in Namibia commented on them. The researcher's interest in the socio-economic experiences of the CLS was strengthened when the researcher was involved in the registration and verification of the CLS under the auspices of the MYNSSC (where the researcher is a staff member) in the Oshikoto region (one of the 13 regions of Namibia situated in the north) in 2009.

The participating CLS in this study are some of those who participated in the countrywide demonstration. During this period the researcher kept doing preliminary investigations on the behaviour of these individuals. However, data collection happened when the researcher decided to go into the real world of practice to interview 12 of those CLS based at Berg Aukas and acquire the data from them; then stage three occurred when the researcher analysed data (in Chapter four) for the results of the study.

This study acknowledges the convenience of the participant's accessibility, and the building of a good relationship and understanding of the participants' (CLS) behaviour. The researcher also considered it convenient to go and spend time with participants and,

“that saved time and money and efforts at the expense of information and credibility”
(Creswell, 2008, p.119).

3.9. Summary of the Chapter

Chapter Three introduced two qualitative research designs that were applied to carry out the study, namely narrative research design and case studies. Furthermore discussions in the Chapter focused on discussing data collection procedures, methods and data analysis, sampling procedures and the population. Data was collected by means of in-depth interviews with twelve children of the liberation struggle who resided at Berg Aukas, Grootfontein in Otjozondjupa region in November 2011. Ethical considerations as adopted by the researcher were presented with a consent form (attached find annexure no.5). The Chapter also gave an overview of the role of the researcher in the study.

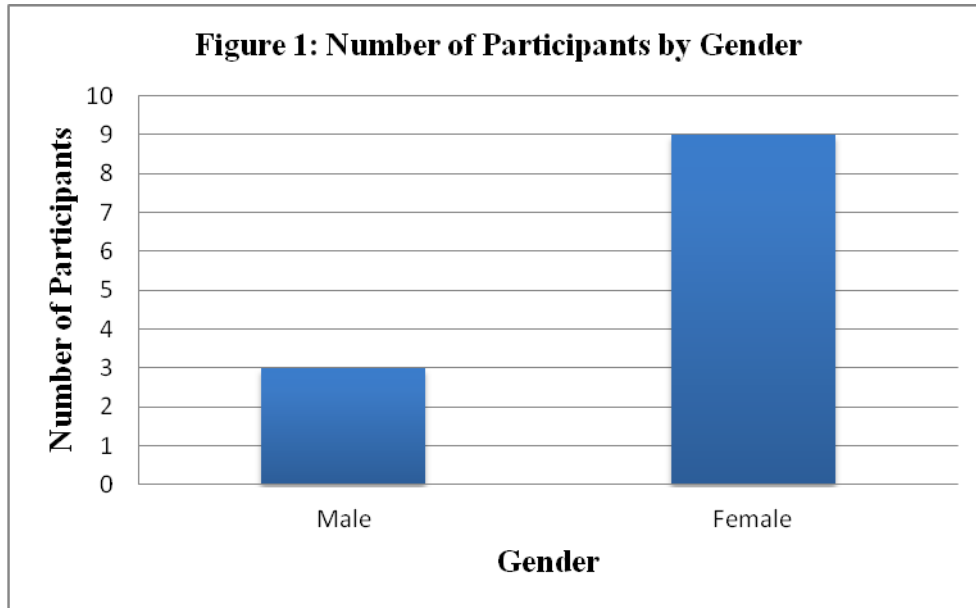
CHAPTER: FOUR: Presentation of Results (Description, Analysis and Transformation of Data)

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the study conducted in Berg Aukas, Grootfontein in the Otjozondjupa region. It should be noted that results were presented in accordance with the research questions. This Chapter presents Section A (as per research questions) in the form of charts and figures. These include: Gender, Age, Original Country of Birth, and Region of Origin in Namibia, Status of Biological Parents, Highest Level of Education Completed and Reasons for Dropping Out of School. Section B is presented in form of texts and topics that emerged from the narrated stories. They are ; High School Dropout, Inconsistent School Attendance, Teenage Pregnancy, One Parent or Both Parents, Orphanages, “*Meekulu’s*” (*Grandmother*) as a Role Model, Poor Family Background, and Poor Medical Attention, Living with Step-Parents, Wishes and Dreams.

Section A

4.1.1 Participants by Gender



As shown by the results above in figure.1, the figure demonstrates the gender of interviewed participants; three males and nine females.

4.1.2 Age Distribution

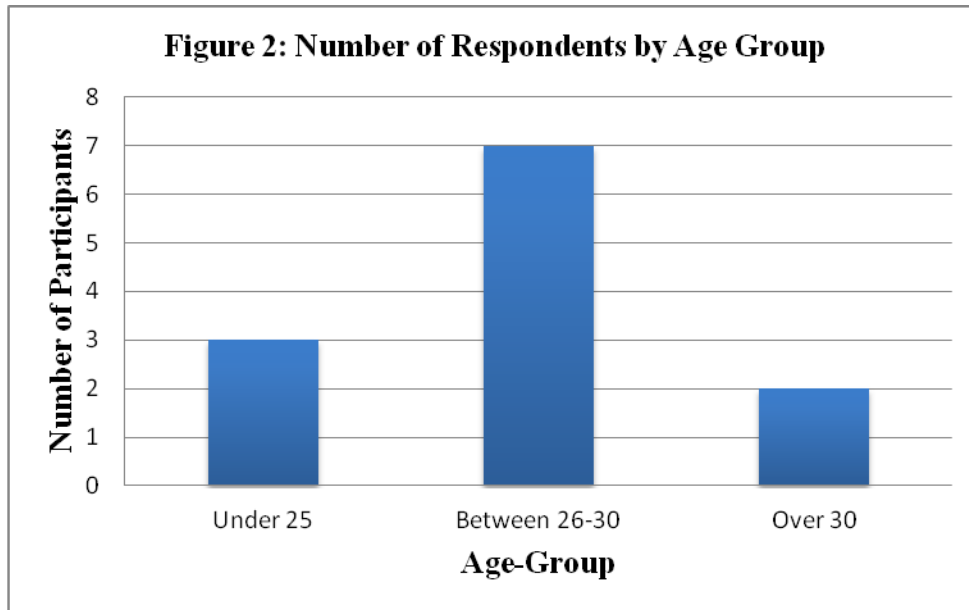
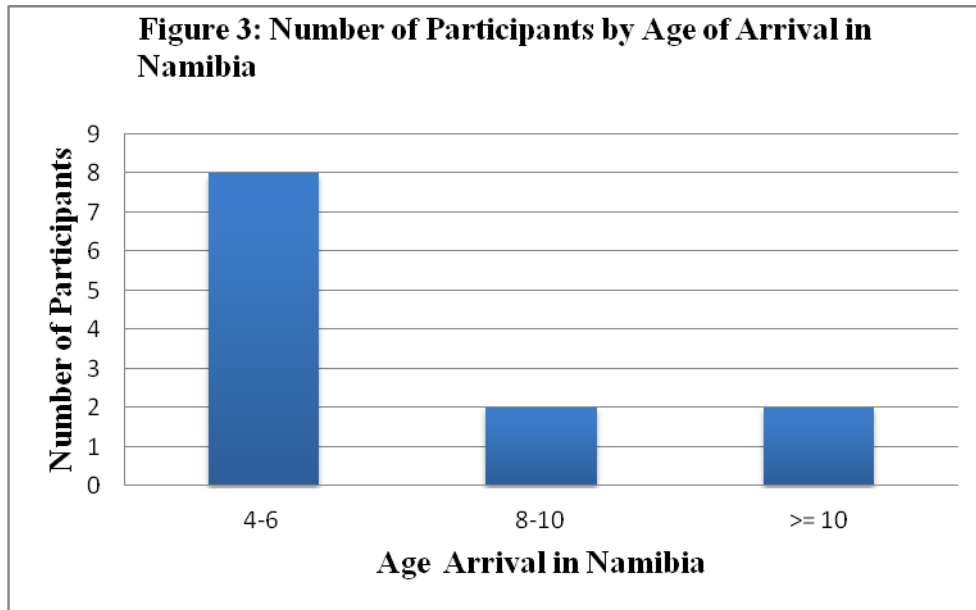


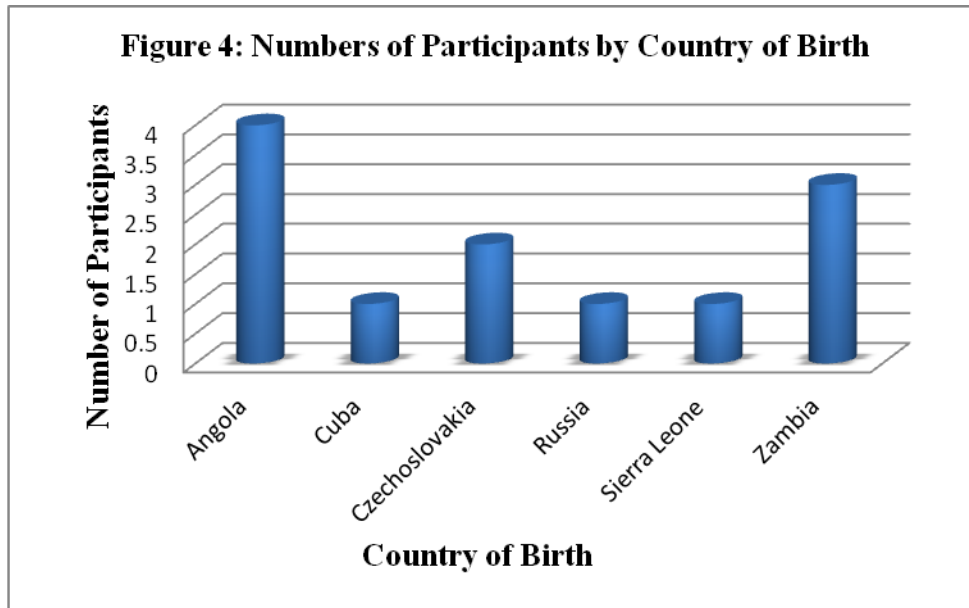
Figure. 2. Demonstrates the age of participants in the study, as shown in the graph above, three participants were under the age of 25 years, seven participants were between the age of 26-30 and two participants were between the ages of 30-35 years of age.

4.1.3 Arrival Age in Namibia



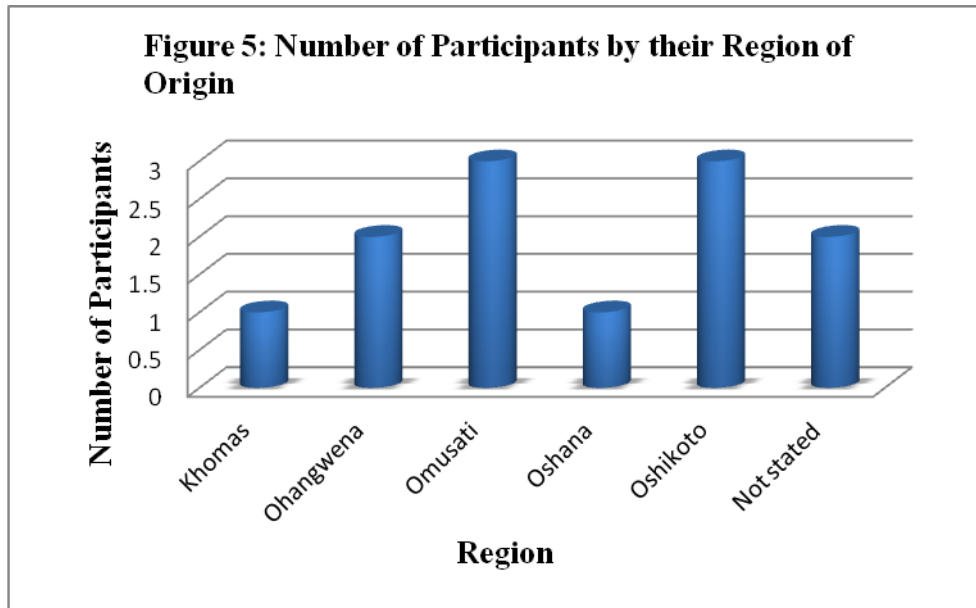
In the table above in Figure 3 shows the age of participants when they arrived in Namibia. The figure shows that eight participants arrived in Namibia aged between four and six years, two participants arrived at the age of eight to ten years and two participants arrived when they were above the age of ten years.

4.1.4 Original Country of Birth



The table above in figure 4 shows the country of birth of the participants. As shown above, four participants were born in Angola; two were born and raised in Czechoslovakia; three in Zambia; one in Cuba; one in Russia and one in Serra Leone.

4.1.5 Region of Origin in Namibia



The graph in Figure 5. presented regions where participants lived in Namibia, two of the participants preferred to keep their regions anonymous for the reason that they did not feel they belonged to any one specific region, two participants were from Ohangwena, three were from Omusati, three were from Oshikoto, and one lived in Khomas and one from Oshana region.

4.1.6 Status of Biological Parents

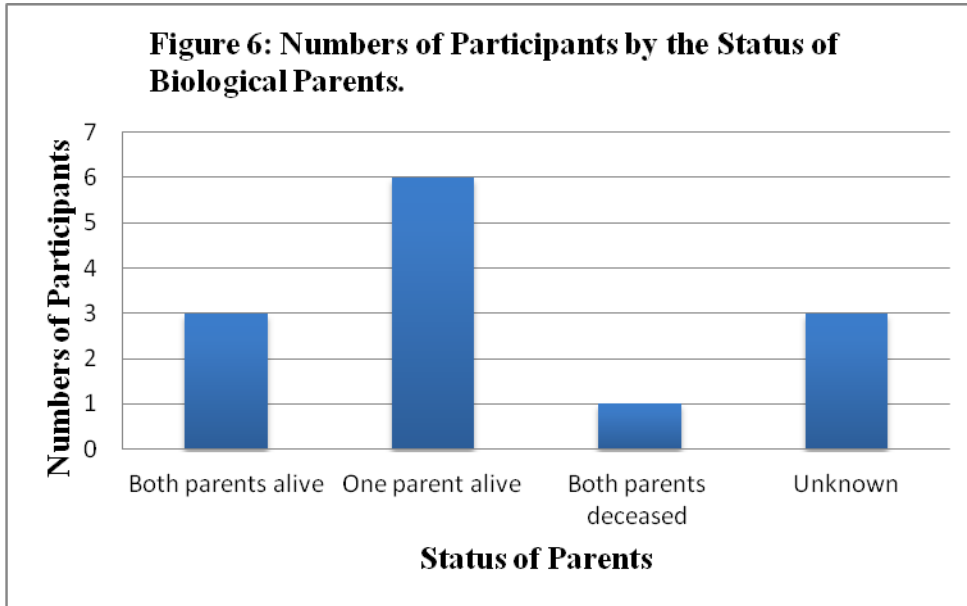
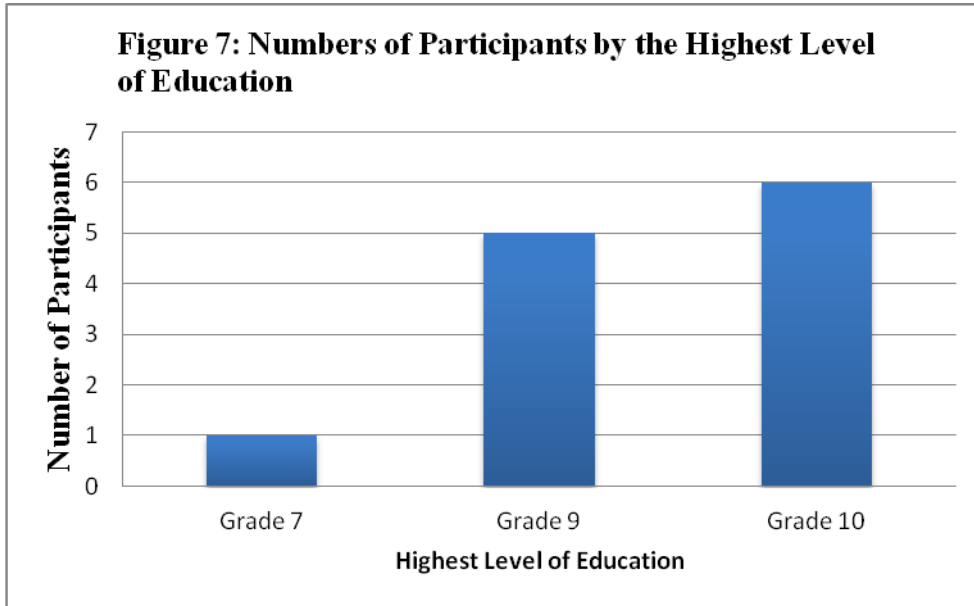


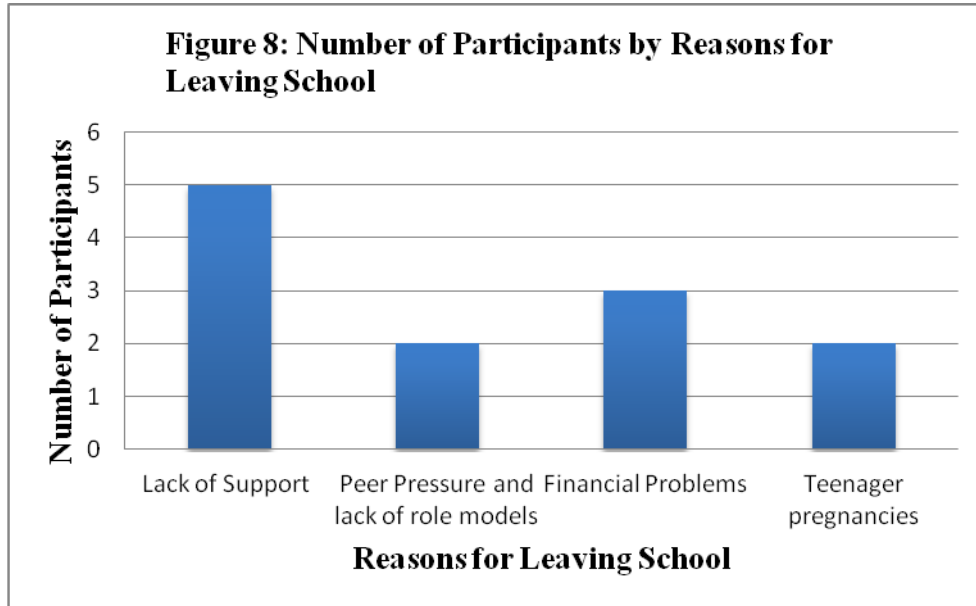
Figure 6. The graph above indicates the status of the participant's parents. The results shows that the parents of three of the participant's parents were alive, six of the participants had lost one of their parents. Three mentioned that they do not know where their parents were and they were still hoping to find out whether they were alive or dead?

