

EXPERIENCES OF THE IMPLEMENTERS OF THE SCHOOL FEEDING
PROGRAMME IN TWO SCHOOLS IN THE ZAMBEZI REGION, NAMIBIA

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN EDUCATION
(LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND POLICY STUDIES)
AT
UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

BY NJAHI REJOICE KHAMA

201063808

APRIL 2022

Main Supervisor: PROF. AFRICA ZULU

Co-Supervisor: DR DAVID NKENGBEZA

ABSTRACT

The School Feeding Programme is used in Namibia as a poverty alleviation measure to ensure that poor and vulnerable learners who come from underprivileged families get to eat at least one meal a day and are able to stay and concentrate in school. However, poverty continues to afflict the Namibian people. The purpose of this study was to investigate implementers' experiences of the School Feeding Programme in two schools of the Zambezi Region. The study is couched within two conceptual frameworks, Amartya Sen's Capability Approach and Maslow's hierarchy of needs. The review of literature addresses aspects such as, the influence of the School Feeding Programme on Education, health and socio-economic consideration, the overview of different country cases of the school feeding programme, challenges and measures to implement the National School Feeding Programme. The study employed the constructivist paradigm rooted in the qualitative approach and a case study design of the two schools of the Zambezi Region of Namibia. Purposive sampling was used to select participants from the participating schools. The study utilised interview guide, focus group discussions and observations data collection instruments and data was analysed using content analysis, interpretive phenomenological analysis and semiotic analysis. The study observes the proliferation of strong evidence that the National School Feeding programme has potential to improve enrolment, attendance, retention and reduce dropout rates among poor and vulnerable children. The research establishes that a multiplicity of challenges threaten the running and implementation of the programmes and include chief among them, lack of training, minimal community participation due to lack of compensation, the absence of a School Feeding Programme policy, lack of proper kitchen utensils, lack of proper infrastructure, dining hall and secured storage facilities, lack of food fortification and diversification, poor health practices, poor coordination and lack of monitoring and evaluation. The study recommends that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture must develop a Namibian School Feeding Policy and improve the coordination of the programme. It exhorts the Ministry of Health and Social Services and the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform to support the School Feeding Programme. Schools

are encouraged to intensify the monitoring of learners' hygiene, guide cooks and promote food production training.

KEYWORDS: Namibia, Experiences, implementers, School Feeding Programme, enrolment, attendance, poverty, nutrition, challenges, Zambezi Region.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to begin by thanking the Almighty God, for giving me good health, knowledge, wisdom, guidance and strength to undertake this study. I would like to acknowledge with appreciation the contributions of the following in making the study a success.

I would like to sincerely thank my supervisors, Prof A. Zulu and Dr D. Nkengbeza, for providing me with academic guidance, suggestions and necessary advice that influenced direction and the shape that this study has taken.

A special thanks goes to Ms S. L. Steenkamp, the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, for allowing me to conduct this study and for providing a partial payment for my study. I also appreciate the Zambezi Regional Director and his staff for their support during my site visits for data collection. I sincerely appreciate the coordinators at central and regional levels, the service providers as well as the leadership of the two selected primary schools for devoting their time and energy to take part in the interviews. Equally, I would like to thank the school board members for taking part in a focus group discussion.

Finally, I heartedly acknowledge and thank my family, Bollen Khama, Isabel, Methuselar, Eudia, Stephen, Karen, M. Mukando and brother Benjamin for their prayers, support, love and cooperation during the entire period of my study.

DEDICATION

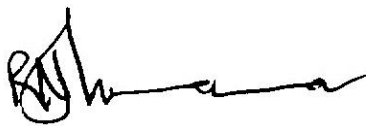
This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, Mr. Bollen Simataa Khama, and our children, Isabel, Methuselar, Eudia and Stephen, for their love, support and encouragement throughout this study.

DECLARATION

I, Njahi Rejoice Khama, declare hereby that this study is a true reflection of my own research, and that this work or part thereof has not been submitted for a degree in any other institution of higher education.

No part of this dissertation may be reproduced, stored in any retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, or by means (e.g. electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise) without the prior permission of the author, or the University of Namibia in that behalf.

I, Njahi Rejoice Khama, grant the University of Namibia the right to reproduce this dissertation in whole or in part, in any manner or format, which the University of Namibia may deem fit, for any person or institution requiring it for study and other research; provided that the University of Namibia shall waive this right if the whole dissertation has been or is being published in a manner satisfactory to the University.



Njahi Rejoice Khama

April 2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
DEDICATION	iv
DECLARATION	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	xiii
LIST OF FIGURES	xiv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS	xv
CHAPTER 1	1
ORIENTATION TO THE PROPOSED STUDY	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 The global background to the study.....	1
1.3 The African historical context	4
1.4 The Namibian historical context.....	5
1.5 Statement of the problem	10
1.6 Research questions.....	13
1.7 Significance of the study.....	14
1.8 Limitations of the study	14
1.9 Delimitations of the study.....	15
1.10 Clarification of operational concepts	16
1.11 Organisation of the study/ chapter division	18
1.12 Summary.....	20
CHAPTER 2	21
LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL/CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	21
2.1 Introduction.....	21
2.2 Conceptual framework.....	22
2.3 Theoretical framework.....	26
2.3.1 The Capability Approach.....	26

2.3.2	Maslow’s Hierarchy of human needs	28
2.4	The influence of NSFP programme on education, health and socio-economic considerations	29
2.4.1	Educational factors.....	30
2.4.1.1	Enrolment.....	30
2.4.1.2	Attendance	32
2.4.1.3	Retention	33
2.4.1.4	Improvement of learners’ performance	35
2.5	Health.....	38
2.5.1	Children’s health needs.....	38
2.5.2	Food supplements	39
2.5.3	De-worming	41
2.5.4	HIV and AIDS	42
2.5.5	Learners’ psychological improvement.....	44
2.5.6	Socio-economic considerations of the SFP.....	45
2.5.6.1	Short term and long term household food security.....	46
2.5.6.2	Alleviation of short and long term hunger	47
2.5.6.3	Job creation	50
2.6	The challenges to the implementation of the SFP	53
2.6.1	Competition in the local markets	53
2.6.2	Competing interests	54
2.6.3	Problem of recruiting untrained staff /teachers/School Board Members.....	55
2.6.4	Increasing numbers of SFP beneficiaries.....	56
2.6.5	The absence of the NSFP policy.....	57
2.6.6	Other challenges.....	58
2.7	Measures to address the SFP challenges.....	58
2.8	Some country case studies on the implementation of SFPs.....	59
2.8.1	The case of Namibia	60
2.8.2	The case of Botswana	64
2.8.3	The Case of South Africa.....	67
2.8.4	The Case of Kenya.....	69

2.8.5	The case of Malawi.....	71
2.8.6	The Case of Brazil	72
2.8.7	The Case of Cambodia.....	73
2.8.8	The Case of the United Kingdom (UK).....	75
2.8.9	The Case of the United States of America (USA)	76
2.8.10	The lessons from the case studies	77
2.9	Summary	80
CHAPTER 3		82
RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN		82
3.1	Introduction.....	82
3.2	The research paradigm.....	82
3.2.1	Ontology	84
3.2.2	Epistemology	84
3.3	Constructivist paradigm	85
3.4	Research design and approach	86
3.4.1	Population of the study	89
3.4.2	Sample and sampling procedures.....	89
3.4.3	Research instruments	91
3.4.4	Pilot study	93
3.4.5	Validity	93
3.4.6	Trustworthiness.....	94
3.4.7	Data collection procedures.....	95
3.4.8	Data analysis	96
3.4.8.1	Content analysis	97
3.4.8.2	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).....	97
3.4.8.3	Semiotic analysis	98
3.4.9	Research Ethics.....	99
3.5	Summary.....	100

CHAPTER 4	101
PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY	101
4.1 Introduction.....	101
4.2 Description of the research area.....	103
4.3 The experiences of the implementers of the SFP in the participating schools	103
4.3.1 The general experiences of implementers of the SFP in participating schools	104
4.3.2 Experiences of implementers regarding their roles and training in the selected school of the Zambezi of Region	106
4.4 Implementers' views regarding the influence of NSFP on education, health and socio-economic considerations	112
4.4.1 Educational indicators.....	112
4.4.1.1 Learner enrolment.....	112
4.4.1.2 School attendance	116
4.4.1.3 Retention and dropout rates	118
4.4.1.4 Learners' performance	121
4.4.1.5 Implementers' views on the performance and progression of learners before the NSFP started and afterwards.....	125
4.4.1.6 The link between NSFP and learner performance	129
4.4.1.7 The progression of learners in schools.....	131
4.4.2 The health of learners.....	135
4.4.2.1 Practices that negatively affect the health of learners in relation to the NSFP	135
4.4.2.2 Implementers' views with regards to NSFP in relation to learners' nutrition	137
4.4.2.3 Implementers' views with regards to NSFP influence on learners infected with HIV and AIDS	140
4.4.3 Socio-economic considerations	143
4.4.3.1 Implementers' views with regards to the influence of NSFP on poverty reduction	143
4.5 Challenges implementers face regarding the SFP	147
4.6 Observation findings.....	164
4.6.1 Observation findings for School 1	164
4.6.2 Observation findings for School 2	166

4.7	Ways to mitigate the challenges faced by implementers of the NSFP	168
4.7.1	Mitigations regarding the alleviation of short-term hunger.....	175
4.7.2	Mitigating poverty reduction on a long-term basis.....	178
4.7.3	Mitigating poverty through child training.....	180
4.7.4	Mitigating poverty through job creation	181
4.7.5	Suggestion on to improve Food Security through the decentralisation process/localised food production.....	182
4.8	Summary	184
CHAPTER 5		186
DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS		186
5.1	Introduction.....	186
5.2	Biographical information	187
5.3	The experiences of the implementers of the NSFP at the participating schools	188
5.3.1	The general experiences of implementers of NSFP at the participating schools in the Zambezi Region	188
5.3.2	Experiences of implementers regarding their roles and training at the two selected schools in the Zambezi region	190
5.4	The influence of the NSFP on education, health and socio-economic considerations	191
5.4.1	Educational factors.....	191
5.4.2	The health of learners.....	196
5.4.3	Socio-economic considerations	200
5.5	Challenges implementers face regarding the NSFP.....	205
5.6	Ways to mitigate the challenges faced by implementers of NSFP	208
5.6.1	Utensils	209
5.6.2	Infrastructure.....	209
5.6.3	Provision of firewood	210
5.6.4	Food quality	210
5.6.5	Community or parental participation in the NSFP	211
5.6.6	Training implementers of the NSFP	212
5.6.7	Mitigating the effect on poor and OVCs from being mocked	213

5.6.8	Late deliveries by service providers	214
5.6.9	Coordination and monitoring activities	215
5.6.10	Namibia SFP policy	216
5.6.11	Alleviation of short - term hunger	218
5.6.12	Poverty reduction on long-term basis	219
5.6.13	Poverty reduction through child training	220
5.6.14	Mitigating poverty through job creation	221
5.6.15	Food security through decentralisation process and localised food production	222
5.7	Unpacking of the conceptual framework	224
5.8	Management of SFP.....	225
5.9	Access and Retention indicators	225
5.10	Educational outcomes	226
5.11	Health outcomes.....	226
5.12	Socio-economic outcomes	227
5.13	A critique of Maslow’s theory	228
5.14	Contribution to knowledge	229
5.15	Summary.....	229
CHAPTER 6		235
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ..		235
6.1	Introduction.....	235
6.2	Summary of findings and conclusions	236
6.2.1	The experiences of the implementers of the NSFP in the participating schools	236
6.3	The influence of NSFP on education, health and socio-economic considerations	237
6.3.1	Educational factors.....	238
6.3.2	The health of learners.....	238
6.3.3	Socio-economic considerations	240
6.4	Challenges implementers face regarding the NSFP.....	240
6.5	Ways to mitigate the challenges faced by implementers of NSFP	242