4.1. 7 Highest Level of Education



The graph in figure 7. shows that participants' highest level of education was Grade 10. The information further reveals that the highest level of education for six of the interviewees was grade 10 (IGSCE), while the other five were Grade 9 holders and one was a Grade seven graduate.

4.1. 8. Reasons for Leaving School



The graph in figure 8 indicates the reasons the participants gave for leave or dropping out of school. Five of the participants declared that they had dropped out of school because of lack of support in the family; three participants cited that they had financial problems and had nobody to pay their school fees. Two participants explained that they had no role models in the family and were overwhelmed by peer pressure. The other remained two revealed that they had become pregnant at the very younger age; one participant shockingly said that after losing her baby during the pregnancy, she could not go back to school.

Section B.

As mentioned above at the introduction of this Chapter, Section B presents in-depth information and data that emerged from the interviews. This section presented data in thematic grouping table before presenting narrated data from the participants.

4. 2. In-depth Information of Participants:

The Following Patterns, Meanings and Words Emerged in Participants' Narrated Stories and Interviews

Table: 4.2

<i>Main themes from the narrated stories:</i>	<i>Sub themes and patterns that emerged from main themes:</i>
“Meekulu” (Grandmother)	“Meekulu”s (Grandmother) love and support Life after “Meekulu” (Grandmother) death “Meekulu”s (Grandmother) hatred and hostility
Identity crisis Social Isolation	Personal identity denial Living a confused life Life without principles and boundaries Hunting for love and a sense of belonging Bad Image/ labels from society for being a CLS Stigma and Discrimination
Dropping out of school	Inconsistent school attendance Commencing school when over age Teenage pregnancy Becoming a single parent Peer pressure Lack of role models Poor medical attention Lack of financial assistance
Living with step parents	Sexual allegations Sexual harassment Bad behaviour Uncaring hearts, rude, mean, cruel and divide and rule strategies

Poor family upbringing	Family Break up Fragmented lives and families Vulnerable life at home Growing up a parentless child Raised by relatives Meeting biological parents after long time Frequent family movements Parents' brutal deaths Emotional and physical abuse Financial crisis
Lack of psychological support and counselling	Poor societal integration
CLS Demonstration	Love Discovery of identity Comfort Support group Acceptance Sharing the pain Caring
Para Suicide	Suicide attempts
Wishes and Dreams	Vocational training Going back to school Provision of land Business and entrepreneurship funds Salon Cosmetology
Hostels	Special treatment Accommodation Pride
Career preferences	Pastor Social worker Priest Counsellor

4.2. 1. "Meekulu's (Grandmother)

Eleven of the interviewed participants mentioned "Meekulu" (*Grandmother*) as an immediate caretaker and the closest person they stayed with upon their arrival in

Namibia. They also acknowledged and identified “*Meekulu*” based on the following models:

4.2.1.1. “*Meekulu*’s Love and Support

Nine out of twelve participants described their “*Meekulu*” (*Grandmother*) as their only caretaker before she later became old and passed away. Seven of the nine participants revealed that “*Meekulu*” was a very significant person who played a tremendously important role in their lives. They gave a description of “*Meekulu*” as their major role model, source of inspiration, motivator, caretaker, supporter, shoulder to lean on, and mother. They further articulated how “*Meekulu*” meant everything in their lives: she was the only person whom they trusted, could share their painful moments with, who supported them all the way, and relieved the painful moments which they faced in their family and in the society. Participants also disclosed that “*Meekulu*” was the only person who had grown to love them as her own children, not considering their social and historical background and gave them a sense of love and belonging in Namibia.

This is backed up by **CASE 1** who stated that, “*Meekulu*” *was a wonderful woman. She loved me and had so much respect for me. She was fun, generous, and courageous and had a woman’s heart indeed. “Meekulu” was not only loving and supportive but she was also very hard-working as she worked hard in the field to ensure that we all had food to eat (mahangu porridge mainly). I would be at school but “Meekulu”) would call me to help her out with her collecting her pension because she trusted me and treated me very nicely. She was my reason to wake up every morning. She had a lot of passion for her*

grandchildren, and for that reason, I settled in very well with her and my newfound family in Namibia. May her soul rest in peace,” (Female, 32 years, 12 November 2011).

Significantly, **CASE 8** highlighted the very same point by adding that “*‘Meekulu’ was kind, loving and looked after me, as if I was one of her own children. She always made sure that we never went to bed on an empty stomach; she fed us, bathed us and encouraged us (including my cousins) to work very hard at school and generally in our life. She always told us wonderful stories before bedtime; these were the most amazing memories I had of her; she loved to see the smiles on our little faces. The happiness of my childhood with ‘Meekulu’ continued until the time my father returned from Opuwo and informed us that he had built his house in Ruacana (a town closer to his duty station) and he was moving there for good and he wanted me to go and live with him. My memories are still fresh about the sadness that both ‘Meekulu’ and I felt when we had to separate. I looked into her eyes and realised that tears were coming from her eyes. This made me so sad that I cried uncontrollably because not only I was leaving ‘Meekulu’ behind but also because I was leaving the only place I had ever called my home. I was leaving the only place in the world where I felt like I belonged. I remember waving back at ‘Meekulu’ until I could no longer see her,* (Female, 24 years, 10 November 2011).

4.2.1.2. “Meekulu” Hatred and Hostility

On the other hand, the remaining two participants gave an alternative description of “Meekulu.” The two participants maintained that she was one of the people who had made their lives very difficult, miserable and depressing. They argued that even though

“Meekulu” brought them up, she was the person who hated them so much as if they had committed some crime.

This is confirmed by CASE 5 when she said, “My ‘Meekulu’ was a woman who hated me with a passion, a woman who despised me so much like someone she had known all her life, when the truth is she was only meeting me for the very first time in her life. She was a cruel woman who seemed to be angry all the time. “Meekulu” was a woman who made my life miserable, a woman who labelled me with her xenophobia by calling me “Omumbwela, “Oshimbalantu,” “aantu yomiihwa” (stranger in the village). She was a woman who tortured me in every sense of the word for she physically and emotionally abused me. I faced the constant insults that she threw at me day and night, took the beatings that she gave me for no reason at all and sometimes for the most simple reasons.

Later on, I also realised that “Meekulu” hated my mother and maybe for that reason, the resentment passed on to us too. “Meekulu” always treated my little sister and me differently from the rest of her grandchildren. She was very hostile and would often say demeaning things to my mother, even in our presence. She would scream at my mother saying things like “you shikumbu” (‘you whore’) you have brought shame and misfortune into my house, you discredited my whole family. Go back to where you came from and take your bastard children with you; go back to being the cheap slut that you have always been in Angola or wherever you were.

“Meekulu” had so many negative feelings against me. She would frankly tell me that I am not her genuine grandchild, “kandina sha iitekulu yaambwela ngaye” (I have no

weird strange and outcast grandchildren), “omapuli nga yeyaa megubo lyandje muka” (these so-called terrorists that ended up in my house should all go back to their life in the bush),” (Female, 31years, 19 November 2011).

4.2.1.3. Life after the Death of “Meekulu’

All participants brought up by “Meekulu” illustrated that her death was one of the major events that completely changed their lives for the worse. They declared that their family members, including their own biological parents, slowly moved away leaving them to take care of the young ones after the death of “Meekulu.” Major changes that occurred in participant’s lives after the death of “Meekulu”) included family relocation, lack of family and societal love, disorder and poor management in houses, poverty, hunger, chaotic and vulnerable life as some participants even dropped out of school.

CASE 7 emphasis the situation that; *“We were very close to “Meekulu,” she was more of a good friend to me, until she fell ill and sadly passed away. She died in my own arms in the morning of that fateful day. After her death everything started to slowly fall apart, and keeping some sort of order in the house started to become a challenge. My family would treat me so badly that at times I would wish that I had died with “Meekulu.” It was not too long after her death that one after the other older family members (including my mother) slowly started to move away, leaving me with the responsibility of looking after my younger cousins. They all left the house with an excuse that they were going to look for work would hopefully return with money to give us a better life. The loss of “Meekulu” not only signified the beginning of my hardships but it also caused my inconsistent attendance of school,” (Female, 27 years, 15 November 2011).*

Participants established how painful and heart-breaking it was to accept the death of the significant persons in their lives. They were deeply shocked and heart broken by the death of “*Meekulu*” and they have never stopped mourning her loss up to now.

CASE 9 underlined this point with emotion when he declared “*the death of 'Meekulu' was a shock to me, I did not believe that she was gone; I felt as if all my organs had been ripped out of my body. I was in so much pain, the kind of pain that I had never felt in my life before. I wanted to die with her; I hoped that it was all a bad dream and if I went to sleep then maybe when I woke up she would be right there, happy and alive. For a long time I wished that I had died instead of “Meekulu,” she did not deserve to die. No one does; I felt that she had left this world too soon. I mourned my “Meekulu” for a very long time up until today. I have never come to terms with the fact that my “Meekulu” is no more; it is as painful as it was today. May her soul rest in eternal peace,* (Male, 24 years, 20 November 2011). For this group “*Meekulu*” (*Grandmother*) represented a pillar of love and support.

4.2.2. Identity Crisis

All participants reported an identity crisis as a serious struggle they experienced throughout their lives in Namibia. Participants explained that they had no personal identity of feeling of home throughout their lives; thus they only focused on their weaknesses instead of their strengths. They also discussed that they had never discovered their potential but only problems; they do not know their destiny only failures, and they never had a chance to develop their characters but focused more on

their personalities. At some point in life their families denied and deprived them of their personal identities.

4.2.2.1. Personal Identity Denial

Two of the participants informed the researcher that their families had rejected and denied them their personal identities. In these two cases, one participant reported that her biological mother forced her to use her stepfather's surname, which meant that she had to abandon her biological father's surname, knowingly that she is not the child of her stepfather and has not been legally adopted by him.

In this scenario, **CASE one** pinpointed that, *“it was from this incident that I believed I totally had fallen from my parents' favour. Though I was a 15 years old teenage girl, I could remember an important occasion when I suffered mistreatment and humiliation from my mother and stepfather when I changed my surname from “Kanuwa” to my real surname “Neelu”. History had it that my biological father was “Kaaushiike Ka Neelu” “Protuzanu.” This means my surname had been “Neelu” ever since I arrived from Angola. It happened that later I discovered that my mother had changed my surname from Neelu to Kanuwa without my consent. Kanuwa was my stepfather's surname. Sometime when at school, I developed the tendency of writing “Neelu” on my books. This frustrated my teachers until they called my parents to clarify the right surname and bring me to order. I fought until my last bullet was spent and managed to liberate my biological father's surname. Lately some local elders helped me to register my birth certificate using “Neelu” as my surname. Then my mother and stepfather reacted*

cruelly to my change of surname and troubles increased so, I went to look for my father's relatives," (Female, 32 years, 10 November 2011).

Shockingly, a second participant illustrated how her family deprived her of her personal identity when they banned her biological father from visiting her in their house.

As **CASE 3** stressed that *"to add insult to injury, my biological father originated from Caprivi (in those days it was not common and was regarded as a family disgrace when a women from Wambo tribe had a child by a man from Caprivi). It is likely that "Meekulu" was infuriated by the fact that my father was from Caprivi. In the absence of my mother, I remember once that my father came to visit to see if he could take me along to stay with him. However, "Meekulu" chased him away scornfully and I assume that was the reason he never returned. I witnessed how "Meekulu" actually yelled at him not to ever visit again. They called him, "omubwela" (witch) and other insults and that is how I ended up growing up without a father,"* (Female, 22 years, 22 November 2011).

4.2. 3. Social Isolation and Being Labelled a CLS

All participants mentioned that they were subjected to social isolation, confusion, anxiety and they never had a chance to express themselves. They also noted that society blacklisted and discriminated against them for being CLS. Because of this stigmatisation from the society, they remained uncomfortable, yet their hidden fears and concerns were never recognised nor acknowledged. Thus, they agreed to living a socially isolated life in Namibia, confused, hunting for love and a sense of belonging.

CASE ONE stresses this when she revealed, *“I did not return with my parents but rather returned with a group of other “Exiled Kids”, accompanied by caretakers. Even though we had so many happy times with other kids and friends at Anamulenge hostel and Oshigambo High School hostel, my friends started diminishing at a slow pace, little did I know that their families from different regions had come to identify and collect them. I was exactly 12 years of age, three years after my arrival in Namibia; yet I had no idea about the whereabouts of my parents, sisters, brothers or family. I always remained in the hostel like a missing child. I was very confused and disturbed since nobody told me what was going on, and I felt I belonged nowhere. As if this was not enough, we shared overcrowded bedrooms with many other children where we were all cramped together like a herd of sheep in a kraal. The food was not good and overall it was just a very chaotic place to stay. Although I had many other children around me I still felt sad and alone, I longed and badly wanted to belong somewhere, just anywhere, that was not at Anamulenge. I wanted to belong somewhere to a family, anywhere that I could finally call home; a home where I would be loved and taken care of by my parents and live a happier life like any other child of my age. Later, when I grew up I turned out to be confused. I never had principles and limits on what to do and what not to do,”* (Female, 32 years, November 2011).

4.2.3.1. Stigma and Discrimination

Stigma and discrimination are other major challenges all participants revealed as having experienced in their families and in the society. They stated that society and family members labelled them as unruly, disobedient and strangers in their motherland. In

many cases, they suffered from xenophobia and tribalism for being CLS and their families regarded them as not being true Namibians.

CASE 10 exemplified how people labelled her as a CLS in the family and the society; *“early on when I returned to Namibia I suddenly realised how I was never going to be considered part of the family. It seemed that as though everybody in the house hated me. I was labelled an outcast, an intruder and my housemates bullied me so much that one could think that their life depended on it. “You are not a Namibian, you are from Angola, go back to where you belong and came from,” they would constantly say that to me. They never understand how I felt; thinking back to my past, the name-calling and all the hurtful remarks they had ever said to me remains fresh in my memory and it hurts me very much to this very day.*

Even elders in the village labelled me as an outcast; to them I was nothing more than “Omumbwela” (foreigner) who had no manners. They had so much xenophobia. They all disliked me for the mere fact that I was born in Angola. I was very young and it was a very sad experience. I had no sense of belonging, I felt as though I had no place in the family, much less in the society, in Namibia or the world. I lived without peace and thought nobody ever loved me. I felt insecure and all alone in the world even to this day. I can say I have seen worries in my life. Emotional wounds have been inflicted on me and they will never heal. There was no counselling, nor support to integrate me into the society,” (Female, 25 years, 13 November 2011).

Another participant mentioned that she suffered from social isolation and kept on hunting for love, a sense of belonging and family warmth.

CASE 4, *“After the death of my mother; I had no choice and place to live, I stayed with my stepfather (my late mother’s husband) for a short period. Since life was very hard for me and I had had enough of my stepfather, I decided that it was time that I went out in search of my mother’s family and maybe then, my life would take a turn for the better. I finally located my mother’s family. As I slowly approached the homestead of my “Meekulu” many thoughts ran through my head. I hoped for a better life, I hoped that finally I had come to one of the places in the world where I would get one thing that I never received ever since my mother died; “family LOVE.” I hoped for a place that I could finally call home. Little did I know that I had just stepped out of the frying pan into the fire. I lived as a stranger from nowhere in my “Meekulu’s”),” (Female, 31 years, 12 November 2011).*

4.2.4. Dropping Out of School

The study found out that all twelve participants dropped out of school at an early age before they reached their secondary education. One participant ended up in grade seven; five in grade nine and the remaining six in grade 10. None of the participants reached secondary school level or tertiary education. The participants identified the following as the major contributing factors for dropping out of school early.

These are listed and discussed from 4.2.4.1 to 4.2.4.3 below:

4.2.4.1. Inconsistent School Attendance

Eleven participants in the study expressed that throughout their time of going to school they had constantly missed classes on a daily, monthly and even yearly basis. There were situations where participant's caretakers passed away, got married, divorced or had marital problems, and then some participants claimed that they were forced to drop out of school and continue the following academic year because of these situations.

CASE 2 confirmed this *“I really loved going to school and I still have a dream of becoming a Business Administrator even though I only ended up in grade nine. My haphazard school attendance started when I was in grade six at Mandume Primary School in Windhoek. When my father and my stepmother had their marital problems, they sent me to the north during April/May holiday never to come back. I packed my bags and left for my “Meekulu”'s place homestead in Ogongo. It was so sad, nobody sent me back to school so I stayed home that whole year without completing grade six. My stay at Ogongo was very challenging, I was more of a foreigner and the xenophobia feelings were very strong in the house. Both physical and emotional abuse worsened with each passing day and I became extremely unhappy and stressed. It was in September 2004 when I was in grade nine that I completely left school for good when I was left with no choice but to move from Ogongo to Oukwanyama to my late “Meekulu's” house during the second half of the year,” (Female, 27 years, 25 November 2011).*

4.2.4.2. Commencing School late and Teenage Pregnancy

Two participants confirmed that they arrived in Namibia at the age of 10 -12 years of age. The challenges they encountered were cultural norms and values. They further reported having been delayed going to school since they were not familiarised and had not learn the dialect and indigenous languages, cultural norms and behaviour. This prevented them from starting school till they were over age. On the same note, some also became pregnant at a very young age during their junior secondary education owing to a lack of information, poor parental guidance and peer pressure.

As pointed out by **CASE 5**, *“ever since I started school, I never had a choice of attending school without interruption. Firstly, “Meekulu” kept me out of school for three whole years for the mere reason that I could not speak Oshindonga. She always said “Kosikola itoyi ko ngwee kushi okupopya Oindonga koosikola ihakuyi aambwela haya popi oimbalantu, ototi owuli Kombalantu?” (Do you think that you will be sent to school while you do not know how to speak Oshindonga) (Oshindonga is my mother’s dialect while Oshimbalantu is my late father’s dialect). “School learners are not outcasts like you; who are even unable to speak your mother dialect, Oshindonga but instead speak Oshimbalantu. Do you think you are in Ombalantu?” Secondly, when my “Meekulu” had marital problems with my grandfather and later separated/ divorced, we moved from Eloolo to Oshigambo. Unfortunately, the family crisis happened during the middle of the year, subsequently I was forced to drop out from school before completing the academic year.. I enrolled and repeated the very same grade. Thirdly, I lost my way in life as I had no form of parental guidance and I made the worst choice a 14 years old*

teenage girl could ever make by falling pregnant and sadly lost the baby. I finally dropped out of school in grade nine,” (Female, 32 years, 18 November 2011).

4.2.4.3. Lack of Family Support, Financial Crisis and Peer Pressure

Eleven out of the twelve participants mentioned that they could not complete their secondary education owing to poor family support, lack of parental encouragement and motivation and lack of role models in the family. Since their parents were unemployed; they indicated that they had nobody to pay their school fees or the school development fund. One participant agreed that she had bad friends who persuaded him to drop out of school and join a village gang group that indulged in alcohol and drug abuse.

CASE 7 confirmed the point stating, *“Our home turned into a child-headed household after the death of my “Meekulu”, and this forced me to drop out from school after my mid-year exam in grade eight. Later when I moved to my father’s place the following year I was enrolled in grade 8 at Iidangungu Combined School. However, I can honestly say that perhaps my father never understood the importance of education, because he was an uneducated man himself. He never paid for my school fees; nor bought school uniform for me. He would rather send me to the cattle post, because all he cared about was the well-being of his cattle. He would go on leave and come with me to the cattle post for weeks. My teachers always reprimanded me for staying away from school and classes and told me to remain in school. My father never listened to my need to be in school since his interest was just the well-being of his cattle. On several occasions, teachers ordered my parents to visit the school because of my low school attendance.*

Nobody cared enough to show up, it was very difficult to keep up with school and I had nobody to turn to for support.

Even though I never gave up and tried selling firewood by the roadside I later joined a gang of teenagers; we smoked, abused alcohol at a young age, we even robbed people to pay for our school fees in our home town. It was not easy to make it at school; I later left school completely, I had given up on my hopes and dreams and I felt worthless in the society. I had lost all hopes of becoming someone in the society, if only “Meekulu” was alive”, (Male, 28 years, 16 November 2011).

4.2.5. Poor Medical Attention

Two participants in the study confirmed and confessed that they suffered from a certain illness. Since nobody cared much in their families to take them to proper doctors, they were forced to drop out of school. It happened that by the time they recovered, they were too old to enroll in their grades. Despite referral letters from their General Practitioners, the school management refused to allow them to re-enroll.

CASE 6 mentioned, *“For me completing school was one of my most important wishes. But in the first place, things were interrupted when my aunt delayed me from attending school. She forced me to look after the younger kids in the house even though I was a child too. I remember that I was of school going age, but nobody ever sent me to school; instead they sent me to the cattle post where I was forced to look after the cattle every morning and afternoon. It was not an easy thing for me to go through, because I had to watch other children of my own age going to school every day and wished that I could*

someday join them. I knew that my school enrolment time was delayed, but I still wished and hoped that my dream of someday going to school would become a reality. By the time, I did finally enrol at school; my passion for education was gone. Secondly, I suffered from eye problems and had to stay out of school for some years. It was in September prior to my final exam for grade 10, when I became partially blind. I was in and out of hospitals and there was no proper treatment for my eye problem and my family could not afford the treatment nor did they care that much. This caused me to completely drop out of school, and then in two years I gave birth to a baby boy” (Female, 26 years, 13 November 2011).

However, **CASE one** remarked, *“I was not able to go to school until the age of 12 years. I enrolled in grade one in Namibia when I was already 13years. I lived in depression and was very distressed. I was in grade 9 when my health started to deteriorate, I got so sick that I would faint and collapse at school. I was always in and out of hospital. Despite my sickness, my mother would still yell and scream at me that I am a lazy fool in her house. I started experiencing terrible chest pain and that caused me to stay out of school so many times. My school performance drastically dropped. Teachers at school detected my problem and they encouraged me to keep going. When I survived the mysterious illness, it was too late to go back to school; I came back to the village from the hospital. Despite a referral letter from the hospital confirming that I had left school because of illness, the principal ignored me, arguing that I was now too old/. That is how I ended up in grade 9, not long after that I remained at home in the*

village. Then I became pregnant and my mother rejected me throughout my pregnancy,”
(Female, 32 years, 24 November 2011).

4.2.6. Social Isolation and Being Labelled as a CLS

All participants mentioned that they were subjected to social isolation, confusion, anxiety and they never had a chance to express themselves. They also noted that the society blacklisted and discriminated against them for being CLS. Because of the stigmatization from the society, they remained uncomfortable, yet their hidden fears and concerns were never recognised nor acknowledged. Thus, they concurred to living a socially isolated life in Namibia, confused, hunting for love and a sense of belonging.

CASE ONE stresses this when she revealed, *“I did not return with my parents but rather returned with a group of other “Exiled Kids”, accompanied by caretakers. Even though we had so many happy moments with other kids and friends at Anamulenge hostel and Oshigambo High School hostel, my friends started diminishing at a slow pace, little did I know that their families from different regions had come to identify and collect them. I was exactly 12 years of age, three years after my arrival in Namibia; yet I had no idea about my whereabouts of my parents, sisters, brothers or family. I always remained in the hostel like a missing child. I was very confused, disturbed since nobody gave me directions on what was going on, and I felt I belonged nowhere. As if this was not enough, we shared overcrowded bedrooms with many other children where we were all cramped together like a herd of sheep in a kraal. The food was not good and overall it was just a very chaotic place to live in. Although I had many other children around me I still felt sad and alone, I longed and badly wanted to belong somewhere just anywhere*

that was not at Anamulenge. I wanted to belong somewhere to a family, anywhere that I could finally call home; a home where I would be loved and taken care of by my parents and live a happier life like any other child of my age. Later, when I grew up I turned out to be a confused person. I never had principles and limits on what to do and not what do,” (Female, 32 years, November 2011).

4.2.6.1. Stigma and Discrimination

Stigma and discrimination is one of the major challenges all participants revealed as having experienced in their families and in the society. They stated that society and family members labelled them as unruly, disobedient and strangers in their motherland. In many cases, they suffered from xenophobia and tribalism for being CLS and their families regarded them as not true Namibians.

CASE 10 exemplified how people labelled her being a CLS in the family and the society; *“at an early stage of living in my new Namibian home, I suddenly realised how I was never going to be considered as a part of the family. It seemed that as though everybody in the house hated me, I was labelled as an outcast, an intruder and my housemates bullied me so much that one could think that their life depended on it. “You are not a Namibian, you are from Angola, go back to where you belong and came from,” they would constantly say that to me. They never understand how I felt; thinking back to my past, the name-calling and all the hurtful remarks they had ever said to me remains fresh in my memory and it hurts me very much to this very day.*

Even elders at the village had labelled me as an outcast; to them I was nothing more than “Omumbwela” (foreigner) who had no manners. They had so many xenophobic feelings towards me. They all disliked me for the mere fact that I was born in Angola. I was very young and it was a very sad experience. I had no sense of belonging, I felt as though I had no place in the family, much less in the society, in Namibia or the world. I lived without peace and think nobody ever loved me. I felt insecure and all alone in the world even to this day; I can say I have seen worries in my life. Emotional wounds have been inflicted on me and they will never heal. There was no counselling, nor support to integrate me into the society,” (Female, 25 years, 13 November 2011).

Another participant mentioned that she suffered from social isolation and kept on hunting for love, a sense of belonging and family warmth.

CASE 4, *“After the death of my mother; I had no choice and place to live, I stayed with my stepfather (my late mother’s husband) for a short period. Since life was very hard for me and I had had enough of my stepfather, I decided that it was time that I went out in search for my mother’s family and maybe then, my life would take a turn for the better. I finally located my mother’s family. As I slowly approached the homestead of my “Meekulu” (Grandmother) many thoughts ran through my head. I hoped for a better life, I hoped that finally I had come to one of the places in the world where I would get one thing that I never got ever since, my mother died; “ family LOVE.” I hoped for a place that I could finally call home. (Poorly) Little did I know that I had just stepped out of one hot fire and I was about to step into another hot fire. I lived as a stranger from*

nowhere in my “Meekulu’s” (Grandmother) house” (Female, 31 years, 12 November 2011).

4.2.7. Dropping Out of School

The study found out that all twelve participants dropped out of school at an early age before they reached their secondary education. One participant ended up in grade seven; five in grade nine and the remaining six in grade 10. None of the participants reached secondary school level or tertiary education. The participants identified the following as the major contributing factors for dropping out of school early.

These are listed and discussed from 4.2.4.1 to 4.2.4.3 below:

4.2.7.1. Inconsistent School Attendance

Eleven participants in the study expressed that throughout their time of going to school they had constantly missed classes on a daily, monthly and even yearly basis. There were situations where participant’s caretakers passed away, got married, divorced or had marital problems, and then some participants claimed that they were forced to drop out from school and continue the following academic year because of these situations.

CASE 2 confirmed this *“I really loved going to school and I still have a dream of becoming a Business Administrator even though I only ended up in grade nine. My inconsistent school attendance started when I was in grade six at Mandume Primary School in Windhoek. When my father and my stepmother had their marital problems, they expelled me to the north during April/May holiday never to come back. I packed my bags and left, to my “Meekulu”s place homestead in Ogongo. It was so sad, nobody sent me back to school so I stayed home that whole year without completing my grade six.*

My stay at Ogongo was very challenging, I was more of a foreigner and the xenophobia feeling was very strong in the house. Both physical and emotional abuse worsened with each passing day and I became extremely unhappy and stressed. It was in September, the year 2004 when I was in grade nine and I completely left school for good when I was left with no choice but to move from Ogongo to Oukwanyama to my late (paternal) “Meekulu’s” (Grandmother) house during the second half of the year,” (Female, 27 years, 25 November 2011).

4.2.7.2. Commencing School late and Teenage Pregnancy

Two participants confirmed that they arrived in Namibia at the age of 10 -12 years of age. The challenges they encountered were cultural norms and values. They further reported having been delayed going to school since they were not familiarised and had not learn the dialect and indigenous languages, cultural norms and behaviour. This prevented them from starting school till they were over age. On the same note, some also became pregnant at a very young age during their junior secondary education owing to a lack of information, poor parental guidance and peer pressure.

As pointed out by **CASE 5**, *“ever since I started school, I never had a choice of attending school without interruption. Firstly, “Meekulu” (Grandmother) kept me out of school for three whole years for the mere reason that I could not speak Oshindonga. She always goes on “Kosikola itoyi ko ngwee kushi okupopya Oindonga koosikola ihakuyi aambwela haya popi oimbalantu, ototi owuli Kombalantu? (Do you think that you will be sent to school while you do not know how to speak Oshindonga?) (Oshindonga is my mother’s dialect while Oshimbalantu is my late father’s dialect). School learners are not*

outcasts like you; who are even unable to speak your mother dialect, Oshindonga but instead speak Oshimbalantu. Do you think you are in Ombalantu? Secondly, when my “Meekulu” (Grandmother) had marital problems with my grandfather and later separated/ divorced, we relocated from Eloo to Oshigambo. Unfortunately, the family crisis happened during midyear, subsequently I was forced to drop out from school before completing the academic year calendar. I enrolled and repeated the very same grade. Thirdly, I lost my way in life as I had no form of parental guidance and I made the worst choice a 14 years old teenage girl could ever make by falling pregnant and sadly lost the baby at a very tender age. I finally dropped out of in grade nine,” (Female, 32 years, 18 November 2011).

4.2.7.3. Lack of Family Support, Financial Crisis and Peer Pressure

Eleven out of the twelve participants mentioned that they could not complete their secondary education owing to poor family support, lack of parental encouragement and motivation and lack of role models in the family. Since their parents were unemployed; they indicated that they had nobody to pay their school fees or the school development fund. One participant agreed that she had bad friends who persuaded him to drop out of school and join a village gang group that indulged in alcohol and drug abuse.

CASE 7 confirmed the point stating, *“Since our home turned into a child headed one after the death of my “Meekulu”, it forced me to drop out from school after my mid-year exam in grade eight. Later when I moved to my father’s place the following year although I was enrolled in grade 8 at Iidangungu Combined School. I can honestly say that perhaps my father had never understood the importance of education, because he*

was an uneducated man himself. He never paid for my school fees; nor bought school uniform for me. He would rather send me to the cattle post, because all he cared about was the well-being of his cattle. He would go on leave and travel with me to the cattle post for weeks. My teachers always reprimanded me for staying away from school and classes and told me to stick to school. My father never listened to my school commitments, but his interest was just the well-being of his cattle. On several occasions, teachers ordered my parents to visit the school because of my low school attendance habit. Nobody cared enough to show up, it was very difficult to keep up with school and I had nobody to turn to for support.

Even though I never gave up and tried selling firewood by the roadside I later joined a group of teenage thugs; we smoked, abused alcohol at a very tender age, we even robbed people with friends to pay for our school fees in our home town. It was not easy to make it at school; I succumbed in grade 10 and never got the chance to register at NAMCOL. I later left school completely, I had given up on my hopes and dreams and I felt worthless in the society. I had lost all hopes of becoming someone in the society, if only "Meekulu" (Grandmother) was alive, (Male, 28 years, 16 November 2011).

4.2.8. Poor Medical Attention

Two participants in the study confirmed and confessed that they suffered from a certain illness. Since nobody cared much in their families to take them to proper doctors, they were forced to drop out of school. It happened that by the time they recovered, they were too old to enrol in their grades. Despite referral letters from their General Practitioners, the school management refused to allow them to re-enrol.

CASE 6 mentioned, *“For me completing school was one of my wishes and aspirations. In the first place, things were interrupted when my aunt overly delayed me from going to school. She forced me to look after the younger kids in the house even though I was a child too. I remember that I was of school going age, but nobody ever sent me to school instead, they sent me to the cattle post where I was forced to look after the cattle every morning and afternoon. It was not an easy thing for me to go through, because I had to watch other children of my own age going to school every day and wished that I could someday join them. I knew that my school enrolment time was overly delayed, but I still wished and hoped that my dream of someday going to school would become a reality. By the time, I am enrolled in school; my passion for school was gone. Secondly, I suffered from eyes ailments and had to stay out of school for some years. Secondly, it was in September prior to my final exam for grade 10, when I became partially blind. I was in and out of hospitals and there was no proper treatment for my eye problem and my family could not afford nor did they care that much. This caused me to completely drop out of school, and in two years I gave birth to a baby boy”* (Female, 26 years, 13 November 2011).

However, **CASE one** remarked, *“I was not going to school until the age of 12 years. When I enrolled in grade one in Namibia I was 13 years old. I lived in depression and I was very distressed. I was in grade 9 when my health started to deteriorate, I got so sick that I would faint and collapse at school. I was always in and out from hospitals. Despite my sickness, my mother would still yell and scream that I am a lazy fool in her house. I started experiencing terrible chest pain and that caused me to stay out of school*

for so many times. My school performance drastically dropped. Teachers at school detected my problem and they encouraged me to keep going. When I survived the mysterious illness, it was too late to go back to school; I came back to the village from the hospital. Despite a referral letter from the hospital confirming that I left school because of illness, the principal ignored me, arguing that my age for my grades are over. That is how I ended up in grade 9, not long after that I turned into a village home girl, I became pregnant and my mother rejected me throughout my pregnancy,” (Female, 32 years, 24 November 2011).

4.2.9. Living with Step-Parents

Out of twelve participants, six pointed out that at a certain point in their lives they had stayed with one of their step-parents (stepmother or stepfather). They maintained that step-parents were their worst enemies who always tried winning the love of the biological mother or father by using the “*divide and rule*” strategy. They further narrated that step-parents were very rude, aggressive, and mean; the stepmothers always behaved as if they were not their real mothers.