6.6	Recommendations.....	245
6.6.1	Recommendation to the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture	245
6.6.2	Recommendations to the Ministry of Health and Social Services.....	248
6.6.3	Recommendations to the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform ..	249
6.6.4	Recommendations to the two schools.....	249
6.7	Contributions of the study.....	250
6.8	How the research questions were addressed during the study	251
6.9	Recommendations for further/future studies	252
6.10	Summary	252
	REFERENCES.....	254
	APPENDICES	272

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1:	Types of SFP and their advantages and disadvantages	23
Table 2:	Index codes for participants	102
Table 3:	The general experiences of implementers of SFP in participating schools of the Zambezi region	104
Table 4:	Experiences of implementers regarding their roles selected school of the Zambezi of region	106
Table 5:	Challenges that are faced by implementers of NSFP	147

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	The conceptual framework where the relationship between SFP management, indicators and potential outcomes	24
Figure 2	Zambezi Region	103
Figure 3	Trends of school 1's enrolment from 2000 to 2017	113
Figure 4	Trends of school 2's enrolments from 2014 to 2017.....	113
Figure 5	Trends of pass rates for school 1 from 2004 to 2016.....	121
Figure 6	Learners eating porridge with their hands at School 1	150
Figure 7	Status of kitchen utensils used at school 2 for school feeding meals.....	151
Figure 8	Quality of a kitchen of one of the schools for NSFP at School 1	152
Figure 9	A heap of firewood used as a source of energy for the cooking of SFP food at School 2 during meal time	165
Figure 10	A school garden to support the NSFP at School 1	177
Figure 11	School Feeding Administration Structure Khama's Model of NSFP Execution in Zambezi Region	247

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

C1HO	Coordinator 1 for the Head Office
C2RO	Coordinator 2 for the Regional Office
C3RO	Coordinator 3 for the Regional Office
C4HO	Coordinator 4 for the Head Office
EFA	Education For All
FFE	Food For Education
HGSF	Home Grown School Feeding
HPP	Harambee Prosperity Plan
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoEAC	Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture
NaSIS	Namibian School Feeding Information System
NEPAD	New partnership for African Development
NSFP	Namibian School Feeding Programme
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PS1	Principal of School 1
PS2	Principal of School 2
RT	Retired Teacher
SBM1	School Board Member 1
SBM2	School Board Member 2
SFP	School Feeding Programme
SP	Service Provider
THR	Take-Home Ration

T1S1	Teacher 1 for School 1
T1S2	Teacher 1 for School 2
T2S1	Teacher 2 for School 1
T2S2	Teacher 2 for School 2
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund
UNTAG	United Nations Transitional Assistance Group
UPE	Universal Primary Education
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation

CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION TO THE PROPOSED STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an orientation to the study. The chapter comprises of the background of the study that focuses on a global background, the African historical context and the Namibian historical context. The chapter also presents the statement of the problem, research questions and significance of the study. The last three sections comprise of the limitations, delimitations as well as definitions of operational terms used in the study.

1.2 The global background to the study

Education and health are two vital pillars of human capital that form the basis of an individual's economic productivity (Tomlinson, 2007). Both aspects are valuable tools in ensuring a healthy economy and in creating a literate society. Early childhood education is specifically recognised as an integral part of basic education. Internationally, education has been recognised by the United Nations (UN) and other international charters to be a fundamental human right. This is expressed in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the Jomtien World Conference on Education (1990).

The United Nations (UN) Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that:

“We, the participants in the World Conference on Education for All, reaffirm the right of all people to education... together we call on governments, concerned organisations and individuals to join this undertaking” (UNESCO, 1991, p. 95).

Namibia, like many other world countries, positively responded to the above declaration by adopting the Education For All (EFA) goals and has shown its commitment to these goals by stipulating the right to education in the national constitution as a fundamental right for every Namibian (No. 20 (1) of 1998). In general terms, the EFA Goals in Namibia address issues concerned with access, equity, quality and democracy. However, Ellis’ (2012) case study of the Namibian School Feeding Programme reveals that in as much as education has been recognised as a fundamental human right, poverty, food insecurity, inequalities and imbalances that occurred in the past reduce opportunities for children from extremely poor and vulnerable backgrounds to access education. However, the Botswana Institute of Development Policy Analysis (BIDPA) case study reveals that, in as much as education is being recognised as a human right, there are millions of children who do not attend school in Africa (BIDPA (2013), To make the matters worse, the majority of them experience malnutrition, stunted growth or short-term hunger which seriously affects their ability to learn.

According to Brandon and Smith (2013) hunger, malnutrition and chronic fatigue are huge hurdles to learning in sub-Saharan Africa. Namibia being one of the sub-Saharan countries is not an exempted from this problem, especially in rural communities. For example, the Namibian Blueprint on wealth redistribution and poverty eradication (2016) states that the

existence of food and nutrition insecurity is primarily due to high levels of poverty in the country. The low-income earners struggle to meet their daily requirement for food intake and therefore only access poor quality food with low micronutrients. The result of this is the failure of children from such households to attend school regularly.

The recent food, fuel and financial crises have evinced the importance of school feeding programmes, both as a social safety net for children living in poverty and food insecurity, and as part of national policies and plans. The Blueprint on wealth redistribution and poverty eradication (2016) demonstrates that these crises relate to food insecurity due to inaccessibility to foodstuffs and a high dependence on food imports – a situation which results in high food prices. This situation hinders the ability of poor and most vulnerable people to access adequate food.

Accordingly, the School Feeding Programme (SFP) is considered as one of the major interventions used to address these aforementioned challenges. Sulemana, Ngah, and Majid (2013) observe that the World Food Programme uses these interventions to assist countries by providing expertise, advice, food aid and cash for the realisation of the UN goals. The SFP is aligned to the United Nations Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 1, 2 and 3 which were operational from 2000 to 2015. The first goal was aimed at eradicating extreme hunger and poverty, the second one was aimed at achieving universal primary education and the third one was aimed at promoting gender equality and empowering women. In 2015, the MDGs were translated into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) whose implementations spans for the period 2016 to 2030. The SDGs, in particular SDG1 whose objective is to end poverty in all forms and SDG 2

which is aimed at ending hunger and achieving food security by deploying a more sustainable approach (Sustainable Development Goals, 2017) are critical to the goals of the current study. Despite Namibia's adoption of the SDGs, poverty remains one of the greatest challenges to human development in Namibia (Blueprint on wealth redistribution and poverty eradication, 2016).

1.3 The African historical context

The SFPs have had a long, international history since the post-Second World War (Uduku, 2011). In Africa, more than 46 million children do not attend school as a result of hunger and malnutrition. Many of them suffer from malnutrition and stunted growth, or experience short-term hunger, which seriously affects their ability to learn. In 2000, the United Nations (UN) member states met in Dakar and committed themselves to eradicating hunger and to attaining universal primary education. The SFPs were one of the interventions chosen to address these challenges (Machocho, 2011).

A greater focus on educational objectives arising from the UN commitments resulted in the SFPs receiving funding from governments, donors and NGOs, mainly from Africa. Today, the majority of low and middle income countries in Africa have now introduced different forms of SFPs in schools to support vulnerable learners and address those challenges (Uduku, 2011). Uduku (2011) investigates how school building designs could support primary SFPs in low and middle- income countries by drawing insights from Ghana and South Africa. The study concludes that SFPs are justified to be development hubs that support children's education and integrated community development outreach

activities. According to Machocho (2011), in most African countries, the provision of food through schools in different socio-economic dimensions, such as education, health and nutrition, social equity, and agricultural development, have made SFPs an appealing option within Education for All (EFA) strategies.

In 2003, African governments, in their envisioned aim to restore agricultural growth, food security, adequate nutritional levels and rural development on the continent, endorsed the Home Grown School Feeding (HGSF) programme of the Comprehensive African Development Programme (CADP). Studies such as Machocho, (2011) also reveal that in the same year, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) identified the HGSF as having an immediate impact on food security in Africa, with the potential to contribute to long-term development goals. These goals, among others, include MDGs which have currently been translated to SDGs. Machocho (2011) explains that the HGSF programme was designed to link school feeding to agricultural development through the purchase and use of locally and domestically produced foods.

1.4 The Namibian historical context

Namibia attained its independence from the South Africa's apartheid regime in 1990. During the apartheid era, most people, especially blacks, experienced poverty, food insecurity, inequality and imbalances. This situation, reduced opportunities for children from extremely poor and vulnerable background to access education (Ellis, 2012).

The post-independence Namibia has made efforts to reduce extreme hunger and socioeconomic disparities. The new government of Namibia put in place national policies and frameworks to create greater uniformity within an unequal educational system, and address the added challenges of hunger and recurrent drought. The SFP received political support from the government through national policy frameworks which are aligned to Vision 2030 where the Namibian nation's aspirations to achieve a knowledge-based society were outlined (Office of the President, 2004).

Namibia is classified as an upper middle-income country (WFP, 2010). Although Namibia is classified as an upper middle income country (WFP, 2010), the country's many school children experience food insecurity and remain out of school because their families do not have the means to support their educational needs. In response to these challenges, the Namibian School Feeding Programme (NSFP) was introduced in 1992 by the Government of Namibia in collaboration with the World Food Programme (WFP) (Ministry of Education, 1993). The aim was to address past inequalities among children and to relieve hunger caused by drought conditions. According to the extensive Annual Progress Report on Namibian SFP, the SFP is one of the strategies which is promoted by the government to address inequalities and other social injustices that prevent Namibian children from accessing educational opportunities (WFP, 2014). The programme was also aimed at expanding access to educational opportunities to all Namibian children, including poverty-stricken children as well as Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC). These children are provided with a nutritious mid-morning snack during school days (Ministry of Education, 1993).

A host of international and national policies have influenced the setting up and management of the SFP in Namibia. Among the international policies are the United Nations Convention Rights of the Child (No.28 of 1989), Sustainable Development Goals, namely SDG 1, SDG 2 and SDG 4 and the World Education Forum of 2000 (UNGA, 2000). Among the national policies, the following are influential in the provision of SFP: the Constitution No. 20 (1) of 1998 and the Namibian Education Act No. 16 of 2001. These national policies emphasised provision of education as a right to all Namibians. In particular, the policy document, titled “Towards Education For All”, was introduced (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1993). One of the relevant goals in the policy is access. The Access goal emphasises the need for the provision of opportunities for all children to attend school by mitigating challenges such as insufficient nutrition, poverty reduction, hunger, dropout rate and vulnerability (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1993). More importantly, the fourth National Development Plan (NDP 4) recognises the SFP as an important vehicle for addressing food insecurity in Namibia (WFP, 2014). These assertions are captured in the Namibian Fifth Development Plan 5 and the Harambe Prosperity Plan (HPP) because they promote the social advancement of the lives of the Namibian people.

To provide a legal framework, the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the WFP, produced a Namibian School Feeding Programme Reference Manual. The manual outlines the following objectives of the NSFP:

- Increased school enrolment, attendance and retention;
- Learning performance and progression through grades; and

- Improved health and nutrition of children through the provision of food that has been fortified with essential nutrients.

The expected outcomes of the NSFP are to:

- Help families in poor rural areas invest in their children's education;
- Improve their health; and
- Reduce poverty and eradicate children's short-term hunger by feeding them during mid-day school break (Ministry of Education, n.d.).