CASE 2 demonstrated the situation; *“I had lived happily with my father before he got married to my stepmother. When my father got married, my whole life started to change. Immediately after my stepmother moved in with us she started marking her territory by showing me that she had power over me. I learned that life with a stepmother was very different from how I had ever imagined it. The situation was very difficult. Most of the time when my father was out of town with work my stepmother would show how heartless she was. She was abusive in every sense of the word, she beat me, she insulted*

me, and she made me feel worthless. She starved me many times when my father was away and if I had lunch, I would not have dinner. She forced me to stay home away from school so many times just so that I could wash her clothes and clean the house in order to make it look good for when her friends came to visit.

That woman never liked me; she always tried to find a way to get rid of me from her life and my father's life. On several occasions, she fabricated stories, accused and reported me to my father. As if the rumours that she made up about me were not enough, she also had the tendency to lock me up in the house.

The fabrication of stories on my disobedience took its course, one time, my stepmother formulated a story that I had attempted to commit suicide in my room and that she could no longer deal with me. She ordered my father to send me away or she would pack her bags and leave instead, so for the sake of saving his marriage, my father made a decision to send me to the North , ultimately I was expelled to the North during April/May holiday never to come back.

Two years later they divorced; my father was kind enough to relocate me from the North to Windhoek. This time my father was married to another woman, "another stepmother." It also happened that the family sold the usual house and moved into another house. The new stepmother was even worse than the previous one. She abused me so badly t that to date I have never stepped my foot in that house in Windhoek. My second stepmother was ungenerous, stingy and cruel. She was always irritated and jealous when my father gave me taxi money. She fought tooth and nail to get rid of me

from the house. Her tactics ranged from locking me out of the house until late, picking arguments, not sharing food, and using abusive language. A number of times she accused me of having an affair and sleeping with my own father. My stepmother and father were always at loggerheads. Consequently, there was no peace in the house. My father had no power to keep me in the house, so for the sake of saving my father's second marriage, I moved out from the house for good up to now," (Female, 27 years, 18 November 2011).

Female participants mainly revealed that their stepmothers accused them of sleeping with their own (biological) fathers while stepfathers accused the female participants of not only sexually harassment but also of sleeping with married man in their neighbourhood.

CASE one confirms this when she briefly explains, *"When my mother got a job in the Ministry of Defence based in Sossouvlei in Karas Region, she left us with my elder sisters in the care of our stepfather. By that time, my health had started deteriorating. I was in and out in the hospital many times. Despite my sickness, my stepfather would sneak into my room during the night and wanted to force me to have intercourse with him. As I refused, he terrorised me by accusing me of sleeping with married men in the village, alleging that my sickness was a result of sleeping with different men in the village. At that time I was still a naive teenager!*

When I reported the situation to my mother, she goes on "mbyoka iiteta nomapenge yokezimo ihayi popiwa wala ngaaka tositha nyoko ohoni nokuli, iinima yatya ngaaka

ihayi yeluthwa kaanona yaakadhona nga. Ndika egumbo lyaantu, idhidhimika nokuli.”
meaning (As a woman those are forbidden stories that you are not supposed to share
with anybody not even your friends or mother. This house does not belong to us. Do you
want me to be a laughing stock in the village? I do not want to lose my husband and my
marriage. Shh! Keep quiet! I should never hear that again. As per my mother’s
instruction, I swallowed my pride and gave in. I never shared it with anybody you are
only the second person to hear this,” (Female, 32 years, 19 November 2011).

Participants described how their step-parents emotionally and physically abused their partner and his or her children and the entire family.

CASE 4, stressed, *“I had lived with a stepfather; I referred to him as father, though he hardly ever behaved like a father to his daughter. Although my stepfather had other children from his previous relationships, he had no children with my mother. As I was the elder child in the house, I suffered the consequences of that since he was a very abusive man. I often witnessed constant physical fights between him and my mother. At times, it would get so bad that the police and neighbours would have to intervene and stop him from hurting us. He was very hostile towards me, sometimes I thought that it was because I was not his biological daughter or maybe he just hated me. I had grown to hate this man, because all he ever did was to hurt both of us (my mother and myself); he was very cold and heartless. This man would start a fight every night and my mother got to a point where she could not take it anymore. She was becoming weak in every*

sense of the word. She was getting both physically and emotionally weak, she had scars, bruises all over her body and depression kicked in, and she eventually passed away.

Although life forced me to stay with my stepfather after the death of my mother, a man whom I had grown to hate with a passion from a very young age and for causing the death of my mother, I had no choice. I stayed with him and his other children, my stepbrothers and stepsisters. He had practically turned me into a slave and he even went as far as preventing from going to school for two years. He treated me as if I were not human; he was always humiliating me. He made me feel like I was worth nothing; he constantly told me that I was never going to become anything in life. On several occasions he accused me of having many sexual partners in our village. He would go on like “ngweye oshikumbu showala ala ngaashi nyoko Ali meembo mu” (You are just a filthy bitch, like mother like daughter). Life was very hard for me with my stepfather; he always reprimanded me for behaving like my late mother until I decided to search for my mother’s family, (Female, 27 years, 23 November 2011).

4.2.10. Poor Family Upbringing

All participants in the study mentioned that their family backgrounds were very poor and vulnerable. They described how they witnessed of brutal fights and arguments among their family members. They also reported the trauma of witnessing the death of those closest to them. Other incidents that occurred included: family break-ups and divorces, major ongoing marital problems, physical and emotional abuse, poverty, hunger, financial crises and so on.

All participants attested to the experience of frequent family relocations and poor family upbringing. They explained that in cases where their caretakers, especially “*Meekulu*” (*Grandmother*), became old died their biological parents or relatives sent them away to other family members. Participants mentioned that on their arrival in Namibia their parents were unemployed. The rural-urban migration of the parent of CLS in search of employment caused CLS to keep on moving from one place to the other. In brief, participants said during their childhood they had no steady place where they stayed permanently.

4.2.10.1. Frequent Family Movements

CASE 6 declared, *“One may not really identify and explain who brought me up in my life. In four years, I moved and kept on changing between my “Meekulu” (Grandmothers)’s house to my aunty, uncles and the list goes on. I personally just grew up as a girl who went to the cattle post and even church wearing nothing but the same old rags (old and worn out clothes) with holes in them. I was always the ugly duckling and vulnerable poor little child who had nobody to look after her but instead was expected to look after other people. I was an unhappy child and nobody even cared”* (Female, 25 years, 17 November 2011).

While **CASE 8** tells, *“History had it that my biological father died during the liberation struggle in Luanda, Angola. My mother was married to another man. When we left Angola for Namibia, I came with a certain aunty who was apparently the best friend of my uncle (the brother of my late father). We went to Ondangwa and stayed with this aunty for almost two years. I called my uncle “my father” because he was the only*

father I knew in my life. Afterwards, he came to pick me from the aunty to take me to my “Meekulu” (Grandmother) house. We settled at “Meekulu’s” (Grandmother) house with my new family. Just when I thought that I was settled because “Meekulu” (Grandmother) was very good, my father came to pick me and took me to his house in Ruacana. I could not understand what was going on I was getting tired of moving from place to place all the time,” (Female, 32 years, 17 November 2011).

4.2.10.2. Parents Brutal Deaths

CASE 4 described, *“Although I was very young when my mother passed away, I can still remember how she died because she died in my own arms. It was after another brutal fight that my stepfather had started, I begged him to stop but he just kept on hitting her. He hit her so much that she fell unconscious. A short while after he had stopped torturing her, she got up from where she was sitting and barely took two steps when she suddenly dropped to the ground. In my young mind, I thought that she had just fainted and I ran towards her and I shook her gently “Meme” may you please get up’. I begged her, but she did not move, not even a little. My mother died right in front of me and at that very moment it was as though my heart had been ripped out of my chest; my whole world came crashing down right in front of my eyes. At such an early stage in my life, I had to come to terms with the fact that my mother was no more, a huge part of me died with her and I mourn her every day. After the death of my mother, I lived with my stepfather for a while; he tortured and abused me until I moved out to my “Meekulu” (Grandmother)’s house. However, history repeated itself at my “Meekulu” (Grandmother)’s house until I decided to look for my father’s family. Staying with my*

father was so much better, but he sadly passed away a short while after I met him. Though my father worked for the Ministry of Defence, I did not get a even a small part of his inheritance, maybe because I was born out of wedlock and he was just about to register me in some of his documents. My stepmother kicked me out of the house, I went back to my “Meekulu’s” (Grandmother) house, and since her house was full of other orphans from her late children, my uncle (whom I also never stayed with long) picked me to go stay with him. It is unfortunate that my parents passed away so soon. Now, I have nobody to look to for support. I feel that if my parents were alive then maybe things could be better for me. They would have guided me at some point,” (Female, 27 years, 12 November 2012).

4.2.10.3. Growing Up in a Vulnerable Environment

CASE 1 narrated, *“Unlike other ‘exiled kids’, I did not return with my parents but rather returned with a group of other “Exiled Kids,” accompanied by caretakers. However, the closing of the school hostels shaped my life in a shocking way. Little did I know that this was the beginning of troubles To start with, I came to learn that my mother was married before she left for Angola and the liberation struggle and that she had had three other daughters by her husband. After independence, the couple took each other back and I discovered that I was born after my mother parted ways with her husband. This simply meant that this man was not my father and I was illegitimate.*

We resided in my maternal “Meekulu’s” (Grandmother) house. Shortly after this “Meekulu” (Grandmother) became old and blind and we both moved (to the house of my mother and stepfather) in order to take care of “Meekulu” (Grandmother). Family

members in my mother's house consisted of my stepfather, two half sisters, "Meekulu" (Grandmother) and other two close relatives. Later when "Meekulu" (Grandmother) became really old and died, then the real troubles began. My family environment started growing worse every day and I had serious problems. My very own mother and her so-called husband treated me like a slave unlike my elder siblings. I ploughed; sowed, weeded, and harvested and thrashed mahangu when I was very young.

Both my mother and stepfather were unemployed for a very long time but they had a shebeen and abused alcohol. Whenever I failed to do a task, they would always blame, scold and beat me badly. My upbringing was unacceptable, I had come to believe and accept that maybe my mother was not my real mother at all. She hated me so much but how could anybody ever treat his or her own flesh and blood the way this woman treated me? I was very heartbroken.

It is very unfortunate that my family background and upbringing were extremely poor and I was vulnerable. I never had peace with my mother and to this day she tries to alienate me from my own relatives and neighbours in the village. I have no peace at heart in my mother's house. Some of us found ourselves in chaos unexpectedly. I never had a family structure which I could call home. Some parents, like my mother, never stayed with their children during the liberation struggle. Later, when we came to stay together in Namibia we were more strangers to one another and have remained so till now. I am not convinced that the mother allocated to me is my genuine mother. It will take me a long time to come to terms with this. Maybe is because I was born out of

wedlock and during hard times in the bush where life was not easy,” (Female, 32 years, 13 November 2011).

4.2.10.4. Growing up a Parentless Child and Getting to Meet Biological Parents after Many years.

The study revealed that among all 12 participants only one participant grew up with both his parents. One participant mentioned that though her father is allegedly alive, she has never met him. Seven of the participants are acquainted or reunited with one of their biological parents after ten years and more. Two participants mentioned that their fathers died during the liberation struggle. One participant has said her father died immediately after their arrival in Namibia.

Participants described the negative impact of knowing and meeting their biological parents after many years. They also explained what a problem it was for them to trust their parents. Participants also established that lack of parental support; poor parent relationship and bond with the child and parents love are some of the consequences of growing up as a child without parents.

CASE 7 exemplified the situation *“Throughout my life of pain and sufferings I thought that meeting my “so called” father that I came to know only at the age of 16 would help me to improve my life. However I was surprised to discover that he was just another-narrow-minded man who even objected and protested at my efforts to get an ID. It was only when I sneaked in his car, stole his ID, and hid it that I successfully managed to obtain an ID by myself. We never had a bond and good relationship, maybe this is*

because we never knew one another from the start,” (Male, 28 years, 15 November 2011)

However, **CASE 10** also added, *“I came with my mother to Namibia from Angola and we stayed in Okalongo. Later my father picked me when I was only 6 from my mother to go to Oukwanyama to stay with my “Meekulu”. Soon after my father got married, he left me with my “Meekulu.” After the death of my “Meekulu,” I moved to my father’s house in the care of my stepmother. Things never turned to be easy; I went back to the house of my late “Meekulu” (Grandmother). However, life continued deteriorating and the lack of family support worsened. I decided to search for my mother’s family and I met my mother again finally in Windhoek when I was eighteen.*

Though I had happy moments from reunited with my mother, it was not so helpful meeting her after 12 years. I could not get close to my mother as I looked upon her a stranger in my life. It was not easy. Our parents never had time to take care for us after independence; they were rather struggling only for themselves. This led us to be in chaos and have a poor family upbringing, family divisions, breakups; we had traumatic experiences. As a CLS, growing up with no father or mother it was not easy,” (Female of 26 years, 14 November 2011).

CASE 4 concluded, *“Throughout my upbringing, I had so much pain, life was very hard, and I was abused and humiliated. I had no reason to keep living but the word of GOD kept me motivated and going every day. I wished I had grown up in a conducive environment where I was properly taken care of. At this point in my life, I had no place I*

could call home since I was brought up in many places during my childhood. I wanted to die and maybe things would be fine. I missed my father terribly because he was the only person who ever cared about me. I was very heartbroken about the death of my father when I discovered that he had died five years previously, because nobody had the decency to tell me about his death. May his soul rest in peace,” (Female, 32 years, 19 November 2011).

4.2.11. Lack of Psychosocial Support and Counselling

All participants agreed that when they arrived in Namibia they faced the harsh reality of the Namibian life. They mentioned that they were not given any psychosocial support, counselling sessions or support programmes. They also complained that nobody prepared them for the situation they would find in Namibia. Two of the participants who arrived in Namibia at the age of ten years and above revealed that they had high expectations and hopes on the life style in Namibia. Surprisingly, they found themselves in a chaotic world as nobody alerted them to the conditions they would found in Namibia. They also concluded that their parents, guardians and family members criticized them for pretending to be little foreigners; truly they had no idea on what was going on. Participants asserted that many of them only came to realise that they had parents, brothers, or sisters at a very late stage.

Even those that arrived under the age of ten years demonstrated that they felt uncomfortable as nobody warmly welcomed and integrated them into society as full Namibians. Participants remarked that they attempted running away from their houses as

they found themselves with a crisis of identity, since they felt totally misunderstood by the society.

This is demonstrated in **CASE 1** who stated *“after we arrived in Namibia the government was supposed to organise counselling session or support group classes mainly for CLS. We were strangers in our own motherland. The aspect of cultural norms, values and behaviour was so weird to me, let alone the traditional food, work, family set up, male-female relationships and other social behaviours in the village. I could not understand what it meant to behave like a typically “Vambo woman” and nobody could understand me. I was very shocked at how my family lived in the village. There were no support or help to alert and encourage me in understanding the difference between life in the camp and the Namibian lifestyle in general,”* (Female, 32 years, 21 November 2011).

This data demonstrate the widespread hardships that most of the CLS experienced throughout their childhood upon returning to Namibia.

4.2.12. The Impact of the CLS demonstration

All participants mentioned that the demonstration of CLS that surfaced in 2008 played a major and important role in their lives. Participants explained that the CLS demonstration unified them as individuals from one family and they learnt to share their hardship experiences in Namibia with one another. Through the CLS demonstration participants explained that listening to the experiences of others gave them courage and strength not only to accept one another but to accept life in general. Since they

discovered that they had have gone through the same experiences, they developed a sense of identity, love and a sense of belonging, empathy, positive thoughts, hope and courage to see light at the end of the dark tunnel.

Participants also disclosed that the CLS demonstration had not only created an enabling environment for them to share their painful moments but it also gave them an opportunity to embrace themselves, support, comfort each other and get connected to one another.

Reflecting on their experiences, participants described the CLS demonstration as a source of peace, joy, love and belongingness in their hearts and their lives too. Participants in the study recognised that the CLS demonstration could be a potential opportunity for their plight to be heard about their needs. They acknowledged that the CLS demonstration was a very significant opportunity to inform the public and the government on what it meant to grow up as a CLS in Namibia.

As described by **CASE 3**, *“I am happy that we demonstrated. I never had a peaceful place that I could call home. My life has been in chaos, if it were not the demonstration of CLS, I would not know how my life was going to be. It really rescued some of us and gave us peace. Staying at Berg Aukas camp made me very strong; after sharing our hurtful experiences with other CLS; it relieved my stress and reduced my level of anxiety and depression,”* (Female, 22years, November 2011).

On the same vein **CASE 1 stated**, *“thank God there was a demonstration of CLS that gave me peace of mind. I have nowhere I belong. When I am at my mother’s house, my*

heart does not feel happy and accepted. During the CLS demonstration we learned to accept one another as brother and sisters in the forest; we shared experiences, problems and felt very much at ease with one another” (Female, 32 years, 12 November 2011).

While **CASE 11** concluded that *“the CLS demonstration gave me peace of mind, after sharing our challenges and experiences we learnt to accept and love one another. I shall say that being a CLS of Namibia is a challenge that I fought on my own and the struggle is not yet over,”* (Female, 28 years, 19 November 2011).

4.2.13. Wishes and Aspirations in Life

Out of the twelve respondents in the study, nine expressed that they wish and dream to go back to school. They pointed out that they would highly appreciate if the government can initiate a programme of sending them back to school, specifically to vocational training. They further articulated that for their best interests the programme should set policies and regulations on how it would support them in terms of incentives and other needs basic for a student.

Participants disclosed that they have a fear to inform the government about their wishes to go back to school, since they have no trust in the government to send them to school up until they complete. Despite the fact that they would like to go back to school, they are insecure with the government’s promises. They choose to demand job opportunities as an instant means they could use to improve their lives and achieve their identified goals (going to school). The remaining three expressed that they wished to venture into entrepreneurship and farming. On the other hand, all the participants mentioned that they

are very passionate and confident about what they want to do in their lives. They also maintained that they considered that they have not accomplished anything up to now. Thus, they accepted that their life was a learning experience. They attested to being very determined to win the war and struggle of being a Namibian CLS.

CASE 7 spoke *“I am 28 years old; definitely, my parents will not listen to my plight of sending me back to school. If only the government could fund my studies. I am talented and brilliant in technical and practical knowledge. I dream of owning a motor vehicle garage in the future. I wish to be given an opportunity to go back to school and study engineering or motor mechanics,”* (Male of 28 years, 18 November 2011).

While **CASE 8** outlined, *“even though my life was so difficult, I still have my dreams because I have learnt that they are something that cannot be taken away from me. I am confident that I am a valuable person in the society, though many people consider me worthless. I am still keeping my dream of someday going back to school and work, save a few cents and further my studies. I would like to do cosmetology to advance my theoretical knowledge in hairstyling, beauty treatment, and make up art, pedicures and manicures. My two major wishes are to run a beauty and cosmetic business or become a pilot or a priest,”* (Female, 22 years, 20 November 2011).

CASE 11 emphasised, *“regardless of what has happened in my life I am still dreaming to go back to school, get a proper job, and marry a man of my choice to make a family. I missed having and meeting my biological father. Life in Berg Aukas is very challenging. We are facing social evils like drinking and reckless behaviour and it is so difficult to*

overcome them. I wish the government would get me back to school or simply get for me a job in order to improve my life,” ((Female, 28 years , 19 November 2011).

CASE 1 concluded this topic by saying that, *“I am confident about my dream of becoming a social worker or a pastor. I enjoy counselling and helping others with problems. I wish to own a crèche or a kindergarten, unite all orphans and vulnerable children in my family and give them the best. I cry aloud to the government to allocate a piece of land for me to start a new life with my children. I pray to God to get a job to support my kids. I am pleading to the government to give me a place to stay, to cultivate and do my work on my land,”* (Female, 32 years, 26 November 2011).

4.2.14. Accommodation and Hostels

All participants claimed that upon their arrival in Namibia their parents never had time to take care of them. They were rather struggling only by themselves particularly in looking for employment. Therefore, they mentioned that government was supposed to make special arrangements for all the CLS. Proposed arrangements included giving hostels or special accommodation where all CLS could be properly taken care of and send them to school as had been the case during the liberation struggle.

The situation is well confirmed by **CASE 1** when she agreed that *“the root causes to my predicament today is blamed on the government for not taking care of the “Exiled Kids” or sending us to proper schools from the start. They are supposed to give us counselling sessions and support groups. Some of us found ourselves in chaos unexpectedly. I never had a family structure which I could call home. They could have organized a hostel.*

Some parents never stayed with their kids e.g. my mother. I was a stranger in my mother's house. Life was never easy. I am proud to be the daughter of a soldier and am a soldier now on my own. Through thick and thin, I am strong and sound. I am determined that one day God will help me to win the war I had gone through," (Female, 32 years, 25 November 2011).

4.2.15. Para Suicide /Suicidal Attempt

Two out of twelve participants stated that they had attempted committing suicide several times in their life. They noted that if it were not for the CLS demonstration that surfaced in 2008, they would certainly have killed themselves.

An emotional **CASE 4** explained *"I was falling apart and I often thought to myself that maybe I was never meant to be happy; maybe I was never meant to find a place that I could call my home; maybe I was being punished for something. I was all alone in the world and it seemed as though everyone I turned to kept turning me away. I wished that I had died with my mother. I was tired of all the pain and suffering and I just wanted to go and find my mother, so I attempted to take my own life on more than two occasions. Nevertheless, for some reason I never died. Someone always got to me before I could do so and I wondered why God did not let me die? I wonder why He still kept me in this world when all I have ever known was the life of pain and suffering. To this very day one could easily identify scars on my neck, I always felt very empty inside,"* (Female, 27 years, 23 November 2011).

At the same time **CASE 5** confirmed that, *“throughout my upbringing, I had so much pain, life was very hard, and I was abused. I attempted committing suicide so many times at home; especially after falling pregnant at the age of 14 years. I overdosed several times and even tried drinking poison. Sadly I lost my baby. I had no reason to keep living, but thanks to the words of God that motivated me and kept me going every day. I hope that one day my dreams of owning a salon and become a pastor will become true and it is my wish to get a chance to turn my life around and finally forgive those who have hurt me,”* (Female of 32 years, 26 November 2011).

4.2.16. Summary of the Chapter

Chapter four focused on presenting the data of the study from the narrated stories. Data that emerged from narrated stories included high school dropout, inconsistent school attendance, teenage pregnancies, lack of one parent or both parents, time in orphanages and children’s homes, the role of “Meekulu”, poor family backgrounds, poor medical attention, living with step-parents and wishing to go back to school.

CHAPTER FIVE: Discussions, Analysing Talk, Text and Interpretation of Results

5.1 Introduction

This Chapter interprets and discusses the result presented in the previous Chapter (Four). The discussions are also based on the theoretical frameworks discussed in Chapter Two. It should be noted that discussions in this Chapter are based on the data that emerged from this study which only includes interviewed CLS in Berg Aukas and should thus not be seen as a reflection of all CLS in Namibia.

5.2. Growing Up in Children's Homes and Socially Isolation

This study found out that some CLS in their host countries during the time of the Namibian liberation struggle grew up in children's homes and upon their arrival in Namibia e.g. Cases One and Five. The study found out that in Namibia, the children's homes were set up by the GRN to accommodate CLS whose parents had died during the liberation struggle and for those whose family members could not be traced immediately after their arrival. The children's homes were also arranged to accommodate CLS whose parents suffered from psychological illness or had health problems.

The findings of the study revealed that children's homes in Namibia were at Usakos (Erongo region), Oshigambo (Oshikoto region) and Anamulenge (Omusati region). The situation of CLS in children's homes was vulnerable and critical as some CLS reported that they spent two to four years in children's homes without any knowledge of what

was happening in their real lives. This is detailed more in Chapter four (Cases One and Five) on 4.2.3 Social Isolation.

For example, Case One's biological parents, relatives and family members could not be traced anywhere in Namibia for almost four years while Case Five's parents had psychological problems upon their arrival in Namibia and the family was not traced easily; thus the two CLS stayed in children's homes for long time whilst waiting for the family to be traced or until parents recovered their mental health.

The study declared that when these CLS reached the homes of their parents, families and relatives, they faced harsh realities of life in Namibia. Food was difficult to accept as it differed a lot from what they were used to eating in the children's homes. Many of their relatives thought they were pretending to be 'little whites'. This negatively affected the relationship between the children and their parents and the society. The study found out that at school, teachers in Namibia could not understand the grading of their reports as they were written in foreign languages. No one made the effort to find out the level of their grades, as some of them were placed in lower grades than they should have been. A good example of this situation was Case Nine whose relatives and teachers at her school forced her to repeat grade three. The above mentioned findings matched those of Simasiku Matongo, a successful CLS referred in the *Informante Newspaper* (15th September 2012) in Chapter two.

The study also found out that two of the CLS who stayed in children's homes described that the living conditions there were very poor, which combined with poor living condition, social isolation, insufficient and unhygienic food, poor accommodation and lack of love and a sense of belonging. The study revealed that this has negatively affected these two CLS (Cases One and Five) from connecting to their real parents as they confessed that they are not convinced to accept their biological parents as their real parents since they did not collect them from the children's homes on time or take good care of them like responsible parents.

This study acknowledges the negative impact of growing up in children's homes as described in detail by Killian et al. (2009) (in Chapter Two). "Children who lost their parents and were kept in children's homes or orphanages experience isolation. When people are socially isolated, they are accompanied by feelings, related to loss or marginality, loneliness, anger, despair, sadness, frustration, or in some cases relief (Biordi & Nicholson, n.d.). This study confirms that the two CLS who stayed at Oshigambo and Anamulenge children's homes suffered from and failed to come to terms with it. As Case One, for example, demonstrated that up to now, she is not at peace, she is living in despair, anger and frustration.

5.3 "Meekulu" (Grandmother) pillar of strength Versus "Meekulu"

(Grandmother) Hostile

The study findings disclosed that there is a high level of appreciation and acknowledgement for "*Meekulu*" (*Grandmother*) as a role model, caretaker and

significant person upon their arrival in Namibia in the lives of all CLS's who were interviewed. The findings of study revealed that most relationships between CLS and "*Meekulu*" (*Grandmothers*) were marked by closeness, shared activities, confidences and mutual support, love and honesty while some were marked by hatred, hostility, anger and poor communication.

The study revealed that Ten out of Twelve CLS described "*Meekulu*" (*Grandmother*) as a very important person in their lives who gave them sense of security in Namibia. The study found out that the love and stability of "*Meekulu*" (*Grandmother*) allowed CLS to remain in school, stay out of trouble, developed strong moral and religious values and consider an alternative perspective on life. The study found out that when CLS lived with their "*Meekulu*" (*Grandmothers*) they were still in school, well mannered, living in stable families and well fed. This was demonstrated more by Case One, Two, Seven and Nine in Chapter Four (4.2.1.2). The study found out that ten of the interviewed CLS lives turned into turmoil after the death of "*Meekulu*" (*Grandmothers*). It was also noted that had "*Meekulu*" (*Grandmothers*) not died ten of those CLS interviewed would have become better persons in the society.

The Ecological System Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) cited in Keiley (2009) maintains that children are influenced by the proximal and distant environments in which they are embedded and the family is particularly influential. In his study as referred to in Chapter two, Keiley (2009) reported that grandchildren (CLS in this study) are influenced by a number of factors associated with the care-giving context in their lives.

In this study, for example, the care-giving arrangements that affected CLS are the death of “*Meekulu*” (*Grandmothers*) and many CLS found it very difficult to form meaningful bonds with their parents after the death of “*Meekulu*” (*Grandmother*). The dependence of CLS on their “*Meekulu*” (*Grandmothers*) was rooted in the knowledge that CLS believed that their lives were better due to their proper upbringing by “*Meekulu*” (*Grandmother*).

The results of the study also found out that some “*Meekulu*” (*Grandmother*) showed hostility and hatred toward CLS. As demonstrated in (Chapter Four, 4.2.1.3) in Cases Three and Five, the nature of the relationship with their “*Meekulu*” (*Grandmother*) was very bad based on arguments, hatred, hostility, fear and distance. The study found that the major source of conflict that caused “*Meekulu*” (*Grandmother*)’s resentment and hatred toward CLS was because of the feeling to their biological parents and thus this hatred surfaced toward their grandchildren (CLS). The study also found out that some “*Meekulu*” (*Grandmother*)’s hatred and resentment toward CLS was motivated by fear that CLS would behave like their parents who had migrated to town immediately after their arrival in Namibia leaving *Meekulu* in poverty.

Despite limited knowledge about the impact and influence on child outcomes when children were cared or brought up by “*Meekulu*” (*Grandmother*), this study found that even if “*Meekulu*” (*Grandmothers*) who brought up CLS were caring and hard working, the majority of these elderly women lived in poverty, were less educated and had a poor socio-economic status in rural areas.

Pittman (2003) in Chapter two pointed out that “children who are raised by grandparents appear to perform very low academically compared to those raised in both single and two parent households. They are more likely to be held back a grade and less likely to complete high school.” This is consistent with the results of this study as all CLS in this study did not make it to secondary education.

However, even if Winston (2003), cited in Mudavanhu (2008), believes that the strong relationship based on a kinship system among African family structure made it possible for families to survive from slavery to the present, the care-giving of grandparents and of the rest of the extended family is a culturally driven practice in Africa. “Therefore the conception of a burden to children brought up by grandmothers cannot be described a hardship in African communities (Mudavanhu 2008).”

The perception is the opposite to the findings of this study. Findings of this study revealed that all CLS were not brought up by “*Meekulu*” (*Grandmother*) because of cultural practices and African kinship system. The reason was CLS’s parents had socio-economic challenges upon their arrival in Namibia, and therefore they took their children (CLS) to rural villages whilst they migrated to urban areas in search of employment opportunities.

The study found out that CLS’s parents were unemployed, without income, with no land and no professional qualifications that could secure them employment opportunities. Thus, they opted to leave their children with their parents (customarily with “*Meekulu*”). This turned out to be a factor that negatively affected CLS’ lives as it

resulted in poor parental care, the frequent movement of CLS to different extended family members and other chaotic childhood experiences. Some CLS (Case One, Two, Five and Nine) were excluded from opportunities to attend school as they were regarded as foreigners in their motherland, others were forced to become cattle herders, some became pregnant at a very young age, some had to work in the house until it was realised that they had to attend school under government legislation.

The tragedy of CLS's parent's inaccessibility to land, employment opportunities' and professional qualification was reported in *The Namibian Newspaper* (20th June 2006) citing Nicky Iyambo (Minister of Veteran Affairs in Namibia). These challenges were explained more in Chapter 2 (2.4. Social and Economic Support provided to CLS from 1990-2008 in Namibia). The study also found out that owing to challenges that faced new programmes that were supposed to cater for the needs of the former freedom fighters in the early years after Namibia's independence in 1990, many former freedom fighters dropped their dependants in the hands of elders as they could not afford to take care of both themselves and their loved ones.

5.4. Bereavement of “Meekulu’s (Grandmother) Versus Life after Her Death

Findings of this study revealed that eleven of the interviewed CLS in the study lost their care takers during their childhood or adolescence. The study found out that caretakers were mothers, and fathers, or “*Meekulu*” (Grandmother) or *other* relatives. It is evident from the findings of this study that CLS lived in denial about the death of their loved ones.

The study also disclosed that CLS never had a sympathetic person who comforted and gave them support to cope with the death of their “*Meekulu*” (Grandmother) and parents or caretakers. This distressed and prolonged the CLS in coming to terms with their loss of their closest relationship and relation such as a grandmother or mother who served as a pillar of strength for the CLS. The findings of this study found that CLS experienced endless grief in a helpless state without receiving any comfort. This is demonstrated by the different coping mechanisms that CLS talked of when trying to cope with their loved one’s death. For instance Case Seven found comfort in dropping out of school and withdrawing from attending Sunday school; he also started abusing drugs and alcohol at a young age (under the age of sixteen) to find comfort and to try and forget about the death of his “*Meekulu*” (Grandmother). He also mentioned that later he vacated from his late “*Meekulu*”’s house and decided to search for other relatives as staying in the house of his late “*Meekulu*” (Grandmother) was bringing back sad memories and hallucinations during the night.

In Chapter two Santrock (2008) and Seifert et al. (2000) in Mwamwenda (2004, p.79) explain that the impact of death on surviving individuals is strongly influenced by the circumstances under which the death occurs. Sudden deaths from any cause are likely to have more intense and prolonged effects on surviving individuals and make the coping process more difficult.

This study found out that many CLS parents, “*Meekulu*” (Grandmother) and other close family members often died from sudden, violent and traumatic deaths. A good example

is Case Four where the mother was brutally killed by her stepfather. This led this individual to suffer from posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms such as intrusive thoughts, flashback, nightmares, sleeping disturbances, and even problems in concentrating at school. The findings of this study correspond with those of Schoka and Hayslip (1999) who confirmed (this was referred to in Chapter two) that family members who communicated poorly about the death of their loved ones had more negative grief reactions in their lives than those who communicated effectively with each other immediately after the loss of a family member.

This study finding also noted that CLS could not accept the death of “*Meekulu*” (Grandmother) easily since they had so much trust and faith in them as the only pillar of strength in their lives. Besides the fact that “*Meekulu*”’s death served as a major loss what was worse is that some CLS witnessed “*Meekulu*” (Grandmother) suffering from illnesses associated with old age and dying in their presence disturbed their mental state. “*Meekulu*” (Grandmother)’s death also led some CLS into having to perform the role and responsibilities of heading the household. An example is Case Seven who took over of the roles and responsibilities of the grandmother at a very young age. This affected his emotional and social development as he was forced to act older and more mature than his age warranted and he subsequently had to leave school to take care of his younger cousins.

The findings of the study also reveal that the death of “*Meekulu*” and other loved ones caused the rejection of CLS by society. The tremendous breakdown in their families left

them helpless, as their “*Meekulu*” was their only hope and inspiration. It should be noted that death of their “*Meekulu*” to some CLS meant poverty, non-completion of school and increased vulnerability, which is a state that exists up to now.

All these findings from the study are consistent with the work and argument of Lindsay and Elsegood (1996) which was outlined in chapter two, who maintain that the death of a loved one, particularly the family head, where the children are under the age of 16, would be accompanied by further losses and trauma in their lives, such as shock and disbelief, dismay, protest, apathy and a continuation of unusual activities.

5.5 Life in the House of a Step-parent

The findings of the study revealed that after “*Meekulu*” became elderly or died, some CLS moved to the houses of their biological parents. A good example of this is given in Chapter four by Case One and Case Two. Findings of the study revealed that when “*Meekulu*” aged and passed on, some CLS were forced to go and stay with their biological parents. When the CLS moved to their biological parents’ homes, where one parent had remarried, this calamity meant that the CLS had to stay with step-parent.