The manual serves as the only reference document used by staff with school feeding responsibilities. The NSFP manual was initially informed by the First National Development Plans (NDP 1&4, 1995-2000) which highlight the SFP as an important vehicle for addressing food insecurity in Namibia (WFP, 2014). The NSFP Manual posits that communities should provide the following: fuel (sticks, wood, paper, plastic, and coal), water, plates and spoons, soap for cleaning, materials for a cooking shelter, materials for a storeroom and cooking utensils. Additionally, the communities should prepare meals at school, construct a cooking shelter and a storeroom which should be secured from both thieves and pests, protect the school premises, organise at least three meetings per annum to discuss activities regarding NSFP, organise fundraising activities, recycle empty bags and oil containers, participate in community development projects and assist with the school vegetable garden (Ministry of Education, n.d.).

Morton, Pencheon, and Squires (2017) note that the MDGs, namely MDG 1, MDG 2 and MDG 3 support the NSFP. These goals address the overwhelming empirical and scientific evidence that the world needs a more radical sustainable approach to ending poverty and hunger. Support for the NSFP is now captured in the SDGs that were implemented in 2015. The relevant SDG sub goals are SDG 1 (which aims to end poverty), SDG 2 (which is aimed at ending hunger), SDG 4 (whose aim is to achieve quality education) and SDG 10 (which aims to reduce inequalities) (Morton, et al, 2017).

The SFP activities are coordinated at national, regional and school levels. At the national level, the activities are led by the Division Management Planning, Appraisal and Training within the Directorate of Programmes and Quality Assurance (PQA) of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture. It is the government body that coordinates, manages and implements the programme in Namibia (MoE, 2012). The main functions of the PQA include food procurement, monitoring implementation and maintaining oversight and external control of the feeding programme. The regional hostel officers in the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture in collaboration with circuit inspectors, principals and school board members and focal point teachers are responsible for monitoring, control, reporting and ensuring quality service (Ellis, 2012). At the school level, the school principal signs for the delivery of food. A focal teacher (responsible for life skills or counselling) is in charge of running the programme, including record keeping. While the school boards are involved because of the in-kind contributions expected of parents (MoE, 2012).

The discussion above, demonstrates that the SFP is included in various national and international legal frameworks. In as much as the SFP is included in various national and international legal frameworks such as the Namibian Constitution, Towards Education for All policy, the Education Act of 2001 and the World Education Forum of 2000, there is no school feeding policy in place to offer guidelines for implementation to date (UNGA, 2000). In fact, the national policies are silent about the roles of school feeding (Bundy et al., 2009). It has been observed by the researcher that the school feeding manual in use took long to be revised. The aim of this study was to explore the experiences of the implementers of the SFP in two schools in the Zambezi region of Namibia.

1.5 Statement of the problem

The SFP has received political support in Namibia. Despite the positive aspects, the Annual Progress Report on Namibian SFP explains that the Ministry of Education Arts and Culture recognises that the quality of the NSFP has been compromised over the years due to inadequate management, implementation capacity and lack of a proper monitoring system (WFP, 2014). Food shortages due to drought and poverty among community members are factors that affect children from poor backgrounds and OVC from accessing education (Ellis, 2012). The personal experience of the researcher also reveals that learners in the Zambezi Region schools experienced severe hunger and this culminated in absenteeism. It is for this reason that the Namibian government, in conjunction with the WFP introduced the NSFP targeting schools in areas severely affected by hunger and poverty (Ministry of Education, 1993). This proliferation of high levels of poverty and hunger necessitated and subsequently resulted in the implementation of the NSFP in the

Zambezi Region. Although the SFP was implemented, there is no detailed policy that guides the implementation thereof. The absence of a comprehensive NSFP policy creates a gap and raises questions as to whether the national policy frameworks that provide a supportive context to the SFPs are effective. Furthermore, the undated school feeding manual in use might raise some questions to researchers and other users as to whether the document is authentic or not. It is also not clear whether the SFP implementers are well versed with their roles and responsibilities.

Added to that, Namibian research literature evinces limited paucity of studies on the SFP. Since the introduction of NSFP in 1991 by the Namibian Government, a few case studies that were carried out by Ellis (2012), Sibanda (2012), WFP (2012) and Hamupembe (2016) to examine its functionalities and effects.. However, these studies were mostly limited to the examination of the NSFP in the Khomas Region. For example, Sibanda's (2012) study, conducted in Khomas Region, focuses more on health related issues as compared to the current study, whilst the WFP (2012) case study focuses more on the transition of the programme from the WFP support to the government support. Hamupembe (2016) explores the management aspects of the programme in Windhoek (Khomas Region) with an emphasis on management challenges. Ellis (2012), in corroboration with WFP country office and the Namibian government, undertakes a review of SFP in the country. The afore-mentioned studies, do not focus on the implementers of school feeding programme such as principals, teachers, school board members, coordinators and service providers' experiences as managers of the programme, specifically in Zambezi Region. Implementers' experiences of the NSFP as well as their views with regard to the programme's influence on learner enrolment, attendance,

retention rate, dropout rate, performance, health, poverty reduction and progression of learners in schools are critical elements in evaluating the overall success of the programme. These are essential components of the programme that preceding studies do not, a knowledge gap that the current study seeks to fill.

Moreover, as a former primary school teacher in the Zambezi Region, the researcher has first-hand experiences of observing OVC and poverty-stricken children going to school hungry – a condition which she observed to be one of the attributing factors to the high absenteeism rate in her school. The researcher also gathered more information through reading about the SFP in local newspapers. She also capitalised on several views and opinions which were aired by government agencies about the benefits of the SFP in relation to learner enrolment, attendance, participation, performance and health. Additionally, Ellis, (2012) explains that the School Feeding Manual in use has not been updated regularly for the past twenty five years and does not clearly stipulate the programme's design and implementation, which raises some questions as to whether the implementers of the NSFP are clear on how to implement and manage all aspects of the programme.

Notwithstanding the existence of the abovementioned studies, a knowledge-gap still exists with regard to the management of the SFP, especially with regards to the implementers' experiences in the selected two schools. The NSFP therefore needs to be effectively managed so that it can lead to desired outcomes. It is against this background that the researcher translated her curiosity into a problem that could be solved through a study of this nature, specifically by exploring the implementers' experiences regarding the school

feeding programme in two selected schools in the Zambezi Region of Namibia. The current study further explored the views of principals, teachers (focal teachers or teacher counsellors), school board members, coordinators (at central and regional level) and service providers (transporters of maize meal consignments to schools) regarding the programmes' influence in relation to learner enrolment, attendance, retention rate, dropout rate, performance, health, poverty reduction, progression of learners and general challenges faced in the implementation and operationalisation of the programme. It is also the intention of the current study to examine the managers' effectiveness with regards to the implementation of the NSFP, draw conclusions and suggest recommendations that will potentially improve the management of the programme in two schools.

1.6 Research questions

The main research question guiding the current study is:

- What are the experiences of the implementers of the school feeding programme in two schools of the Zambezi Region of Namibia?

The following sub-research questions guided the study:

1. What are the experiences of the implementers of NSFP in the two schools?
2. What are the programme implementers' views regarding the influence of the NSFP on selected specific educational indicators (enrolment, attendance, retention rate, dropout rate, performance and progression of learners), the health of learners and socio-economic factors (poverty reduction) in the two selected schools?
3. What are the challenges that implementers face in the operationalisation of the NSFP, and how can these challenges be mitigated in two schools?

1.7 Significance of the study

It is anticipated that the significance of the study will be three-fold. Firstly, it is envisaged that the findings of the study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge and practices related to the implementation of the NSFP. Secondly this study is of paramount importance as it will explicate and expand significant experiences of implementers of the NSFP on how the programme has impacted learner enrolment, attendance, retention rate, dropout rate, and performance, health of learners, poverty reduction and progression of learners into grades. Thirdly, it is hoped that the study will create awareness for the principals, teachers, schools board members, coordinators and service providers of the existing challenges in the implementation and management of the NSFP. In this regard, the study will provide potential directions for the improvement in the implementation of the NSFP in both the two regional schools under study as well as nationally. Finally, it is anticipated that the findings of the study may serve as a springboard for other researchers intent on conducting further research in the implementation and management of the NSFP.

1.8 Limitations of the study

The following limitations may be inherent in this study: Firstly, the study is a small scale-case study, and was limited to only two schools in the Zambezi Region with the sample size of two principals, five focal point teachers, and a focus group discussion of two school board members, four coordinators and one service provider. As such, the findings cannot be generalised to the region and country. Secondly, this research investigated the experiences of the implementers of the SFP as a service delivery mechanism in two

schools and its influence on learner enrolment, attendance, retention, learning capability, health, and alleviation of short-term hunger, and progression of learners into grades only. Thirdly, that the study is qualitative in nature and participants were drawn from the population of the two schools only and thus, the findings cannot be generalised to other places in Namibia.

The participants' efforts and commitment to voluntarily sign consent forms and agreeing to take part in the study is an indication that they provided honest responses. Additionally, unavailability of some participants due to illness did not compromise the validity of the study as the researcher could still use a small sample size and utilise different data collection methods that allowed her to triangulate and explore the same phenomenon using more than one method. This provided rich data and enabled the researcher to achieve a measure of validity and trustworthiness.

1.9 Delimitations of the study

This study was confined to the school feeding programme in the Zambezi Region of Namibia. The study was also delimited to focus only on principals, teachers, coordinators, schools board members and service providers as implementers of the SFP in two schools in the Zambezi Region of Namibia. The delimitation to only two schools was meant to enable the researcher to obtain thorough and in-depth data on the subject.

The participants were delimited to fourteen. The number of participants was appropriate for such a purpose, especially because of the time constraints experienced by the researcher.

1.10 Clarification of operational concepts

This section defines the operational concepts as they were used in the current study.

- **SFP** – School Feeding Programme: refers to the provision of meals in schools funded by donor partners, or national government. The schools are managed by the teachers and parents associations (Asiago & Akelo, 2014). In the Namibian context, the SFP is an incentive to help feed the OVC and poor children of the community who come from underprivileged homes in order for them to have access to education (Ministry of Education, n.d). In this study, ‘SFP’ refers to food aid in form of porridge that is provided to poor, orphaned and/or vulnerable school going children to enable them to access education and reduce hunger in a sustainable manner.
- **Malnutrition** - refers to a condition caused by inadequate or excessive intake of proper nutrients (World Health Organisation, 2011). In this study, ‘malnutrition’ shall refer to under-nutrition which refers to insufficiencies and disproportions in a children's intake of nutrients.
- **Nutritional Status** - refers to the state of a person’s health in terms of the nutrients in his or her diet (MD Anderson Cancer Centre, 2010). This can be determined by taking measurements of weights, height and age. In this study ‘Nutritional Status’ refers to a physiological state of an individual, culminating from the relationship between nutrients intake and requirements for the body’s ability to digest, absorb and use these nutrients. For example, the nutritional status of an individual is important for public health.