However, the findings of the study by LAC on step-parenting reported in *The Namibian* (29th May-2012) in Chapter two revealed intimidation by the step-parents and fear from on the part of the step-children (CLS) as one of the major problems faced by CLS who moved in with their mother or father and a new partner. This links to the findings of this study as many CLS experienced challenges staying with their step-parents. This study also found out that many CLS step-parents were very abusive toward them. Some

sexually intimidated their stepchild (a good example is Case one, Chapter Four). The study also noted that CLS's stepparents always wanted to be the centre of attention and were jealous of any care given to CLS by their biological parent (as demonstrated in Case Two). Female participants suffered more from sexual intimidation from their stepfathers and instead of supporting and protecting them, their biological parents, particularly the mothers, advised them to conceal any physical, emotional and sexually threats from their stepfathers. In an effort to sustain the economic livelihood and prevent shame coming to the family biological parents chose to remain in their marriage status over their children's safety e.g. of Case One given in Chapter Four.

The study also found out that lack of legal clarity and law relating to step-parenting in Namibia as cited in *The Namibian* (29th May2012) from the LAC study forced some CLS to move from the house of the biological parent after the death of that biological parent without benefiting from any inheritance from that parent. This is exemplified in Case Four, where the CLS narrated that after the death of her father, her stepmother refused to give her any share of her late father's inheritance. Therefore she moved out of her father's residence and went to search for the family of her deceased father.

5.6 The Unruly Behaviour of CLS

Literature from Chapter Two in this study highlighted that the behaviour of CLS was not only acceptable at the family level but also was not acceptable in the society too. The literature also revealed that CLS have unruly behaviours, are rebellious and disrespectful of people in the community. As discussed in detail in Chapter Two, "the behaviours of many young. *'Exiled Kids'* has been a source of consternation to older members of the

community,” The Times of Namibia (5th July 1991) quoted in Jason (2001). This study did not found CLS as unruly and indisciplined as found in the literature. The study suggests that literature revealed CLS behaviour as ill mannered, rebel and unruly because they suffered from post traumatic stress. (See findings and theories in Lindsay and Elsegood (1996) and Killian et al. (2009) outlined in Chapter Two.).

This study reveals that the unruly behaviour of CLS, outlined in Chapter Two, was caused by times of unhappiness and frustration which they had in their lives as nobody gave them proper support over issues like the death of their “*Meekulu*” or any love or sense of belonging in their lives in general. The results of this study are in line with Meyer (2004, p. vii) as she explained in Chapter two that, “life without the blessings and benefit of peace is miserable. One cannot enjoy life without first having peace. Without peace we live in turmoil, worried, anxious and upset at all times”.

Based on Meyer’s view (2004), this study has revealed that the unruly behaviour of CLS is rather symptomatic of the search for love and help in their family as well as in their community. The study also discovered the need for CLS to be taken for clinical counselling and trauma healing for their lived experiences to learn to accept their pain and find peace and contentment in their lives.

5.7 The Crisis of Identity

It is obvious that findings of this study have negative implications for CLS as regards their identity. This study revealed that CLS lived in the dilemma in defining the reality of who they are, where they belong and what defines them in their lives. In this study

some CLS could not even identify a personal identity/ feature. This was demonstrated (in Figure 5. region of origin, Chapter Four). For instances Case Two decided to keep her region of origin as unspecified, not because she was not confident enough or had personal reasons not to reveal her region but rather it was caused by the uncertainty, feeling of homelessness and inability she had lived in.

Furthermore, as mentioned in Chapter Two, by *The Villager Newspaper* (30th March 2012 -6th May 2012) “due to many broken and fragmented lives and families, stricken poverty, marital problems and other social evils surrounding the society, it ruined the behaviour and mindset concerning our identity.” The proposed five basic reasons why people suffer an identity crisis given by *The Villager newspaper* (of the same dates) in Chapter two are similar to the findings of this study, which has shown that the childhood background of the CLS has negative impact on their self-esteem and self-identity as many of them suffered from family displacements and frequent family movements. The study revealed that frequency displacements and family movement led many CLS to a crisis or turmoil of identity. Case Two, Case Nine, Case Five and Case Four in the study are good examples of those CLS who suffered from identity crises as they frequently moved from one family to another, a situation that led them to be confused and frustrated.

The findings of this study highlighted that, instead of the CLS being able to concentrate on developing and enhancing their personal identities, the social setting of their childhood and adolescence forced them to focus on solving their social and personal

crises e.g. *Meekulu* 's death and taking over responsibilities. The study also supports the thoughts of Erickson (1963), cited in Mwamwenda (2004), which stated that people without any proper sense of their own identity remain ignorant of what they really want to do in life and are rather unsure of themselves. They feel out of place, socially, and believe themselves to be insignificant and unimportant not only from their own point of view but from the perception of society too.

This study revealed that the CLS in this study have suffered from low self-esteem as they tend to focus more on the aspects of themselves and their experiences that make them unhappy i.e. "*Meekulu*'s "death, public perception of being a CLS, unemployment, poverty, etc. The study found out that CLS do not appreciate their positive aspects and strength but instead they concentrate on their weaknesses. For instances, Case Twelve narrated that no matter how hard he will work his family and the society have already painted him as a CLS who will never make it in life. This study declared that CLS have not been able to hold to what they think was right but went along with what others wanted them to do. Thus, they could not grow and develop a unique understanding of themselves with their values and relationship to the community.

The findings of this study are in line with the Zulu aphorism of Mkhize (2004), cited in Killian et al. (2009), pointing that: "*Umntu ngumuntu ngabantu*", which means that a human being is being a human being because of other human beings. Reflecting back to the theory of Bronfenbrenner that structured the interdependence of activities, this study discovered that the identity of CLS was shaped by their lived experiences and from their

childhood relationships and background. Various situations disrupted their identities i.e. frequent family movements, family displacement, war, and conflicts. The results of this study also signify that the negative events which occurred in the lives of the CLS did not only affect their identity, but also their physical and emotional development. This is explained more in Chapter two when discussing the Identity Crisis theory by Erik Erickson (1950 to 1968) and Marcia “give surname (1966, 1976 and 1980), cited in Santrock (2008), who expanded the Erickson’s initial theory identity by arguing that the emergence of an identity crisis occurs during the teenage years when young people struggle with feelings of identity and role confusion

The findings of this study correlate to the findings of Erik Erickson (1950 to 1968) and (Marcia 1966, 1976 and 1980) cited in Santrock (2008). The findings of this study found that CLS have suffered both identity diffusion and identity moratorium. Case One, for example, mentioned that she does not feel home in Namibia, as she is still searching and hoping to find destiny or a country she can call home.

This study also found out that the, CLS suffered from crises in their ethnic and cultural identity. Case Twelve, for example, mentioned that he is still unfamiliar about cultural norms, values in Namibia as he was more used to the culture and ways of behaviour of his host country during the liberation struggle. The study noted that the failure of CLS to adhere to their identity caused unhealthy relationships within themselves, family members and the society and thus no one is able to define and understand them well.

5.8 Lack of Psychosocial Support

Despite the fact that the government of Namibia agreed to treat all “Exiled Kids” as the same, this study found that the “GDR Kids” had special treatment and were privileged since they benefited from the Germans, both those living in Namibia and those abroad, who initiated projects to improve their living conditions. Documents are available that mention projects which were initiated to promote solidarity and communications of GDR Kids and to reconnect them. Such projects that benefitted only the “GDR Kids,” thereby neglecting those CLS who came from other countries and this was outlined in Chapter two by Kenna (1999).

The findings of this study found that CLS faced hardship in their lives. They needed extra support not only to deal with the transition from life in the camps (during the liberation struggle) to life in an independent Namibia, but they also needed coping mechanisms for situations such as dealing with the death of “*Meekulu*”, living with step-parents, learning to live with their biological parents, dealing with illness in their families, poverty, life frustrations, cultural norms, food, dropping out of school, separation from brothers and sisters,

The findings of this study also noted the complete lack of psychosocial support it revealed that of all twelve CLS interviewed; only Case One received financial assistance from SIPE. However, the study found out that SIPE merely financed CLS whose parents had died in the liberation struggle. In a situation where a CLS dropped of school or failed, the grant was immediately withdrawn. This study also revealed that SIPE had no

proper monitoring strategies on the lives of the CLS. Case One, for example, explained that at one point she became sick and dropped of school because of illness, but when she recovered and pleaded with SIPE to bring her back into the system, SIPE official refused despite her providing him with her medical record.

The findings of this study also noted that lack of psychosocial support from the society and family members obliged CLS to become old at their young age and have more responsibilities than should have been given to someone so young. Some CLS e.g. Case One, Case Nine and Case Five engaged in other activities to raise funds to meet their basic needs. For instance; Case Five mentioned how she plaited teachers at school at the age of 12; Case Two mentioned that she cultivated the soil and ploughed her neighbour's mahangu field during the rainy seasons to get money to pay for her school while Case Five brewed traditional beer for sale and sold other items for a living. These examples demonstrate that CLS lived a vulnerable life in Namibia without psychosocial support from either society or their families. All the CLS developed their own coping mechanisms and healed their wounded souls by themselves. The study indicates that had the CLS received proper counselling and psychosocial support, it would had softened their inner emotions, lessened their present anger and helped them to become better persons in their community.

The result of the study also found that many CLS experienced traumatic events such as the illnesses and deaths of their "*Meekulu*" or parents, violence and exploitation, stigma and discrimination, isolation and loneliness, poor family structures, lack of adult support

and guidance. It is evident that these individuals need a sense of belonging to show them love and appreciations. Such a support system could have shaped their life in a positive way.

5.9 Suicidal Attempt among CLS

This study found out that some CLS attempted suicide owing to poor psychosocial support. As demonstrated in Chapter Four, all CLS in this study are either orphans with no parents or orphans with only one parent. For example, e.g. Case Four, attempted suicide because of the death of her mother who was brutally killed by the stepfather. The findings of the study also reveal the behind suicidal attempts as suggested by Tam, Lee, Har and Chan, 2011 in Chapter two. These researchers identified hopelessness in life, hostility, self- negativity and social isolation as major causes of suicide. This present study found hopelessness as one of the factors that led to suicide attempts among CLS. Hopelessness occurred when CLS become very depressed and frustrated with life, not seeing any hope after the death of the “*Meekulu*” (Grandmothers), and thus viewed suicide as the only option.

This study found out that some CLS became hostile and were hurt by the behaviour of their step-parents and experienced xenophobic feelings from others. The study also found that CLS attempted to commit suicide because they had weak social ties and a confused sense of not belonging. Had there been a dual intervention that worked with CLS, their families and the society, they would have benefited from the strategies to reduce hopelessness, hostility, negative perceptions of CLS and their isolation. This study concludes that poor family background, alcohol and drug abuse, weak family

structures, low socio-economic status, anti-social behaviour, family disruption/stress, abuse, dropping out of school, and crimes are the main factors that caused suicide attempts among CLS.

5.10 CLS future Wishes and Dreams

The result of the study has shown that Grade 10 was the highest level of education for all interviewed CLS, (elaborated more in Chapter four and figure 3.3). This demonstrates that all CLS's were unskilled, not marketable, and unemployable and they had nothing to attract employers in the industry or vocational institutions. In the Namibian labour market, there is no question that it is a challenge for a Grade 10 certificate holder or one from a lower Grade to find a professional job. A tertiary qualification is a prerequisite for career development of Namibians and CLS do not have tertiary qualifications or vocational skills. This study discovered that the future for the CLS appears bleak and unpromising in the labour market.

However, this study also discovered that regardless of the fact that CLS lacked vocational training skills and professional qualifications, they were very eager to go to school and further their education. The study also found out that CLS have dreams to pursue their studies and advance their careers and that CLS were, idealistic, and enthusiastic to achieve their set goals and objectives.

Shockingly, the study also revealed that CLS had no long-term commitment to available job opportunities given by the government of Namibia. All CLS in the study mentioned that the jobs made available to CLS by the government do not lead to career

development. The study found out that available job opportunities for CLS are mostly as cleaners, members of the Defence Force, drivers, handymen, labourers, etc. It is against this background that CLS were more likely to quit these jobs when they found better opportunities that might advance their careers. The study also found out that not all CLS demand job opportunities as reported in the media, e.g. Case One, Seven and Twelve confirmed that should the government have good programme of sending CLS back to school specifically for vocational training with clear policies and regulations on how it will support them in terms of incentives and other basic educational needs, they would wish to go to school.

5.11. Summary of the Chapter

Chapter Five discussed and interpreted the findings in Chapter Four. It presented the brief summaries and conclusions of the findings in respect to the socio-economic experiences of the children of the liberation residing at Berg Aukas who were awaiting the answer to their dire situation from the GRN in November 2011. The Chapter also highlighted discussions by confirming and rejecting literature reviewed in Chapter two concerning the lived experiences of TCKs and CLS.

CHAPTER SIX: Summary of the Study, Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

Firstly, this chapter discussed the summary of the study. Secondly, it gave highlights on the implications drawn from the findings of the study. Thirdly, it should be noted that conclusions and recommendations provided in this study were based on the findings of the study.

6.2 Summary of the Study

Chapter one provided a brief background, based on the origins of CLS and how they surfaced into a countrywide demonstration in 2008. The chapter gave a brief discussion on the definition of CLS. Chapter one also outlined the goals and objectives, significance of the study, limitations and delimitations of the study and definition of terms in the study.

Chapter two gave the theoretical framework that influenced the study. The Chapter gave a general discussion on challenges faced by children and young people returning to their country of birth after the liberation war. It also looked at the experiences of TCKs and challenges facing them in their lives. The study further gave a general background of available information on the socio-economic experiences of all Namibian CLS, explicitly the GDR Kids.

Chapter three introduced two qualitative research designs that were applied to carry out the study, namely narrative research design and case studies. Furthermore discussions in the Chapter focused on data collection procedures, methods and data analysis. Data was

collected by means of in-depth interviews with twelve children of the liberation struggle who resided at Berg Aukas, Grootfontein in Otjozondjupa region in November 2011. Ethical considerations as adopted by the researcher were presented with a consent form (attached find annexure no.5).

In Chapter four, data presentations of the study were presented from the narrated stories. Data that emerged from narrated stories included high school dropout, inconsistent school attendance, teenage pregnancies, lack of one parent or both parents, time in orphanages, the role of “Meekulu”, poor family backgrounds, poor medical attention, living with step-parents and wishing to go back to school.

Chapter Five discussed and interpreted the findings in Chapter 4. It presented the brief summaries and conclusions of the findings in respect to the socio-economic experiences of the children of the liberation residing at Berg Aukas who were awaiting the answer to their dire situation from the GRN in November 2011. The Chapter also highlighted discussions by confirming and rejecting literature reviewed in Chapter two concerning the lived experiences of CLS.

6.3 Conclusion

- This study concludes that most CLS upon their arrival in Namibia were in the care of “Meekulu” (*Grandmother*). When “Meekulu” passed on, the CLS were left on their own, looking for family members, love and a sense of belonging and for a place they could call home. This situation made them vulnerable and led them to face many socio- economic challenges. Some dropped out of school, some fell pregnant at a very young age, some indulged in anti-social behaviour

(like drinking and taking drugs), while others had to move frequently between families, suffered from identity crises and lived in social isolation. The study also concludes that the situation of CLS was unbearable since some even attempted to commit suicide. In addition, it was also discovered by the study that some CLS had never spent time with their biological parents, and some only heard about the death of their parents and some up to the time of the interview still hoped to meet their parents or find out what had happened to them.

- It was also concluded in the study that CLS had not received psychosocial support and counselling upon their arrival in Namibia to prepare and orient them with the transition of their lives from living in camps and their host countries to living in Namibia with their biological parents and other relatives.
- In addition, it was also found from the study that persons are inseparable from their environment and the environment can explain their behaviour. It was found that CLS socioeconomic experiences of many LCS had negative impacts and influence on their lives. For example, the absence of their biological parents for the CLS caused weak family structures, which led to lack of love and support whilst poor integration of CLS in the society resulted in identity crises and later led CLS into unruly behaviour, being rebellious and undisciplined s.
- The educational level of CLS who participated in the study was found to be extremely low, and they were not able to find jobs. The highest educational level of CLS was found to be Grade ten. Therefore, these CLS were found to be

unskilled, unemployable since they had nothing to attract employers and in vocational training institutions to engage them.

- The study discovered that the MYNSSC had not conducted an extensive qualitative needs assessment to classify the socio-economic circumstances of individual CLS which be used as a guide in answering CLS individual needs and situation. The registration of CLS which was conducted according to Cabinet Decision no. 17th /16.09./002 (attached find, CLS Registration Form, Annexure no.5) had no comprehensive criteria to identify needy CLS. The registration was quantitative; as it had not answered the problems of CLS in their individual circumstances; this neglected the CLS who were in dire need of help (particularly the 12 CLS in this study).
- The lack of academic literature and studies about Namibian CLS after the liberation struggle showed less public interest in the gravity of CLS as a social problem in Namibia.
- It was also concluded from the study that despite the many social and economic struggles experienced by CLS throughout their lives, they were still standing strong and promising. It should also be noted that not all CLS were only demanding job opportunities, some CLS wanted to be given a land or a farm where they could settle and do farm work. Some asked for loans or grants to venture into business while some wished to be given a second opportunity in

their life particularly to go back to school to acquire practical skills in welding, engineering, cosmetology, etc.

6.4 Recommendations

Based on the outcomes of this study, the following recommendations with regards to the participating CLS in this study are made:

- Many CLS are in need of a clinical support and counselling. The government in collaboration with other relevant stakeholders needs to take the an initiative to dispatch clinical s, psychologists and social workers to Berg Aukas to provide clinical counselling to CLS to work through their socio-economic and traumatic experiences of life in Namibia and in exile.
- The study recommends that the process of answering CLS plights and giving assistance e.g. job, education, and vocational training, business and other opportunities to CLS should be based on their social and economic circumstances. There is a need to establish a standardised recruitment template that should guide stakeholders in answering the CLS individual needs.
- The Namibian society need to create a conducive and friendly environment to allow the integration of CLS as full and equal Namibians and get rid of the perceptions, stigma and negative labels painted on CLS as unruly and undisciplined.

- Policies on the plight of the CLS should consider strategies that would be country wide to combat in the long-term the attempts of CLS to commit suicide
- Further research should concentrate on doing a study comparing the lives of CLS in exile with the lives in after Namibian independence when they have returned.
- It should also be noted that this study noted a case of a CLS who had squandered prospective opportunities in her life and would like to seek attention in the limelight of others. However, the demand for job opportunities for CLS should not overlooked and this study recommends that the Namibian government screens each individual CLS cases instead of generalising about them or lumping them together with other young people whose parents were not in exile, because their circumstances are not the same.
- This study finds that CLS are in a social crisis in Namibia who need trauma and healing sessions and the government cannot turn away and ignore this need and this crisis.

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ANNEXURES

Annexure One: Interview Guide

My name is D.N.E Shiningayamwe, pursuing for a Master degree in Education specialising in Lifelong Learning and Community Education at the University of Namibia. As part of the University requirement, I am carrying out a Case Study on Social and Economic Experiences of the Children of the Liberation Struggle (CLS) Cases of CLS residing at Berg Aukas. The information provided by respondents will be treated with Confidence. Note: These interview guides consist of two sections, open and closed ended interview guide questions.

Section A

- 1. Physiological needs include hunger, thirsty, air, food, drink, shelter, blankets, stimulation activities, warmth, sleep etc.**

1.1. Please briefly narrate about your physiological needs experience when you arrived in Namibia?

.....

1.2. How you were psychosocial supported since you arrived in Namibia?

.....

1.3. What would you recommend the government would have done prior to your arrival?

.....

2. Safety and security include; needs for security, protection, structure, law, order, limits, freedom from fear, anxiety, and chaos.

2.1 How were your safety and security needs in a new environment that you call home?

.....

.....

2.2 Were you aware of any child rights or law in place?

.....

.....

2.3 What were your limits as a child?

.....

3. Belongingness and Love needs are e.g. love, friendship, comradeship work group, family life, support and affection, relationships, rootedness and identity etc.

3.1 Who were your guardians?

.....

3.2 How was your family structure?

.....

.....

3.3 Tell me about your friends?

.....

3.4 . How was the perception of your family members, community members toward you?
(How was your relationship with your immediate family, community and the society at large)?

3.5 What type of a need do you think have not covered in your life?

.....
.....

3.6 Who are your role model or who inspire you in your life and why?

.....

3.7 Briefly describe extra mural activities you were involved?

.....

4 How you were financially supported as an “Exiled Child” or what other additional provision services were availed to you?

.....

5 How and when did you receive your Namibian citizenship?

.....

6 If you are to reverse your life back, what will you do differently concerning your life experience in Namibia?

.....

7 Where do you call home?

.....

7. Self Esteem and Self-Actualizations

7.1 What was your ideal self in terms of your dreams, hopes and wishes?

.....
.....

7.2 What is your natural talent and how did you discover it?

.....
.....

8. Is there anything that you would want to share with me concerning your life experiences as a Child of the liberation struggle?

.....
.....

END OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

Annexure Two: Consent Form**UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA – FACULTY OF EDUCATION****CONSENT FORM FOR CHILDREN OF THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE****RESIDING AT BERG AUKAS CAMP, GROOTFONTEIN.**

RESEARCH TOPIC: A CASE STUDY OF THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC
EXPERIENCES OF THE CHILDREN OF THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE- CASES
OF CLS RESIDING AT BERG AUKAS

Dear Participants,

You are invited to participate in a research project aimed at investigating and understanding the social and economic experiences of children of the liberation struggle upon their arrival in Namibia from 1990 until 2008, before partaking in a countrywide demonstration. The purpose of the interview guide accompanied by this letter is to help me understand and narrate your socio-economic experience from your own perspective.

Your participation in this research project is voluntary and confidential. You will not be asked to tell your real name. Should you wish to participate in this study, **NB* Confidentiality will be guaranteed.** Raw data will be kept strictly confidential, and will not be shared with anyone. None of the written case studies of this research will be published using your real name. The results of the study will

- Assist CLS to document their social and economic experiences from 1990-2008.

- Be useful to the MYNSSC, policy makers and the GRN in responding to the plight of the CLS.
- Contribute to a deeper understanding of CLS's behaviour's, attitudes and complaints.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign this letter as a declaration of your consent. This means your participation in this project is willingly voluntarily you may not **EXPECT ANY TYPE OF MONETARY OR MATERIAL PAYMENT.**

For any questions or other confidential contributions to make about the project please, contact

Dorthea N.E. Shiningayamwe @ 0813990786

Participant's

signature.....

Researcher's

signature.....

Sincerely Yours,

Dorthea N.E. Shiningayamwe

Researcher

Annexure Three: Inventory Sheet

UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA – FACULTY OF EDUCATION
 INVENTORY SHEET FOR CHILDREN OF THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE
 RESIDING IN BERG AUKAS CAMP, GROOTFONTEIN
 A STUDY TO INVESTIGATE THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EXPERIENCES OF
 THE CHILDREN OF THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE- CASES OF CLS RESIDING
 IN BERG AUKAS

PLEASE DO NOT FILL IN YOUR NAME

Sex (circle the correct answer)	Female Male
How old are you now? (enter complete age)	
Which year did you Arrive in Namibia (enter the year you came in Namibia)	
How old were you when you came to Namibia?	
Where were you born? (Country of birth i.e. Zambia , Germany etc.)	
In Namibia, which region is your place of residence? Region of origin	
Status of parents	
Is your biological mother still alive?	Yes No
Is your biological father still alive?	Yes No
Highest level/grade of education completed?	
If you did not complete school, why did you left school? (reason for leaving school)	

Annexure Four: Permission Letter from - MYNSSC



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
MINISTRY OF YOUTH, NATIONAL SERVICE, SPORT & CULTURE
DIRECTORATE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Internal Submission

Date: 07th November 2011

To: Dr. P. T. Shipoh
Permanent Secretary

Through: S. Hoveka
Acting Director

From: Dorthea Shiningayamwe
Rural Youth Development Officer-Khoumas region

Subject: Request for an Academic Research at Berg Aukas on Children of the Liberation Struggle (CLS).

1. Date of the Event

13th -27th November 2011

2. Background and Motivation of the Research

The above-mentioned official is a Student at the University of Namibia pursuing a master degree in Education (Adult education and Community Development). Research study is part of the fulfillment of a Master's programme. Therefore, the official is interested to carry out a study on the social and economic experiences of the Children of the Liberation Struggle, with a special focus on those based at Berg Aukas. The purpose of the study is to investigate the socioeconomic experiences of these individuals since their arrival in Namibia until 2008, to explore how they have been living before they surfaced into a 2008 CLS countrywide demonstration.

The findings of this study may assist the Ministry to own a (hard copy) report based on researched case studies on the historical background of CLS social and economic experiences since their arrival in Namibia until 2008 (before the demonstration). The findings will also be useful to shape the discussions and guidelines to the Ministry, policy makers and the GRN in responding to the plight of the CLS. On the other hand, information on social and economic experiences might further contribute to a deeper understanding of CLS's behaviors' and attitudes.

3. Aims and Objective of the Research

- 1.3.1 To investigate the social and economic experiences of the CLS residing in Berg Aukas from 1990-2008.
- 1.3.2 To assess the social and economic support received by the CLS from 1990-2008
- 1.3.3 To document the stories of the lives and experiences of CLS as from 1990-2008.

*Any references given below?
 YP of members?*

*B
 10-11-2011*

4. Activities Involved

The study is based on an extensive qualitative approach focusing on case studies, therefore it requires participatory observation of respondents (C.S) and deep relationship to get in-depth information about the socio-economic experiences of these individual, and thus it may require a period.

Approval to carry the study is already discussed with the Head of Center (Bery Aukas) and it will be communicated to the Camp Commanders to assist in facilitating the data collection. An informed consent form will be given to the respondents to volunteer for the study. Face to face, interviews will be recorded with a digital voice recorder, transcribed for analysis and then interpreted for data presentation. **All raw data collected will be kept strictly confidential and will not be shared with anyone.** The study also request Kakero Siegfried to help as a researcher assistant and help with other logistics.

who is this?
PS

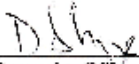
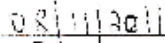
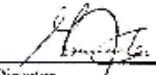


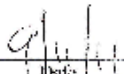

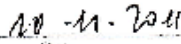
5. Financial Implication and Personnel Implication

This may include S&T and overtime that may be performed if necessary for two officials Kakero Siegfried (assistant researcher) and Dortha Shiningayamwe (main researcher), and Transport for officials from Windhoek to Grootfontein at an estimate of NS 1000.00

4 541 @ 52\$ x 14 x 2 = 14728 = Estimate of overtime: NS 1000.00

6. Recommendations

It is highly recommended that the Permanent Secretary grant the approval for the Officer to carry out this research study for the benefit of the Ministry and the completion of her studies.

	
Requesting Officer	Date
	
Director	Date
Recommended/ Not Recommended	
	
Financial Advisor	Date
Approved/ Not Approved	
	
Approved/ Not Approved	Date
Permanent Secretary	

Annexure Five: CLS Registration Form

10/8/12



Republic of Namibia

MINISTRY OF YOUTH, NATIONAL SERVICE, SPORT AND CULTURE

REGISTRATION FORM

CHILDREN OF LIBERATION STRUGGLE
(as per Cabinet Decision no 17th /16.09./002)

Children of the Liberation Struggle are children of veterans (veteran as defined in the Veteran Act, Act no 2 of 2008), inclusive of exiled children who until 21st March 1990 were under the age of 18 years.

**MINISTRY OF YOUTH, NATIONAL SERVICE, SPORT AND CULTURE
REGIONAL REGISTRATION**

NATIONAL DOCUMENTS

(Only **ORIGINAL** documents should be accepted. No certified copies to be accepted!)

- | | | |
|----|--|--------------------------|
| 1. | Namibian ID | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. | Namibian Birth Certificate | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. | Marriage Certificate | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. | Death Certificate (in case of a Dependant) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. | Confirmation letter | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. | Citizenship | <input type="checkbox"/> |

The chairperson of Regional Verification Team should mark with an **X** for appropriate coding in the box

1	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of Chairperson:.....
Signature:.....
Date:.....
Region:.....
Constituency:.....

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
MINISTRY OF YOUTH, NATIONAL SERVICE, SPORT AND CULTURE

APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION AS CHILDREN OF LIBERATION STRUGGLE

Complete the part of this application which is applicable to you. Where a question is not applicable, write (N/A). Any false statement or information on this form may result in the application being disapproved and in prosecution.

PART 1

(This part must be completed by all applicants)

Place of application

- 1. Region.....Constituency.....
- Place.....Date.....

Particulars of applicant

- 2. Surname.....Others.....
- 3. First name(s).....
- 4. Nationality.....
- 5. Citizenship.....
- 6. National identity card number.....
- 7. Date of birth.....
- 8. Place of birth.....Country.....
- 9. Birth certificate number.....
- 10. Sex.....
- 11. Particulars of Parents:
 - (a) Father:
 - If alive:
 - (i) Employed.....
 - (ii) Retired.....
 - (iii) Unemployed.....
 - (iv) Other, specify.....
 - If deceased:
 - (i) Date of death.....
 - (ii) Place of death.....
 - (iii) Place of death:
 - Village/Town.....
 - Region.....Country.....

(b) **Mother**

If alive: (i) Employed.....

(ii) Retired.....

(iii) Unemployed.....

(iv) Other, specify.....

If deceased: (i) Date of death.....

(ii) Place of death:

Village/Town

Region Country.....

(c) **Guardian**

If alive: (i) Employed.....

(ii) Retired.....

(iii) Unemployed.....

(iv) Other, specify.....

If deceased: (i) Date of death.....

(ii) Place of death:

Village/Town

Region Country.....

12. **Marital status:** married/single/divorced/widow/widower.....

if married:

(a) Name of spouse.....

(b) Maiden name.....

(c) Date of marriage.....

(d) Place of marriage.....

Village/Town

Region Country.....

13. **Education and Training**

	Name of institution	Qualification obtained	Year completed	Sponsor
Primary				
Secondary				
Vocational				
Tertiary				
Other, specify				
Current studies				

14. Employment

(i) If employed

- (a) Name of employer.....
- (b) Postal Address
- (c) Telephone Number

(ii) If were employed

- (a) Name of employer.....
- (b) Postal Address
- (c) Telephone Number
- (d) Reason for leaving employment.....

(iii) If self employed

- (a) Type of self employment.....

(iv) Never employed

15. Give names of your dependant children, if any:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>(a) Name</p> <p>Sex</p> <p>Date of birth</p> <p>Place of birth:</p> <p>Village / Town.....</p> <p>Region.....</p> | <p>(b) Name</p> <p>Sex</p> <p>Date of birth</p> <p>Place of birth:</p> <p>Village / Town.....</p> <p>Region.....</p> |
| <p>(c) Name</p> <p>Sex</p> <p>Date of birth</p> <p>Place of birth:</p> <p>Village / Town.....</p> <p>Region.....</p> | <p>(d) Name</p> <p>Sex</p> <p>Date of birth</p> <p>Place of birth:</p> <p>Village / Town.....</p> <p>Region.....</p> |
| <p>(e) Name</p> <p>Sex</p> <p>Date of birth</p> <p>Place of birth:</p> <p>Village / Town.....</p> <p>Region.....</p> | <p>(f) Name</p> <p>Sex</p> <p>Date of birth</p> <p>Place of birth:</p> <p>Village / Town.....</p> <p>Region.....</p> |

5

PART 2

ASSISTANCE

(This part must be completed by all applicants)

1. What type of assistance do you need?

(a) Education

Specify:

(b) Training

Specify:

(c) Employment

Specify:

(d) Self Employment

Specify:

(e) Others

Specify:

PART 3

(This part must be completed by all applicants)

Particulars of parents:

(a) Is or was your father a registered veteran? Yes/No.....

(b) If 'yes', give his veteran's registration number.....

(c) Is or was your mother a registered veteran? Yes/No.....

(d) If 'yes', give her veteran's registration number.....

DECLARATION BY APPLICATION

(This declaration must be completed by all applicants)

I,(full names), hereby declare that the information given by me in this application is, to the best of knowledge and belief, true and correct in every respect. I understand that any false statement in this application may result in disapproval of my application or render me liable to prosecution. I also declare that this application, together with my statement, have been read to me and fully explained in a language which I understand and that I have no further facts to add to my application.

Applicant's Signature.....

Mark or right thumb print

I certify that:

1. The Deponent acknowledges to me that :
 - 1.1 He or she knows and acknowledges the contents of this Declaration;
 - 1.2 He or she has no objection to taking the prescribed oath or making the affirmation;
 - 1.3 He or she considers the prescribed oath or affirmation to be binding on his or her conscience
2. The Deponent thereafter uttered the words: 'I swear or affirm that the contents of this Declaration are true and correct (so help me God)' (as the case may be).
3. The Deponent signed or thumb-printed this Declaration in my presence at the address set out here to.

Thisday of.....200.....

COMMISSIONER FOR OATHS

ADDRESS

The image shows two identical registration cards side-by-side. Each card is headed by the text 'MINISTRY OF YOUTH, NATIONAL SERVICE, SPORT AND CULTURE' and 'Children of the Liberation Struggle' (left) or 'Children of the Liberated Struggle' (right). The cards contain several fields for personal information: 'Name', 'Surname', 'Date of Birth', 'Place of Birth', 'Registration Office', and 'Signature'. A large central area is labeled 'Portrait' and contains a watermark of a map of Zimbabwe. At the bottom of each card is a grid for a unique identification number.

Annexure Six: Narrated Stories of the CLS**Cases Study I****NDAPANDULA NEELU**

I am *Ndapandula Neelu* (not her real name), 32 years old, mother of two from Eenhanha constituency, Ohangwena region. I was born in Kwanza Zulu Natal, Angola. I arrived in the land of the brave and country of my mother's birth at the age of nine years. I had no idea how I arrived in the country, as I was not feeling well during the journey. I could not remember how and when I settled in (former Ombalantu district) Anamulenge, Outapi town. Unlike other "exiled kids," I did not return with my parents but rather returned with a group of other "exiled kids", accompanied by caretakers. I attended my primary at Anamulenge primary school, accommodated in the school hostel, served food and taken care by a team of Catholic sisters (nuns).

We had so many happy moments with other kids and friends at Anamulenge hostels. Life was good until my friends and sisters started diminishing at a slow pace, little did I know that their families from different regions identify and collect them. At this time, I still had no idea where my parents. It happened that one day, a woman I knew by the name *Late Ndahafa Shopa* together with another aunty picked me from Anamulenge. The late Ndahafa seems to know my family and my mother. Perhaps Ndahafa had informed my mother about my whereabouts.