- **Policy framework** - A set of legislative and executive instruments that may include statutes, decrees, orders, policies or guidelines relating to a social programme, in this case school feeding. These instruments collectively articulate ‘rights’, set out objectives and establish and regulate the institutions and processes for the realisation of these rights through government action (WFP, 2013). In this study, ‘policy framework’ refers to a frame which comprises of a set of legislative, and executive instruments that may include statutes, decrees, orders, policies or guidelines that are associated with the school feeding programme. **Fortification** - The practice of deliberately increasing the content of essential micronutrients (such as Vitamin A, iron, iodine or zinc) to food (WFP, 2013). For the purpose of this study, ‘fortification’ is considered as the practice of adding the content of Vitamin A, iron, iodine and salt to the food, in this case porridge as essential micronutrients.
- **Deworming** - A treatment to control the intestinal worm infections such as helminths roundworm, ringworm and hookworm (WFP, 2013). For the purpose of this study, ‘deworming’ refers to the control measures in a form of supplements to treat intestinal worm infections.
- **Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC)** - Within the Namibian context, OVC are children under the age of 18 whose mother, father, both parents and/or primary caregiver have died, and/or is in need of care and protection (Sibanda, 2012). In this study, ‘Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC)’ refers to destitute children, whose parents or caregivers cannot afford to provide them with their physical needs, in our case, healthy food.

- **Effectiveness** - Utilising the right opportunity in order to achieve the right goals (Lawson, 2012). In this study, ‘effectiveness’ refers to the degree to which an act/action is successful in producing the desired results or fulfilling set goals.
- **Efficiency** - In light of service delivery, ‘efficiency’ implies satisfying the most essential needs of the community to the greatest possible extent by maximising limited resources available for this purpose (Lawson, 2012). In this study, efficiency refers to the ability to achieve more with less resources.

1.11 Organisation of the study/ chapter division

Chapter 1 is the general orientation to the study and introduces the reader to the experiences of implementers of the NSFP and comprises of explications of the general orientation to the study, the global background of the NSFPs, the African historical context and the Namibian historical context. The chapter also presents the statement of the problem, the research questions and highlights the significance of the study. The limitations and delimitations of the study as well as the definitions of key terms are also discussed.

Chapter 2 is provides a context for the current study by undertaking review of the pre-existing literature. It also focuses on the discussion of the conceptual and theoretical frameworks that underpin this exploration of the Namibian SFP. The chapter also explicates the major tenets of the two theoretical framework in which the current study is couched - The capability Approach and Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. In undertaking a review of related literature, the chapter explores and discusses the influences of the NSFP

on education, health and socio-economic considerations, the challenges faced in the implementation of the SFP and measures to address the challenges. The chapter further presents some country case studies and lessons that the current research learns from and draws comparisons from.

Chapter 3 explains the research methods and research design adopted for the current study. The chapter explains the research paradigm, the constructivist paradigm in particular, which was utilised in this study. The population, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments and data collection and analysis procedures are also elucidated. Penultimate, ethical issues affecting the research are also clarified.

Chapter 4 is the data presentation and presents and interprets the research results answering the research questions sequentially. The tenets of the conceptual framework and theory are also explicitly and implicitly incorporated in the interpretation of the results.

Chapter 5 discusses the research results in in the context of the literature deliberated on in Chapter 2. This contextualisation of the analysis in the pre-existing corpus of literature is important in order to establish connection between the results of this study and the existing literature. It also assist us in locating the gap in the literature that the current study seeks to fill.

Chapter 6 comprises the summary, conclusions and recommendations. This chapter provides suggestions and recommendations that could assist in improving the implementation and management of the NSFP. It also explains the original contributions of the study, how the research questions were addressed and offers suggestions for directions for further/future studies.

1.12 Summary

This chapter has provided the orientation to the study. The first section of the chapter explained the background of the study followed by a clarification of the historical context in which the current study is located. The background and historical context, which aimed at contextualising the current study, illustrate how education is a human right that has been embraced by Namibia and protected in the country's constitution as well as aligned to international instruments. However, due to imbalances, inequalities and poverty that characterised Namibian society during the apartheid era and world over, most poor and vulnerable children could not access education. In order to respond to those challenges, the SFPs were introduced worldwide and in Namibia. The chapter also presented the statement of the problem, research questions and explained the significance of the current study. The last three sections of this chapter outlined the limitations, delimitations of the study and provided definitions of key/operational terms as used in the study. The next chapter discusses the literature review and explains the theoretical frameworks.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL/CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is to provide a discussion of the relevant pre-existing corpus of literature pertaining to the experiences of the implementers of the school feeding programmes. The first section of the chapter will present discussions of the conceptual framework and the theoretical frameworks that inform the current study. This is followed by a review of literature on the effects of the SFP on education, health and other socio-economic considerations. In doing this, the discussion country of case studies of the implementation of the SFP are evaluated at both the global and continental (African) levels. This section is important because it provides an overview of different country cases on how the feeding programme was implemented as well as lessons that can be drawn from them. The fourth subsection address the challenges in the implementation of the SFP, followed by a discussion of the measures that have been adopted to address them. . This is a critical section of the chapter and study because, by drawing lessons from previous studies, it guides the current study in its exploration of the experiences of the implementers of the school feeding programme in two schools in the Zambezi region of Namibia.

2.2 Conceptual framework

Education is a powerful tool for human development and poverty reduction, hence it has been regarded as a basic right for every Namibian. The Ministry of Education and Culture (1992, p.14) underscores this statement by observing that, “Investment in human capital, including, importantly, the basic health care and primary education for children, is one of the most effective means of stimulating long term economic growth and improving general welfare”. It is for this reason that the NSFP has been imagined to be a valuable catalyst in promoting equitable participation in quality learning and education for all for children in Namibia, by providing nutritious and healthy food through schools - which are a part of social and economic life and development of communities (Ministry of Education, n.d)

In the researcher’s view, there are important factors that should be taken into consideration when defining SFP. Firstly, the type of meals that are provided, for example, snacks that are eaten in school, such as biscuits contribute to the definition of the SFP. Secondly, the time that the meal is provided to beneficiaries, for example, school lunches. Finally, the place where the meals are provided. The literature review undertaken here illustrates the various forms in which the NSFP concept presents in different contexts. It also discusses the advantages and the disadvantages of the NSFPs. Table 1 below illustrates some of the common types of SFPs as well as the advantages and disadvantages of such SFPs. The table illustrates that the NSFPs include school meals (in the form of breakfast or lunch), snacks eaten in school (such as high energy vitamin and mineral fortified biscuits, fruits, milk or juice) and take – home rations (that are provided to families of school children to

ensure regular attendance of those children) (WFP,2015). For the purposes of the current study, NSFPs can be defined as the provision of different types of meals to poor and vulnerable learners at different times and places to sustain and assist them access quality education with good health.

Table 1: Types of NSFP and their advantages and disadvantages

	SFP Snacks	SFP meals	Take-Home Rations
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided to learners who attend school • Learners are motivated to attend regularly • Snacks may be shared with family members, who may be in great need of nutritional support • Alleviation of short-term hunger so learners may concentrate in classrooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided to learners who attend school • Learners are motivated to attend regularly • Able to use local fresh produce from nearby farmers • Alleviation of short-term hunger so that learners may concentrate in classrooms • Meals include nutritionally dense food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners and families benefit when a child attendance levels are fulfilled • Learners are motivated to attend regularly • Snacks may be shared with family members, who may be in great need of nutritional support • Does not affect teaching time
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeting is broad • May affect teaching time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeting is broad • Costs may be higher e.g. payments to service providers and salaries for cooks • May affect teaching time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rations are often cereals and oil (might not be fortified)

Source: Lawson (2012)

The NSFP has been of vital importance to the Namibian nation in general and the Zambezi Region in particular. The Annual Progress Report (2014) on NSFP supports this point by emphasising that the programme has been used as a strategy to address inequality, and other social injustices and to expand access to educational opportunities to all poor, vulnerable and disadvantaged children in Namibia, including the Zambezi Region. This implies that the NSFP has the potential to include those who were excluded from accessing education due to poverty and social vulnerability. A further illustration of the importance of the SFP is demonstrated in the conceptual framework (in Figure 1 below), where the relationship between the SFP management, indicators and potential outcomes is depicted.

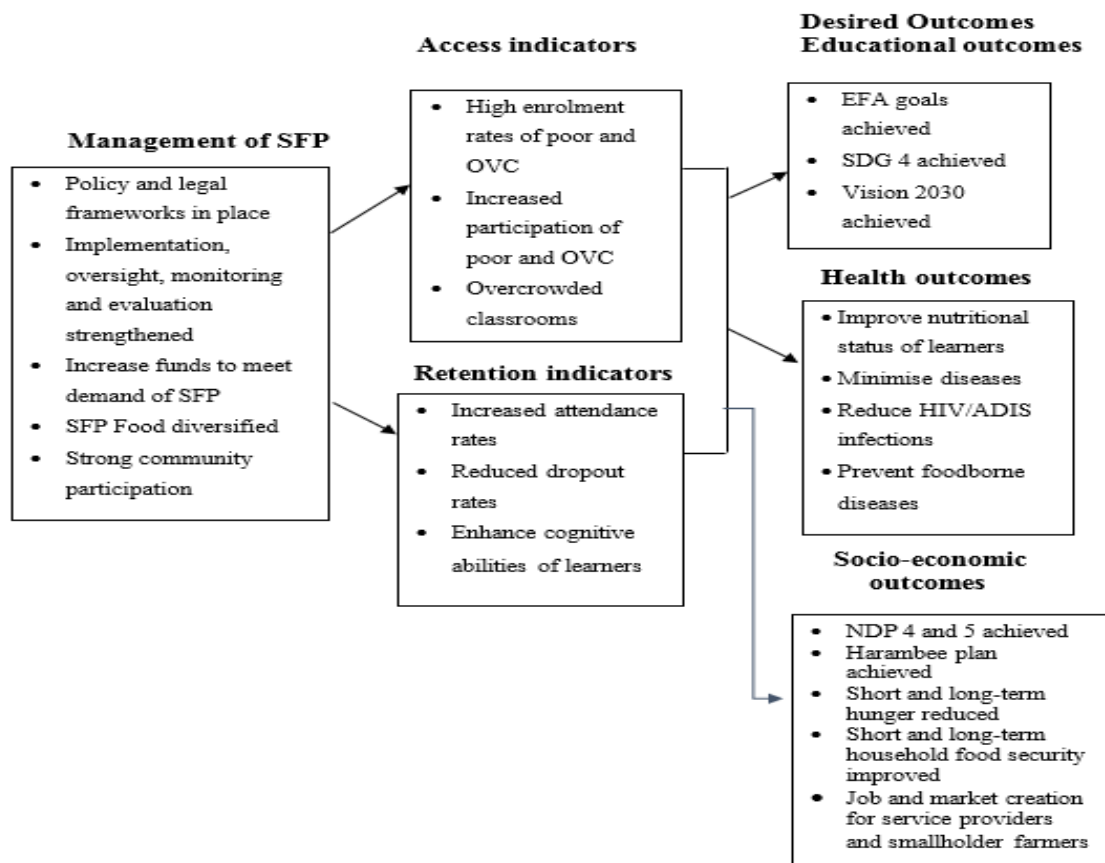


Figure 1: The conceptual framework below where the relationship between SFP management, indicators and potential outcomes. Source: Researcher, 2020

The Namibian Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture has made strides and realised that the quality of the NSFP has been compromised for a long time due to inadequate management, implementation capacity and a lack of monitoring (Annual Progress Report 2014). In order to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation of the programme, the Annual Progress Report (2014) suggests that the focus areas should include among others, developing an NSFP policy, improving programme design and implementation, strengthening institutional capacity and developing a monitoring and evaluation system. Through the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, the Government of the Republic of Namibia aims to eliminate hunger by providing OVC and learners from poor background with school meals. As a result, the NSFP has contributed to increased school enrolment, attendance and retention in the country, including the Zambezi Region (Annual Progress Report 2014).

The World Food Programme (2014) estimates that 368 million children from poor and vulnerable backgrounds worldwide are beneficiaries of the SFPs. According to the WFP (2013), the objectives of WFP's work in the SFP include, providing a safety net for insecure households, supporting children's education through enhanced learning ability and access to the education system, enhancing children's nutrition by reducing micronutrient deficiencies, strengthening national capacity through policy support and technical assistance and developing links between school feeding and local agricultural production. The food assistance was done by providing food items either in the form of snacks or meals to school children with the bold aim of reducing or eradicating hunger and enhancing the teaching and learning processes.

2.3 Theoretical framework

The main theoretical framework which guided the study of the experiences of the implementers of the school feeding programme in two schools in the Zambezi region of Namibia is the Capability Approach supported with Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs. These are discussed in detail below.

2.3.1 The Capability Approach

The Capability Approach is based on the work of Amartya Sen and later extended by Martha Nussbaum. Sen developed the concept of capabilities in 1979 during his Tanner Lectures. He raises the question of 'equality on what' (Wells, 2013) indicating that any form of equality in general should argue for equality of something else. Their work has mostly focused on poverty and inequality, with specific reference to gender justice in society. Some of the aspects of the Capability Approach originated since the work of Aristotle's understanding of human flourishing, Karl Marx's account on the importance of functioning and capability for human being and Adam Smith's analysis of relative poverty in terms of how a country's wealth and how different cultural norms are affected by material goods were regarded as a necessity (Sen, 1999; Nussbaum, 2003).

One of Sen's followers was philosopher Martha Nussbaum. Even though Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen had similar views on the capability approach, they also differed (Robeyns, 2003). For example, Nussbaum's work focuses on moral-legal political philosophies, where she argues for a general list of central human capabilities

that should be incorporated in all government constitutions (Robeyns, 2003), while Sen's philosophy focused on the question "*equality for what?*" during his Tanner Lectures. His literature argues for capability instead of utility (ibid). In other word, Sen's arguments are aligned to economic reasoning, whereas Nussbaum's argument is linked to the traditions in humanity (ibid).

According to Sen (1987, p. 36), the capability approach is seen as:

A functioning is an achievement, whereas a capability is the ability to achieve. Functionings are, in a sense, more directly related to living conditions, since there are different aspects of living conditions. Capabilities in contrast, are notions of freedom, in the positive sense: what real opportunities you have regarding the life you may lead.

Alternatively put, Sen (1999), indicates that functioning are various things a person may value doing or being. In other words, they show the practical realisation of one's chosen way of life. Examples of functions include being well fed, having shelter, taking part in community activities, relating to other people, working in the labour market, caring for others, having an education, being healthy and so forth. Robeyns (2005) defines capabilities as people's potential functionings. The basic ideas of capabilities as an evaluative frame is that what matters most to people is their substantial structural as well as individual ability to achieve functionings. Functionings according to Amartya Sen are tantamount to the actual living that people manage to achieve (Sen, 1992, p. 52). For example, to what extent an individual person has accomplished and realised at any given time (Alkire, 2003). Beyond a focus on whether persons do (or do not) achieve particular functionings, the capability approach most notably assesses whether she or he is free to

achieve them, given the personal (education, competencies, literacy), material, and resources available to him, or her.

This study also used the Capability Approach to research about the NSFP from the perspective of implementers. The study used Sen's capability approach to refer to what managers (as implementers of the NSFP) in two schools are able to do (activities), as well as what kind of managers they can be (being). Sen (1999) reiterates that capabilities are what allow people, in this case, managers who are implementers of the NSFP to perform certain functions to lead the kind of lives they value and have reason to value. Equally, the capability approach refers to what community members are able to do (participatory activities) in the NSFP in the two schools. What allows community members to participate in the NSFP? Similarly the approach refers to the poor and OVC whether they are able to get their school meals (Are they well fed?) to have more freedom to live a better life (and learn).

2.3.2 Maslow's Hierarchy of human needs

Maslow's theory is based on the assumption that when a person's needs are addressed at the first level, that person advances to the next level. The first level of physiological are the daily needs that are essential for survival and they include basic needs like food, shelter, water, health and clothing. Once physiological needs have been met, the person will, according to Maslow (1970), move to the second level which is comprised of security of self and of psychological needs. The third level is of social needs and includes the human needs or desires to belong to a certain group or association. For example, people

need to be loved, they need to belong to a community, and they need friendship. The fourth level of needs is that of self-esteem, which is a sense of self-respect and self-motivation and also includes how one relates to other people. Lastly, the highest level of needs in the Maslow hierarchy is self – actualisation. It is concerned with the search for personal experience and fulfilment. Maslow explains that a human being goes through a hierarchy of needs, starting with the physical ones, which include food to much higher needs which include self-actualisation. According to Maslow (1970), the theory demonstrates that when needs are met, learners are generally happy and content. The atmosphere in the school thus, becomes conducive for teaching and learning. The Maslow’s Hierarchy of Human needs was adopted to help understand the significance of the NSFP in relation to learners’ social contexts, its response to their needs and the extent to which its implementation has been successful. The adoption of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs results from the observation that the physiological needs must be met first. Once food is available to the learners – the physiological needs are met – the learners are able to focus their attention of the needs on a higher plain.

2.4 The influence of NSFP programme on education, health and socio-economic considerations

The review of literature shows that the SFP has had influences on the conditions and statuses of learners. The section below outlines some of these influences. This section is divided into subsections. The first of the subsections will deal with the matter of education, the second addresses the children’s health needs and the third discusses the socio-economic considerations.

2.4.1 Educational factors

This subsection addresses educational indicators which are pertinent to the current research. These are enrolment, attendance, retention and performance of learners in schools.

2.4.1.1 Enrolment

Enrolment has been defined by Darko (2014) as the number of learners or students that have the capacity to register their names in school in order to receive formal education in a given state. A number of researchers have observed that the feeding programmes lead to an increase in enrolment. For instance, Hamupembe (2016) argues that the SFP is of paramount importance as it is aimed at increasing the enrolment of orphans and vulnerable children in schools. The researcher argues that the SFP serve as a motivational factor for enrolment. For example, the Annual Progress Report (WFP, 2014) indicates that the NSFP has contributed to increased enrolment of learners. In addition, the Namibian School Feeding Case Study by Ellis (2012), indicates that the programme continues to draw vulnerable children to school (more than 50% of children in primary schools are in the programme). These are children who otherwise might not enrol, attend or remain in school. This implies that the National School Feeding Programme attracts needy learners to enrol in school.

The WFP has assisted 770,000 school pupils in the semi-arid and arid areas of the country with food relief items. The provision of free meals in those areas, as affirmed by Carvalho et al. (2011), has resulted in an increase in enrolment, stability, attendance and learners' cognitive development.

Furthermore, Tomlinson (2007) asserts that much of the focus of the SFPs is on increasing the enrolment of girls, who, in times of economic crisis or food emergency, are usually the first to be withdrawn from school in order to assist with sibling care and to generate income. The WFP (2007) examines the impact of the school meal programme in the three Northern regions of Ghana in relation to girl-child education. The reports indicate that the feeding and take-home rations have encouraged 85% of girl-children's enrolment, attendance and retention in the three Northern regions of Ghana. Tomlinson also explains the benefits of increasing the enrolment and retention of girls, indicating that girls who go to school are likely to marry later, and have on average 2.9 children, as opposed 6.5 for uneducated girls. Implied here is that the NSFP has become a motivating factor which attracts learners who were initially excluded and who were equally unable to enrol in school due to poverty and vulnerability. But due to the advent of the school feeding programmes, the need-gap of hunger was filled and it became easier for them to enrol in school and to benefit from the meals.

2.4.1.2 Attendance

Hornby (2004), define the concept of ‘attendance’ as the act of being present at a place, for example, at school. Several researchers have linked the provision of school feeding meals to school attendance among learners. Darko (2014) notes that the SFP and lunches worldwide serve as a motivating factor that encourage pupils, especially disadvantaged children in the society, to attend school. Dei (2014) explains that low-income countries are expanding the SFPs because they enable them to move closer to the MDGs (these have been translated to Sustainable Development Goals - SDGs). It appears that Goal 1 (which aims to eradicate hunger and poverty), Goal 3 (which focuses on health) and Goal 4 (which focuses on the provision of education) are enhanced in the process. The expansion of the programme also enhances the realisation of the attendance goals, especially when the programme draws more children to the classrooms.

A Namibian case study by Ellis, (2012) observes that the SFP contributed to the regular attendance of learners including in the Zambezi Region and this led to the government to progressively expand the programme to now cater for the needs of about 320,000 learners in more than 1300 schools across the country. In the same vein, Lawson (2012) in exploring the impact of the SFP, came to the conclusion that increasing enrolment and attendance in schools should be regarded as the primary objective of the school feeding programme.

In Finland, the Ministry of Education and Culture (2012) estimates that almost 850,000 pupils and students are enjoying the free meal throughout the schools in the country. The free snacks form part of the free lunch in Finnish schools and about 47,000 children benefit from them before school starts, during school and after school. Furthermore, the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture asserts that free meals and snacks have increased attendance in schools throughout the country. The SFP have a remarkable impact on the attendance of learners in the world. Through the provision of school meals, children are assured of getting something to eat at school and this encourages them to attend school every day. The free meals serve as a motivational factor to school going children and in the long run encourage attendance and retention in schools. It is evident that the introduction and effective management and implementation of the SFPs in different countries increases learner attendance rates.

2.4.1.3 Retention

‘Retention’, has been defined by Machocho (2011) as the flow of pupils in a school organisation from one grade to another without repetition and dropout. Getting school pupils to enrol and attend classes is one thing, and sustaining them in the classroom for teaching and learning processes for a lengthy period in order to achieve the cognitive, effective and psychomotor skills is another phase on the educational ladder. Otieno (2014) argues that improved nutrition and health are seen as necessary condition for increasing retention and learning achievement in schools. It is for this reason that in 2000, the United Nations met in Dakar to commit itself to the eradication of hunger and the attainment of universal primary education. The school feeding programme was one of the strategies

adopted to address these challenges (Tomlinson, 2007). Darko (2014) supports the aforementioned statement by asserting that governments, international organisations, non-governmental organisations seem to be more concerned about the feeding programme as they contribute cash and food items in support of them.

Cheung and Berlin (2010) compare three Food for Education programmes which were introduced in Cambodia which provided, (i) breakfast before school, (ii) breakfast plus a take-home ration for poor families with girls in grade 4 to 6, and (iii) breakfast plus a take-home ration plus deworming medicine. The researchers look at the enrolment, school attendance and length of time to complete the education programme. Across all treatment types, Cheung and Berlin (2010) found out that children in communities with any of the Food for Education programme were 10 percent more likely to be in school and would remain in school for a total of 1.8 more months than in communities without any interventions.

Dei (2014) indicates that the SFP serves to attract children to attend school and retain them for the period within which they will be there. Dei also explains that good practices of the SFPs and nutritional components sustain attendance and the retention of learners, and enhances the teaching and learning process. Thus, effective management of the SFP can lead to the retention of learners in schools. This results in the retention of learners in school and leads to improved education outcomes. This could in turn lead to the realisation of NDP 4 goals and the achievement of SDGs.