History had it that per liberation struggle school's authority, Ndahafa was not given permission to take me home but rather to have me transferred to Oshigambo School

(where there was another squad of “exiled kids”), a place I found out later that was closer to our home village. I am transferred to Oshigambo school hostel. We stayed in Oshigambo a year and half. As Anamulenge school case, families of “exiled kids” at Oshigambo started identifying and collecting their kids. At the age of eleven years, I always remained in the hostel like a missing child. I had no idea what was going on. I felt a bit confused and disturbed. Nobody could give me directions. Nobody prepared me on the situation we will find in Namibia. I was in the dilemma for three years.

I started demanding my parents. I was later informed that my mother is not well. I cannot meet her. My father apparently died in Angola when I was a baby. A certain aunty whom I believed to be my relative shortly started picking me for weekends and holidays. Subsequently Oshigambo School hostel closed down and probably “exiled kids” intake. The relative aunty came to collect me for good. She assured taking me home to meet my mum, granny and the entire family. Deep down I hoped and expected my family we left in Angola. Happiness was over the moon. I was excited and thrilled.

However, the closure of the school hostels shaped my life into a shocking shape. Little I know that this was the beginning of problem era. To start with, I came to learn that my mother was married before she left to Angola for the liberation struggle. They had two daughters with the husband. After independence, the couples reunited. I also discovered that I was born by the time my mother parted ways with her husband. Simply I was born out of the wedlock.

I am brought to my new family. We settled in Onakalunga Village, Oukwanyama residence in Ohangwena region. Upon my arrival, I stayed in my maternal grandmother's house. Later my grandmother aged and became sightless, we both moved to my mother's house to take care for the poor old aged woman. Life in my mother's house entailed my stepfather, two half sisters, a grandmother and other two close relatives. Granny was a wonderful woman. She loved me and had so much respect over me. She was fun, generous and had a woman's heart indeed. I was very happy. I would be at school but granny will call me to help her out with her pension logistics and treat me nicely. She was my reason to stay and wake up every morning, may her soul rest in peace.

Consequently, not long that I enjoyed granny's love. The old woman aged and died. Real troubles began. My family environment started growing bitter and worse day-by-day. I had serious problems. I was not still in school at the age of 14 years. My mother forced me to do heavy domestic work at the expense of my elder siblings. I was ever discriminated against other housemates. I ploughed; sowed, weeded, and harvested and thrashed mahangu at a very tender age. I remember going for weeding tenders in neighbourhoods to get money for my primary school fees at the age of 13 years. Walking a 4km distance to collect water from a well with a 25lt container was my daily assignment. Pounding mahangu, cooking for the family, cleaning the house, washing my elder's clothes formed part of my daily responsibilities. I became a slave in my own biological mother's house.

Since my parents were still unemployed, my mother had a shebeen. She had a problem of alcohol abuse, whenever I fail doing a task, she always blamed, scold and beat me to death. The upbringing was unacceptable. I came to term with that she is not my biological mother. Probably the late granny was the one. I was very heartbroken. I could vividly remember a life term episode how I suffered a heavily mistreatment and humiliation when I changed my surname from Iyambo to my real surname Uugulu. My biological father was Late Neelu Uugulu "Protuzanu." My surname has been Uugulu ever since from Angola. My mother later forced me to use Iyambo (my stepfather's surname). I liked Uugulu though. After I enrolled at school, I developed a tendency of writing Uugulu to my books at school. This strained teachers until they called my parents to explain the situation and bring me to order. Things get more worsened when I made my birth certificate using Uugulu as my surname. It was by luck that my neighbourhood grannies assisted me. I was 15 years of age. It is from this incident that I believed I totally get out of my parents favour.

Since, my mother and stepfather greeted changing my real surname with cruelty. Troubles mounted more and more. I retreated to look for my father's relative. Few moments when my mother is in good moods, she would tell me that my father's families are from Omuthiya. One day I visited the clinic and heard more about my father's roots hailing from Omuthiya, Ondonga in Oshikoto region. Destiny had me, I met my father's family e.g. uncles and grandmother. It was a happy moment. I stayed the whole holiday. Granny (my late father's mother) loved me very much. She cried aloud when we met. She wanted me to stay for good. The "*so-called mother*" of mine refused. I call her "*so-*

called” because to date I am not convinced she is the one. Out of a choice, I visited granny during holidays and weekends. She was loving and supportive. She always gave me money, food and other necessities to take home.

Life continued bitter and sour. Given that, my father died in the liberation struggle. I benefited from SIPE. My mother was very stingy and mean with my social grants. She never supported me with the grant. She rather used it for other purposes, mainly for her shebeen and alcohol. I had no cloths, beddings, shoes, underwear’s and other cosmetics for a teenager girl. I attended church with my other children in the neighbourhood’s clothes. I used toilet papers and worn out cloths for my periods. It was a traumatic life indeed. She would castigate me if I ask her to support me from my grant. It happened that one day I took a stand, approached NAMPOST and pleaded them to allow me to have access to the money. It was from this time that I bought myself proper cloths, uniform and other basic needs for myself.

I lived in depression and was very distressed. My health became poor. I started getting sick. I would faint and collapse at school. Despite my sickness, my mother would still yell and scream that I am a lazy fool in her house. My stepfather accused me of sleeping with men in the village. He claimed that too many partner in I have in the village caused my sickness. I kept on having terrible chest pain. I always stayed down at school. My school performance started getting weaker and weaker. Teachers at school also picked up my problem. They encouraged me to remain stronger. The situation was awful.

However, my mother whom I referred to “*a ghost woman*” later got a job in Sossouvlei (deep in Kara’s region). We remained in the house with my stepfather. I was sick, yet doing heavy domestic work in the house. My elder siblings were just travellers. Yet when my mother comes, she would give money to my elder sister. I later became very sick. I was admitted in and out of the hospitals. Nobody would come see you. There was no family support. By that, time mother transferred from Kara’s region. She would not visit me in the hospital. It hurt me a lot. I ended up referring the issue to the social worker. The idea was my mother to confess publicly if she gave birth to me. She confessed it in the presence of other family members.

I still loved going to school. I remember sneaking out from the hospital to come write my grade ten exams but fainted in the way home and was found lying the next morning by road passers. I later ended up in the wheel chair, my school attendance slowed down, until I totally dropped out from school for good, SIPE social grants also stopped that time.

Due to my constant sickness, my elder sister called me to Windhoek for better treatment. They sent me to a psychiatric and social worker. History repeated itself; my sister was outrageous than the mother. Beside my poor health, I was terrible treated. Later some uncle to my sister’s husband picked me, referred me to some Dr. Iihuhwa, and diagnosed that I had no heart failure, but suffered from depression and stress. When I survived the mysterious illness, it was too late to go back to school. I came back to the village. Despite a referral letter from the hospital confirming, that I left school due to illness. The

principal turn a blind eye on me, arguing that my age for my grades are over. I ended up in grade nine.

I turned into a village home girl. I later become pregnant. My mother rejected me throughout my pregnancy. I was moving between my boyfriend's place and my father's family in Omuthiya for emotional support and love. I felt belonging to nowhere. Currently I am a mother of three kids, yet all my children are with my boyfriend and father's family. My mother does not have any little heart with me. It is with regret that I grew up with an unsympathetic family. I still wish to relocate somewhere to a family where I could call home. It is such a sad experience mistreated by your genetic mother than by a stranger. In tears, I feel that if my biological father was alive or had I owned a sibling from my father things would have been better.

I am very outspoken, person of persons, loving, passionate and positive. I am confident about my dream of becoming a social worker or a pastor. I enjoy counselling and helping others with problems. I wish to own a school crèche or a kindergarten, unite all orphans and vulnerable children in my family and give them the best.

With my unfortunate family background and upbringing, I pray to God to get a job to support my kids. I cry aloud to the government to allocate a piece of land for me to start a new life with my children. I have no peace in the name of my mother. My mother to date tries to divide me with my own relatives and neighbourhood in the village. I have no peace at heart in my mother's house. Thanks God there was a demonstration of CLS that gave me peace of mind. I have nowhere I belong. When I am at (my father's

mother) grandmother's house, my heart is at ease. If am to get a job I would never stay at that house. I am pleading to the government to give me a place to stay, to cultivate or do my work.

In conclusion, I shall say that being born during the liberation struggle of Namibia is a challenge that I fought on my own. My struggle is not yet over. To date am not convinced that the mother allocated to me is my genuine mother. It will take me ages to come to terms with. Maybe is because I was born out of the wedlock and during hard times in the bushes.

The root causes to my today's predicament is blamed to the government for not taking care for the "exiled kids" or sending us to proper schools onset. They suppose to give us counselling sessions and support group classes. Some of us found ourselves in chaos unexpectedly. I never had a family structure where I called home. They would have organized a hostel. Some parents never stayed with their kids e.g. my mother. I was a stranger in my mother's house. Life was never easy. I proudly consider being born by a soldier and a soldier on my own. Through thin and thick, I am strong and sound. I am determined that one day God will help me to win the war I have gone through.

Case Study II

MAKAFI

It was in 1989 when we first arrived in Namibia with my mother and I was only five years old. Upon our arrival, we headed to Ogongo, Uukwambi in the Omusati region and there we lived with my grandmother for close to a year. My father later picked me up from Ogongo and took me back to Oukwanyama with him. At Oukwanyama, we stayed with my grandmother who is not my biological grandmother but she was the woman who had raised my father all his life. My father told me that all his parents died when he was very young and grandmother took over the role of raising him. After independence, my father got a job straight away and he worked and stayed in Windhoek.

Life living with my grandmother was good before old age caught up with her. She was a good woman who not only taught me valuable life lessons, but she also loved and cared for me, she was always there when I needed her and I loved her very much. We were very close, until she fell ill and later sadly passed away, she died in my very my own arms.

I never came to terms with my grandmother's death; I felt like she had left the world too soon, she left me too soon. After my grandmother passed away everything started to fall apart, keeping daily order in the house started to become a challenge. The older kids misbehaved and dominated the house and they made life very difficult for me because I was still a new comer and they made it a point to make my life miserable. They would often beat me up for no reason; they would treat me so badly that at times I would wish

that I had died with my grandmother. Our house that was once a home had now turned into a house where all the sweet memories that I once made were all turning into bad memories. Neighbours learnt about my hardships and they persuaded my father to take me to Windhoek or take me back to Ogongo to my mother. My father hardly stayed home, he had always stayed away with work in Windhoek.

My father was a very sympathetic man and he later relocated me to stay with him in Windhoek. We stayed in Freedom land in Katutura at the beginning, we lived happily and we had a good relationship. I started my primary school at Tobias Hainyeko Primary school in Katutura, Windhoek the happy moments with my father did not last long. In two years time my father got married and at that stage, my whole life started to change. The new woman of the house moved in with us and immediately after that she started to mark her territory by showing me that she had the power over me. I learned that life with a stepmother was so much more different than I ever imagined. The situation was irrepressible that father was out of town with work related missions most of the time and my stepmother started to show how heartless she really was. She was abusive in every sense of the word, she beat me, she insulted me, and she made me feel worthless. She starved me many times when my father was away and if I had lunch, I would not have dinner. She forced me to stay home away from school so many times just so I could wash her clothes and clean the house.

That woman never liked me; she tried finding a way to get rid of me from the house. On several occasions, she fabricated stories, accused and reported me to my father. It so

happened that one weekend while my father was away, I felt terribly hungry so I decided to ask for permission from my stepmother to go visit my uncle at Babylon in Havana. In the absence of my father, the purpose to see my uncle was to report my stepmother's uncalled behaviour to him. Though she permitted me to visit my uncle, she later twisted the story to my father that I sneaked out of the house for two days without her permission. Apart from rumours and common wicked behaviours, the selfish woman had a tendency of locking me up in the house, beat me up and slave me with household work.

The fabrication of stories on my disobedience took its course. At a time, my stepmother formulated a story that I had attempted to commit suicide in my room. For the sake of saving his marriage too, my father could not bottle it up any longer. He ultimately expelled me to the north. This happened during April/ May holiday. I can vividly remember having my pass certificate of grade 6. Back to square one, I was at my maternal grandmother's homestead in Ogongo. It was so sad, ousted during the midyear meant not completing the 2001 school calendar. True enough I never had a chance to say out my story. I was young and naive and so everybody believed I was an awful child, if only my grandmother was alive.

Arriving at Ogongo my mother was not around. I later learnt that she has a job and based at Onyaanya. I stayed at Ogongo close to a year not going to school because no one bothered to send me back there. I was 14years old by that time and I remained at home. Life was very tough. I was imperilled to all types of work at home. I suffered from

abusive languages at hand from the housemates. Nobody cared about me. I felt like a disgraced child.

Later on, my mother overheard that I was out of school so she fetched me from Ogongo to Onyaanya where I stayed with her. She was single and stayed in a one-bedroom iron sheet house built around certain school ground, where she served as a cleaner at the time. My mother was a heavy alcoholic. She always returned home very late at night under heavy influence of alcohol. She was hardly at home, as a child it was frightening to stay in a house alone. Despite the alcoholic problem, we had no bond or connection between us. I had no sense of belonging with her, probably because we did not know each other from onset and for too long. I came to associate with her more after a decade. I always stayed alone in a shack the whole day and that harsh upbringing was too much on me.

Due to my mother's situation, I felt it was better to leave and go back to Ogongo. The following year I moved to Ogongo and enrolled for grade 8. My stay at Ogongo was greeted with challenges from my aunty and granny. That aunty was very violent, cruel and unkind. The house was full of boys and I was the only girl. I had to cook for them, pound and do other all other household chores. My auntie's interest was to make sure that I completed all the chores in the house. Even if she was a police officer, she had never cared for my schoolwork.

One day she heavily mistreated me while preparing for school in the morning. That day I woke up to pound before dawn. Since I finished a bit late, I could not proceed in the

field but rather to clean up and to go to school on time. This angered both my grandmother and aunty. They seized the water basin, poured out water and soiled me with mud. Life continued growing from bitter to worse. The abuse and extreme unhappiness in the house was something I could not stomach. I had no choice. I decided to go back again to Oukwanyama to my late (paternal) grandmother's house. It was during a midyear time. It was in September and so yet again, I left my Grade half way.

The last time I left Oukwanyama was in 1997 and I was back in 2004. I could not remember the place very well. I had only N\$ 20.00 for transport. A certain Samaritan that I explained my situation gave me a free hike from Ogongo to Oukwanyama. I settled but life was hopeless. I felt the globe falling on me. For two whole years, I had not gone to school. Life was more and challenging. Nothing was changing for the better. I remember losing all my official documents in Oukwanyama because of lack of the proper stay. History repeated itself.

My father later heard about my arrival. For the second time, father was kind enough to relocate me from Oukwanyama to Windhoek. I learnt that the stepmother I left last time had divorced my father. This time my father was married to another woman, "another stepmother." It also happened that the family sold the usual house and moved into another house. The new stepmother was even worse than the previous one. She terribly abused me to the point that to date I had never stepped my foot in Windhoek. Since I dropped school for the past two years, my father advised me to enrol for non-formal school. I enrolled for a Computer Course at Penduka.

Slowly, things started getting out of hand. Student life started demanding e.g. taxi fares, food and other commodities. My stepmother was ungenerous, stingy and cruel. She was always irritated and jealous when my father gave me taxi money. She fought tooth and nail to get rid of me from the house. Her battle ranged from locking me out of the house until late, picking arguments, not sharing food, not to talk of abusive language. A number of times she accused me of having an affair and sleeping with my own father. My stepmother and father were ever at the loggerheads. Consequently, there was no peace in the house. My father had no power to keep me in the house.

For the sake of saving my father's second marriage, I got thinking of withdrawing from the house. I had friends in the neighbourhoods. I pleaded them to rescue me for a while. I moved in to the neighbouring friend's house. Things were not that easy, my friends had boyfriends. They would go out on drinking sprees, clubbing, dancing and all other adolescent girls could do. I was still young and had no means. I dropped out from the computer course. My father turned a blind eye on me. He has to save his marriage. I kept on telling myself that one day, things will change.

Hours and days passed, months went by and I did not see my father. Yet we stayed in the same neighbourhood. However, God does wonders. It was during the rainy season, my mother travelled to Windhoek to sell marula juice, "omagongo." It happened that my mother called my father to pay us a visit at our house. Surprisingly, she was greeted that I no longer stay there. I was called from the neighbouring house. My mother was

touched by the story. She decided I should pack all my belongings and off to the north I went.

We stayed in the north. My mother is a changed person. She had a house in Onyaanya. She also collected my other three siblings that I came to learn that she had. At last, we were a happy family. It is with regret that family reunion came too late. I had no chance to go back to school. All my dreams were shattered. It kept on haunting me down. I never had peace. Later, I gave birth. It is unfortunate that I am an “exile child” to have endured hardships that nobody should ever have to go through. The community had a bad perspective of us but I have a dream of finishing school and getting a proper job. I am a soccer player, love athletics and enjoy sport. I am talented in hairdressing. None of my dreams and aspirations I feel I have achieved. I had not realized most of my talents. I am speechless and have no comment over my life experience in Namibia. If it were not a demonstration of CLS, life would have been worse. It really rescued some of us to have peace indeed. I prefer to be called “Makafa”, (worn out cloths) literally because I feel am ‘useless, worthless and stupid” in the image of others. Nevertheless, I trust that though I Makafa, I am Makafa in the eyes of those who feel that they are well off but not to everybody. I am looking forward to getting a job I like and sort out myself one day like any other person.