2.4.1.4 Improvement of learners' performance

Hornby (2004) defines 'performance' as how well or badly you do something. In this context, 'performance' refers to how well learners have improved in their school work. A study by Omwami, Neuman, and Bwibo (2011) on the effects of a SFP intervention on school attendance among elementary school children in rural Kenya notes that good nutrition results in better learning capacity. Darko (2014) argues that the learning and cognitive development of school learners are affected by the nutritional deficiencies resulting in learners inaction, inattention and less concentration on the teaching and learning processes. The fortified foods, which are served in schools, are important in solving nutritional deficiencies like Vitamin A and iodine and this goes a long way in enriching the learners' cognitive capacities and enhance their performance (Darko, 2014). The total development of learners' wellbeing is a prime concern of every government and parents and the states at large. Most countries around the world use several measures to get the citizenry well informed so that they also contribute to national development. SFPs are used by several countries including Namibia to achieve these universal goals for education (Darko, 2014). The initiative helps to realise this vision because learners' output in schools and outside schools are put into consideration to enhance rapid socio-economic development (World Bank, 2012).

While early studies were equivocal about the link between nutritional deficiency and cognitive performance, evidence has also shown how even a short-term lack of food such as breakfast can lead to a reduction in concentration and difficulty in recalling new information and verbal fluency (Bennett as cited in Tomlinson, 2007). Additionally,

Tomlinson further identifies a variety of cognitive tests showing the benefit of a good breakfast on a child's performance and how performance is significantly better shortly after a meal. Furthermore, temporal hunger has been shown to decrease attentiveness through decreased mental and physical activity. In the same vein, Munyiri (2010) asserts that the enrolment and attendance of learners in the Kikuyu district of Kenya has greatly increased compared to schools without the SFP. Munyiri (2010) notes that children look better and healthy in schools with the programme than those without the programme and, in terms of performance, the schools with SFPs perform better than those without the programme. This was evident when the test scores of two groups were compared at the end of the year.

Munyiri concludes thus, that there is a relationship between the SFP and learning outcomes in the Kenyan District. From this evidence, Munyiri (2010) is of the view that children's regular attendance of school in the study district fosters their cognitive development. The children's performance at school improved tremendously. On the other hand, McEwan (2012) points out that the Chilean SFP has impacted learners' performance since its inception almost a century ago. This was evident in the academic scores of selected schools in the 2011 and 2012 academic years in Chile.

Muntenyo (2010) observes that an estimated 120 million children were beneficiaries of the SFP in India and the results have shown that the daily diet for learners at school has enriched their performance. In addition, the deworming segment of the programme in India has reduced the learners' burden regarding worms which are believed to obstruct cognitive development, and it has improved the learners' achievements academically. In

the same vein, Mhurhu et al. (2010) recount that in New Zealand, the school breakfast had a significant impact on the children's performance due to fortified grains which enrich mental development.

In another development, Sinko (2012) states that the successes of the Finnish Education system at the world surveys are attributed to many factors where free lunch in Finnish schools has produced good results. Sinko (2012) further explains that the high quality nutritional meals for Finnish pupils has contributed immensely to the country's successes in education over the years. It is evident that free nutritional meals provided to learners have made a positive contribution towards the pupils' learning and cognitive development in that country.

More so, the World Food Programme (2010) reveals that the Kenyan SFP has experienced successes regards children's performance since its inception. The WFP further states that attendance, completion rates and examination marks as well as the continuation rate of the learners of Kenyan schools improved dramatically within a short period of the programme. The schools which provide free school meals have witnessed high enrolment and attendance rates, the completion rates of girls have improved, including the children in the pastoralist communities and semi-arid areas who have completed their primary education since the beginning of the programme (WFP, 2010).

2.5 Health

This subsection addresses five indicators and these are, children's health needs, food supplements, deworming, HIV/AIDS and learners' psychological improvement.

2.5.1 Children's health needs

Child Health Unit (as cited in Tomlinson, 2007), explains that traditionally, health and education are considered as separate domains due to the separation of responsibilities between government departments. However, Del Rosso, and Marek (as cited in Tomlinson, 2007) argue that the link between health and education is being acknowledged. There is growing evidence that shows how children can benefit from broad health and nutritional intervention. Langinger (2011, p. 3) argues that the SFP has an impact in children's psychological and cognitive development. For example, the problem of loss of weight, illness and height among children have been improved in Kenya during the introduction of SFP in public schools.

The deworming component supports learners' health in relation to retention, attendance and children's output. Malnutrition among school going children includes iron and iodine deficiencies. According to Rosso (as cited in Darko, 2014), the learning and cognitive development of learners are affected by the nutritional deficiencies because this makes them inactive, inattentive and less concentrated on the teaching and learning processes. Darko (2014) further explains that fortified foods served in schools also target nutritional

deficiencies like Vitamin A and Iodine which can enrich learners' cognitive capacity and enhance their performance.

2.5.2 Food supplements

Hornby (2004) define 'supplement' as something that is added to something else to improve or complete it. In this case, supplements are vitamins and other foods that are consumed in addition to what learners usually consume (in this case, porridge), to improve the micronutrients of school feeding meals. Lawson (2012) argues that for families living in poverty, food choices are usually limited, resulting in nutritionally inadequate diets that are often deficient in vital micronutrients. In as much as the SFPs are promoted for increasing educational achievement, they also play a vital role in achieving the nutritional goal.

In view of the above, Arsenalt, et al. (2009) submit that deficiencies of micronutrients such as iron or vitamin B-12 can result in increased vulnerability to infections, stunted growth and diminished cognitive performance in learners. In addition, WFP (2012) states that a nutritious school meal also promotes inclusive human development by incentivising regular attendance, decreasing health-related absences, improving concentration and learning ability for girls and boys as well as ensuring completion of the school cycle. According to the WFP (2013), the nutritional status of school-aged children impacts on their physical development, health, learning and cognitive potential and subsequently their school attendance and educational achievements. It further claims that the SFPs can improve fortified meals to help provide micronutrients that are commonly missing from

children's diets. For example, micronutrients can tackle important deficiencies among children of primary-school age, such as lack of Vitamin A or iron, both of which affect children's ability to learn. It is also believed that good programmes are implemented as part of a wider school health and nutrition package which includes deworming, nutrition education and clean water.

A study conducted by the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) provided 61,000 school-age children in India with an iron-rich lunch through a school-based mid-day meal programme. The iron-rich meal came in the form of Ultra Rice- a manufactured, micronutrient packed, rice-shaped grain blended with traditional rice during the cooking process. The study showed a significant increase in iron stores of children that consumed Ultra Rice compared to the control group. The study further revealed that children who consumed Ultra Rice also experienced a significant reduction in incidence of morbidities compared to the control group during the study period (Buhl, 2010).

In contrast, Lawson (2012) argues that school feeding meals or snacks can be easily fortified to help provide micronutrients that are commonly missing from children's diets. Adair, as cited in Tomlison (2007) demonstrates how some catch up (following stunting) is possible between the ages two and eight. There is also some considerable evidence that micronutrients supplementation can tackle important deficiencies among children of primary-school going age, such as Vitamin A or iron, or both, which affect children's ability to learn (WFP, 2013). Implied here is that when the SFPs are provided with micronutrients, they can greatly improve the micronutrient status of learners. Micronutrient deficiency can arrest cognitive growth as well as learning and mental

development. Therefore, the fortification of school meals is very crucial. Accordingly, if the SFP is well implemented, it will not only alleviate the learners' hunger, but also enhance nutrition, particularly when the food is fortified with micronutrients.

2.5.3 De-worming

Deworming is defined as a treatment that controls intestinal worm infections such as helminths, roundworm, ringworm and hookworm (WFP, 2013). Moreover, Levy (2012) explains that the school-based deworming exercise is an initiative that provides free deworming drugs to control parasitic worms. In his estimation, over 600 million learners in the world are infected annually and are at risk from the parasitic worms. He further points out that children's mental and physical developments are harmed by the parasitic worms, which causes malnutrition, anaemia and low concentration levels among children. Schools can effectively deliver some health and nutritional services and address problems that are prevalent and recognised as important within the community. For example, micronutrient deficiencies and worm infections may be effectively dealt with by infrequent (six-monthly or annual) oral treatment (Sibanda, 2012).

A study conducted in Kenya by Langer, (2011) observes that on a yearly basis deworming of school going children has been implemented alongside the SFP, which has improved the health status of the children in that the number of learners affected by all forms of worms has been reduced after the administration of deworming vaccines to children. Additionally, Levy (2012) points out that the deworming component aims to improve learners' health and performance and can in the long run arouse and sustain the

children's interest in going to school. Levy (2012) further submits that parasitic worms can affect children's health and make them behave abnormally due to anaemia and its related diseases. The collection of information regarding school meals and deworming shows that school-based deworming is an important tool in addressing anaemia, poor physical and intellectual growth and cognitive damage caused by worms infections in learners. It is of important for managers of the SFP to integrate deworming in the feeding programme so as to improve learners' attendance, retention, health related issues and participation in the classroom and outside the classroom.

2.5.4 HIV and AIDS

The World Bank (2013, p. 2), argues that the SFPs and lunches are crucial interventions in reducing HIV and AIDS cases among learners in the developing nations and the food insecure regions. Hornby (2004) define HIV an abbreviation that stands for the Human Immunodeficiency Virus, the virus that causes infections/illnesses that can cause AIDS, and AIDS is the abbreviation that stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, an illness which attacks the body's ability to resist infection and which eventually causes death.

Tomlinson (2007) argues that the HIV and AIDS pandemic should be seen as a 'permanent emergency', particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, because it contributes to the huge increase in the number of orphans and the withdrawal of children from school so that they assist in caring for siblings and in generating income for households where a parent is sick or has died. Additionally, in East and Southern Africa, one of the effects of HIV and AIDS is the

increasing number of orphans and vulnerable children as well as child-headed households. This has implications for food security, levels of childhood malnutrition and, in turn, forces nutritional interventions that government should implement as one of responses. Similarly, the Namibian government has also responded to the increase in HIV and AIDS with urgency and has done so by requiring ministries to include its components in their programmes. For example, in 2003, the Ministry of Education responded to this concern by putting in place the National Policy on HIV and AIDS for the education sector. The policy addresses the special needs of Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) that are affected by HIV and AIDS and explains available assistance, including participation in school feeding schemes which eventually ensure that they continue to have access to free and quality basic education (WFP, 2012). Furthermore, the World Bank (2013) states that the SFPs and lunches are crucial interventions in reducing HIV and AIDS cases among pupils around the world, especially the developing nations and food insecure regions. According to Afoakwa (2012), take home rations that are provided to learners to consume at home as well as school lunches are interventions that assist the orphaned children to obtain needed education in order to realise their fundamental human rights.

Darko (2014) explains that HIV and AIDS affected communities need a lot of food items because this disease aggravates the cycle of inadequate nutritional intake and malnutrition among the people and the orphans. Furthermore, in communities with absolute poverty, orphans often cannot attend school regularly, and for this reason attendance, retention and performance are affected due to low concentration among children. Additionally, Pieterse and van Wyk cited in Tomlinson, (2007) observe that, while HIV has not led to a sizeable famine on its own, it undoubtedly worsens chronic food security. In this regard, Tomlinson

(2007) demonstrates how the effects of recent droughts in Southern Africa have been exacerbated by HIV and AIDS and it has become clear that the ability of communities to cope with the challenges of poverty has been undermined by HIV and AIDS. In addition, as HIV infected family members become ill, health care expenses increases and income declines as family members become too ill to work.

Moreover, Jukes, Simon and Bundy (2008) report that the feeding programme in Southern Africa has played a vital role in reducing the spread of HIV and AIDS among learners, especially the girl child. According to Jukes, Simon and Bundy (2008), the programme serves as a motivation to keep the girls in schools and this reduces their risk of HIV infection. Jukes, Simon and Bundy (2008) are of the view that in Southern Africa, the SFP has helped reduce HIV and AIDS vulnerability among girls because of the long hours they spend in schools as well as the availability of food. They argue that children will have something to rely on at school, that is, the free school meals which help reduce the stigma on HIV and AIDS patients and their orphans in Southern Africa. Additionally, the programme also helps to reduce commercial sex work rates and unnecessary errands which can lead to rape and infection by the HIV-virus among children.

2.5.5 Learners' psychological improvement

The World Bank (2012) notes that the SFP is a scheme that shapes the minds of learners towards the teaching and learning processes. Hornby (2004) refers to 'psychological environment' as connected with a persons' mind and the way in which it works. World Bank (2012), points out that a sound body corresponds to a sound mind in that the organs

and the body operate in tandem. World Bank (2012) further explains that the availability of a daily hot nutritional meal for learners at school and a take home ration, encourage children to learn without thinking about what to eat. This gives learners the food needed to support their cognitive development.

Darko (2014) notes that hunger and being out of school are two major factors that can bring about childhood depression. Furthermore, Darko (2014) explains that the SFP has been a vital tool in minimising children's early psychological depression because it enables poor children to attend school, learn and have at least one nutritional meal a day. This reduces the children's psychological battle in their youthful stage and fosters regular attendance and retention. Additionally, school feeding meals also address depression among children because the burden of determining what to eat at school and at home becomes something of the past.

2.5.6 Socio-economic considerations of the SFP

The socio-economic considerations in this regard include the following: Short term and long term household food security, alleviation of short and long term hunger and job creation.

2.5.6.1 Short term and long term household food security

Bundy et al. (2009) and the Botswana Institute of Development Policy Analysis (2013) argue that the recent food, fuel and financial crises have highlighted the importance of SFPs as social safety nets for children living in poverty stricken and food insecurity spaces and as part of national development goals particularly the educational policies and plans. In addition, the SFPs provide a resource transfer to household's equivalent to the value of food distributed. In this study, the SFP has been referred to as an instrument which safeguard households' food security by reducing short-term hunger among learners. This is because many learners come to school on an empty stomach. The link between school feeding and food security has usually been conceptualised in terms of how the SFPs improve educational outcomes, which, in turn, helps to improve literacy, enhance education, ensure smaller families and improve household management (Tomlinson, 2007). It offers an incentive for households to send their children to school and invest in education. The programme can contribute to pupils' ability to learn by avoiding hunger and enhancing cognitive abilities. Furthermore, these effects may be enhanced by complementary interventions such as deworming and micronutrient fortification.

On the other hand, the SFPs can be used to form a structure for food products that can benefit farmers by building a market for them. This is the concept behind the Home Grown School Feeding (HGSF) included in pillar four of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) - a programme of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and identified by the Millennium Hunger Task Force as a quick win in the fight against poverty and hunger (NEPAD, 2007). According to Afoakwa

(2012), the locally produced foodstuffs are used to prepare nutritional meals for learners in famine afflicted areas. The long term objective is to reduce poverty and increase food security as well as nutritional diets among learners without any cost.

In Kenya, the WFP provides school meals to about 770,000 most vulnerable school children who are living in arid and semi-arid lands, semi-arid coastal districts, and the slums of Nairobi as well as refugee camps (Cavalho et al., 2011). In order to have a long term solution to the situation, the WFP has expended Food-for-Assets (FFA) and Cash-for-Assets (CFA) to promote food security. These activities mainly focus on rainwater harvesting for human and livestock use, soil and water conservation, and the production of drought-tolerant crops. These project are envisaged to benefit people either through food distribution or cash transfers. Tomlinson (2007) argues that if SFPs are properly utilised, they may have an impact on short-term food security by providing take-home rations as an income transfer to households. He further asserts that if school feeding meals are well targeted, short-term food security may be enhanced by improving protein and micronutrient status of children.

2.5.6.2 Alleviation of short and long term hunger

Asiago and Akello (2014) argue that poverty and hunger cause many families to spend many days without food and they end up seeking the benefit of the SFP to have food for their children and an opportunity for them to learn. Additionally, Darko (2014) points out that school meals for the learners around the world has a positive impact on the reduction of short and long term hunger among pupils as it helps them concentrate in the learning

process. In other words, hunger has been reduced because of the SFP in schools. Much research has been conducted on the effects of short-term and long-term hunger in relation to learning capacity and in-school meals as well as take home rations provided to learners to reduce hunger.

Learning ability is greatly affected by hunger resulting from skipped meals. For instance, Sibanda (2012) explains some of the factors that contribute to hunger among school going children and these include among other things, the long distances learners have to travel to school, cultural meal practices that include no or small breakfasts due to a lack of family time and resources to provide adequate meals to children before and during school hours. In other words, many cultures do not provide breakfast and this is translated to mean that the child's last meal is in the evening. Moreover, Briggs (2008) asserts that the possibilities of long travelling time means the child starts the school day hungry and unable to concentrate. Therefore, the provision of a snack at the beginning of the day or mid-morning alleviates short-term hunger and this could lead to increased awareness, activity and learning capacity. Additionally, Darko (2014) explains that children from poor homes are likely to go to school without food and if they do, they are less likely to learn. Hunger and poverty have a direct link with the poor educational performance of learners.

The SFPs reduce short and long term hunger which can cause absenteeism, low performance and finally can lead to school drop-outs among learners. Moreover, Asiago and Akello (2014) affirms that the SFP has great benefits as it improves enrolment and the attendance rates for most schools in Kenya. Asiago and Akello (2014) further explain

that improvements in enrolment and attendance clearly indicate that food is a factor that determines the willingness of children to attend school. In other words, parents who cannot afford to provide meals for their children find that schools that offer feeding meals offer a big relief to short term hunger and poverty.

Bundy et al. (2009) claim that the SFPs are among the several safety net programmes that can have significant long-term benefits beyond the value of immediate transfer. For instance, the SFP can encourage the participation of children in education and even promote their learning. This will not immediately increase their household income, but in the long run, additional schooling may increase the child's income as an adult and help interrupt the intergenerational cycle of poverty. Furthermore, the HGSF programme provides a platform to implement a nutritional safety net when combined with complementary initiatives, and encourages the diversification of school meals while promoting healthy eating habits. Moreover, the HGSF programme contributes to improving livelihoods and long-term development goals (WFP, 2015). Implied here is that the SFP assists parents to feed their children. As a result, the money that was envisioned for child support on education is served for food and other assets, and ultimately improves their livelihood. This implies that the provision of school meals therefore alleviates short-term hunger, while supporting long-term goals of educational attainment.

2.5.6.3 Job creation

Darko (2014) argues that the SFPs around the world provide jobs to people that produce foodstuffs for the preparation of meals for children in schools. The local farmers and matrons for various SFPs will have access to an income derived from the sale of their produce such as cereals, grains, tubers, vegetables and services rendered in the preparation of the meals. Similarly, the caterers of the school have access to an income from the services they render in preparation of the food (Afoakwa, 2012). In the same vein, the Ministry of Education HGSF in Kenya creates jobs by issuing local tenders for cereals, pulses and oil, while parents source salt and firewood.

In other instances, farmers gain principal economic benefits of local procurement for schools while local the community benefits through job creation and preparation of school meals. In Chile and Brazil, for example, the national policy allows for different mechanisms for the decentralisation of school meals procurement and delivery involving the private sector (Global Panel on Agriculture and Food System for Nutrition, 2015). In addition, the HGSF can create jobs and profits not only for smallholder farmers, but also for those involved in the transportation, processing and preparation of food along with the school feeding supply chain. For instance, jobs that are created in rural communities can provide off-farm income generation opportunities - and many of the jobs are filled by women. Furthermore, off-farm investment may in turn further stimulate productivity and agricultural employment by providing long-term food security and improving welfare in rural households (Aigbedion, Chamorro, Duggan, & Fujiwara, 2012). Moreover Asiago, and Akello (2014) establish that the increase in learners' numbers is a challenge that head

teachers face in the implementation of the SFP. These numbers were escalated by the fact that many parents take their children to school because of the SFP and the introduction of free primary education. Poverty and hunger cause many families to spend many days without food and seek the benefit of the SFP which provides food for their children and an opportunity to learn. This situation has left schools with no option other than to employ untrained teachers, as a result, creating jobs for them.

The challenge related to HGSF in Kenya is that the schools' ability to purchase locally produced products is hindered because all schools in the HGSF programme are in semi-arid areas, where the production capacity is limited. To mitigate this, the Ministry of Education has suggested the use of traders as a fall back in times of decreased rainfall (Bundy et al., 2009). In addition, when food prices are at their lowest, directly after harvest, schools purchase as much as possible to ensure a supply sufficient for the entire term. However, storage remains a challenge in many schools. On the other hand, the WFP (2015) states that the HGSF programme has vital benefits for building direct links between schools' demands for fresh and local products and the available supply from smallholder farmers at local or national levels. This expands market and economic opportunities to farmers and communities. For example, in Latin America and the Caribbean, the WFP's Purchase for Progress (P4P) provides an initial platform to expand the links and increase the proportion of basic grains for school meals which are sourced from local smallholder farmer associations (in particular maize and beans), and improve the farmers' capacity to meet the requirements of the public procurement processes. Furthermore, from 2009 to 2014 the P4P initiative supported 34,000 farmers and enabled the purchase of 70,000

metric tons of food from smallholder agriculture, worth 40 million USD of which 33 percent went to the national school feeding programmes.

In countries like Ecuador and Bolivia, the WFP has been implementing integrated Home Grown School Feeding approaches with local governments and communities for several years, with successful experiences documented and replicated (WFP, 2015). The assured market presented by the HGSF programmes can work as an incentive for smallholder farmers to invest in increasing agriculture production. For example, in 2014 a Malawian farmer earned nearly 80,000 kwacha (US\$200) from her sales of maize, soya, sweet potatoes and ground nuts to Ching'ombe Primary School. She testified that she benefitted more from a reliable market; she was able to double the amount spent on fertilizer and hybrid seed. Because of these inputs she was able to grow and harvest more bags of maize that time compared to the previous time (Davies, 2014).

Moreover, the SFP in Botswana was also sensitive to the needs of the community as it provided employment by recruiting cooks and hand stampers to process sorghum grain from the local community. Additionally, the study further notes that community members monitor food preparation through the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) while the Village Development Committees are involved in various decision making processes regarding school meals (Botswana Institute of Development Policy Analysis, 2013). According to Davies (2014), the HGSF model has the potential to increase community engagement and participation. This is particularly true when procurement is decentralised, enabling district authorities or schools to purchase food directly from local smallholder farmers and their organisations. For example, in Malawi procurement committees composed of parents,

community members, teachers and pupils receive training in procurement planning, negotiations and delivery terms. This allows schools to negotiate directly with farmers in order to cost-effectively purchase nutritious food. Additionally, they are provided with a receipt book to guide their choice of food, as well as guide how to ensure that students' nutritional needs are met. Moreover, from the look of things, partnerships are key to the success of the HGSF programmes. There is no one-size-fits-all model, but that the programme should rather be tailored to each different country's context.

2.6 The challenges to the implementation of the SFP

The challenges regarding the SFPs have been discussed by a multiplicity scholars. Davies and Dei (2014) explain that though significant progress has been made regarding the HGSF programmes, many challenges remain. Sections 2.5.1- 2.5.6 outline some of these challenges.

2.6.1 Competition in the local markets

Davies and Dei (2014), observe that competition in the local markets is one of challenges that affects the HGSFPs. For example, in Liberia, limited funding and high local prices in comparison to import parity prices makes purchasing rice from smallholder farmers challenging and makes smallholder farmers to be less competitive towards export prices (Davies, 2014). Dei (2014) submits that the feeding schemes have gained a reputation over the years for being expensive, riddled with implementation problems which make them less effective in meeting health, nutrition or educational objectives. Again, Afoakwa

(2012) opines that one of the major challenges for SFPs are on issues relating to price, availability of food commodities, logistics and non-payment or delayed release of grants for feeding by governments. The availability of funds to run the feeding programme is an important issue because when there is lack or delayed funds to buy foodstuff and to pay food handlers, the programme is likely to encounter serious problems, if not forced to come to a halt altogether. Furthermore Dei (2014) reveals that the Eastern Cape Department of Education at one stage suspended the SFP due to lack of funds. The study further reveals that the decisions to suspend the SFP will always have a devastating impact on thousands of learners who are already in a battle to get their daily nutritional meals and to gain quality education due to the appalling state of schools in that province.

2.6.2 Competing interests

Dei's (2014) case study of the evaluation of the SFP in South Africa reveals competing interests as one of the major challenges. This challenge results in cooking delays and dishing of food, cook absenteeism and disruption of instructional time among other challenges. Dei's (2014) further explains that food is served in classrooms, learners take their time to eat, wash their bowls and clean their classrooms. These activities disrupt the teaching and learning processes thereafter. Equally instructional time is wasted and learners lose time that should have been used for learning.

Dei (2014) explains that managers and governors of the SFP help to balance both governance and management. Similarly, they have to make sure that there is a good culture of feeding, teaching and learning and to enhance an effective day to day functioning of

the school. Dei (2014) reiterates that an effective SFP will be achieved only if the school (School Management Team) and community (parents) engage in the effective and transparent building of a strong relationship and trust for each other. In other words, maintaining a balance between school management and community members remains a problem as both stakeholders need determination in balancing their roles. Asiago, and Akello (2014) in their exploration of the challenges facing head teachers in the implementation of school feeding programme in Kenya, establishes that due to financial constraints and the fact that sometimes cooks were not hired, compelled teachers to have no option but to supervise the cooks and serve meals to learners. By so doing, most teachers found the SFP to be burdensome and demanding in terms of time because they could not balance teaching and school feeding coordination.

2.6.3 Problem of recruiting untrained staff /teachers/School Board Members

Asiago, and Akello (2014), reveal that 46% of the schools employ untrained teachers to manage increased pupil population, and about 34% merge their classes. Consequently, these untrained teachers lack expertise in teaching methodology and are ineffective in content delivery which in turn negatively affects learners' reading and writing skills (Asiago & Akello, 2014. p.8). On the same note, Joubert (2011) notes that both managers and governors are faced with challenges to fulfil their roles because the idea of governors being responsible for the internal organisation of the school is impossible due to fact that training courses, hand-outs, packs, videos and booklets given to governors fail to capacitate them properly to execute their duties. Additionally, school governors do not get proper training before assuming their duties. As a result, they fail to execute their

management roles including decision making. Furthermore, the WFP (2013) report reveals that facilitators of a workshop on SFPS observed that the NSFP training participants exhibited a large knowledge gap because the majority of the schools have never received formal training on how to implement the NSFP. In addition, Khama (2014) reveals that most school board members in the Zambezi Region of Namibia, were not trained about their roles and responsibilities following their appointments as school governors. This shows that lack of skills was an impediment with regards to the execution of the school board members' mandates.

2.6.4 Increasing numbers of SFP beneficiaries

A positive in the case of Namibia, is that the feeding programme is growing fast and the number of beneficiaries were envisaged to reach 300,000 by 2015. Despite the fact that the SFP remains a strong national priority, the financial resources and capacity-building efforts that are essential to support expansion become severely stretched (WFP, 2012). In other words, the rapid expansion of the feeding programme results in resource deficiencies, both in funding and human capacity as these becomes stretched and in turn threaten the programme's quality and impact.

Many countries around the world are experiencing a surge in the number of school-aged children that are not and have never been enrolled in school with regard to school enrolments. For example, in Mali, only 40 percent of primary school-aged children were enrolled because access to schools in remote food insecure areas is still a challenge (Global Panel on Agriculture and food Systems for Nutrition, 2015).

2.6.5 The absence of the NSFP policy

Ellis (2012) affirms that the NSFP does not have a policy of its own. The WFP Report (2013), evinces that the quality of the NSFP has been compromised in Namibian over the years due to inadequate management, implementation capacity and a lack of proper monitoring systems. The absence of the NSFP policy leaves a gap with regards to the design and implementation of the programme (WFP, 2013). Moreover, Ellis (2012), emphasises that the intentions of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture has always been to have a NSFP policy of its own written within the context of the programme and reform. The same sentiment was echoed by the WFP Case Study (2012) on the Namibian school feeding programme who observe that, even though the programme was embedded in various legal documents, no school feeding policy exists. The WFP (2012) further reveals that the absence of the policy contributed to the programme's failure to reach a level of prominence it deserves. This reality also applies to other countries. For example, the Botswana Case study (2013) explains that there is no specific policy for the SFP in Botswana but the programme is guided by the Guidelines on the Management of Primary School Feeding Programme. Interestingly, while the country is without a SFP policy, the feeding programme in public schools is an integral part of the revised National Food Strategy and is also included as part of the Revised National Policy for Rural development.

2.6.6 Other challenges

Other challenges to the SFP are mentioned by Ellis (2012). Ellis (2012) explains that besides hunger, there are other factors that affect school attendance and these include among others, distance from home to school, relevance of the curriculum, disability, stigmatisation, and social, cultural or familial conditions. This is further supported by the National Household Income and Expenditure Survey of 2009/10 which explains that 9.1 percent of children aged 6 to 16 (8.4% female, 9.8% male) have never been to school.

2.7 Measures to address the SFP challenges

The review of literature demonstrates some measures suggested by scholars to address the challenges faced with the school feeding programmes. One of the suggestions is captured in Davies (2014) who explained and observed that for the smallholder farmers to be more competitive in the local market, the production of cowpeas and their incorporation into the SFPs should be emphasised. Another suggestion is captured in the regional initiatives for West Africa Rice Organisation. The organisation addresses funding challenges by investing in cost-effective production processes, which help to further reduce costs for the farmers. Thirdly, Asiano, and Akello (2014) explains that the problem of recruiting untrained teachers in Kenya can be mitigated by sensitising parents on their role in supporting the SFP in order for schools to realise academic excellence. This will assist in freeing the teachers from the responsibility of preparing and serving school feeding meals and remain focused on teaching only. Fourth, Joubert (2011) and Khama (2014) suggest that School Governing Boards need certain competencies before they are able to govern

their schools. They need to develop and improve their capacity and knowledge regarding the SFPs as part of educational governance of the schools. In other words, training on the SFP for both teachers and school governors is essential for them to be effective in terms of the management of the programme. The Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition (2015) suggests that in such contexts, the provision of the SFPs represents an effective incentive for parents to send their children (especially girls) to school when they could otherwise be doing economically-valued tasks at home. Lastly, the need for a policy is paramount. The intention of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture is to have a policy written for the NSFP within the context of a programme to reform school feeding (Ellis, 2012). To this effect, the SFP is therefore an important part of an array of measures that are needed to fulfil the right of every Namibian child to education.

2.8 Some country case studies on the implementation of SFPs

The objective of this section is to analyse country case studies on the implementation of the NSFP. The section focuses on the following subtopics:

- The case of Namibia
- The case of Botswana
- The Case of South Africa
- The Case of Kenya
- The case of Malawi
- The case of Cambodia
- The Case of Brazil

- United States of America
- Lesson learned from the implementation of school feeding programmes in order to deliver effective management services.

These countries above were chosen in order to inform and comparatively contextualise the development of the NSFP programme in Namibia. Countries like the United States of America, South Africa, Brazil, Botswana and Kenya are more historically experienced in terms of the implementation of SFPs as compared to Namibia. It is for this reason that they were sought to inform and comparatively contextualise the development of the NSFP programme in Namibia, and in the process, add value to the current study. The view of the researcher is that a country like Namibia can learn from the experiences of other countries such as the above mentioned in terms of implementation of the NSFPs. Similarly, countries like Malawi and Cambodia with little experience, were worthy studying in order to equally learn from both their challenges and their successes and ultimately emulate good practices from them.

2.8.1 The case of Namibia

In 1991, the Namibian School Feeding Programme (NSFP) was introduced as a pilot school feeding programme in drought affected areas of the country. The World Food Programme (WFP), in collaboration with the then Ministry of Education and Culture, initiated the programme by distributing over a one-year period, the surplus military food rations from the United Nations operation, UNTAG, that supervised elections. The

support was expanded to five schools in the area, and 400 to 500 children were fed (Ministry of Education, 1993). In 1996, the Government of Namibia took over full ownership with regard to administration and funding of the programme (WFP, 2012). Namibia embraced the advent of the SFP to benefit the poor, orphans and vulnerable children in order to improve their health and to allow them access to an education. The implementation and management of the NSFP, currently, is being carried out by the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture at both national and regional levels (MoE, 2012). The managers are also responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the SFP.

Following the success of the pilot programme of 1992, a four - year national SFP began in 1993, with funding from both the WFP and the Namibian government. The programme ran from 1993 to 1996. The WFP provided vegetable oil, dried skimmed milk and cash to the poor and vulnerable children of Namibia. In addition to this direct assistance, the Government of Namibia implemented the programme under the WFP guidance and it was also accorded a budget line. Some of the vegetable oil was used to purchase maize meal and sugar and children were fed a maize porridge meal mid-morning. Other donors and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) provided once-off equipment donations (Visser, 2005). The WFP's vision was and still is to eradicate hunger in people's lifetime, with a bold aim that is outlined in Sustainable Development Goal 2, that of putting an end to hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition as well as promoting sustainable agriculture (WFP, 2012). A geographical targeted strategy was used to identify remote schools in drought-prone, poor-crop producing regions and a second-tier targeting assessed vulnerable and needy children as beneficiaries within approved schools.

The OVC in drought affected areas are regarded as poor due to inadequate access to food, education, healthcare and quality life. The purpose of introducing the SFP in those areas was to respond to the educational and nutritional needs of learners from extremely poor and vulnerable groups in drought affected rural areas. The aim was also to mitigate the impact of inequality, poverty and to enhance access to education and to improve nutrition (Ministry of Education 2007, & Visser, 2005). In addition, a case study of Namibia conducted by Ellis, (2012) affirms this by explaining that the government had introduced the programme with the intention of relieving hunger resulting from drought conditions, and equalising educational opportunities for OVCs. Similarly, the Annual Report for the Technical Assistance to the NSFP for May 2013 to May 2014 indicates that the SFP is one of the strategies promoted by the Government of Namibia to address inequalities and other social injustices that prevent Namibian children from accessing educational opportunities. The programme was gradually introduced in new areas. Regional workshops were held to educate the community leaders, parents and teachers about the programme and the most crucial outcome was the community's agreement to support the programme by providing firewood and labour, while food rations were used to pay cooks (Visser, 2005).

Since the inception of the SFP, there has been little, if any, thorough study conducted especially on the implementation of the SFP in the Zambezi Region. Before this study, it was not clear whether the implementers of the programme were carrying their roles and responsibilities as expected. Therefore, there was a need for a thorough study to be conducted to assess the impacts of the SFP in Namibian schools. Bundy et al. (2009) reveal that the SFP can benefit education (in this case, learners) through enrolment, attendance,

cognition and educational achievement. These researchers note that well-designed SFPs that include micronutrient fortification and deworming can provide nutritional benefits to younger children. In the same vein, Sibanda (2012) highlights the benefits of the SFP, some of which are increasing enrolment and attendance, alleviating short-term hunger, and improving the nutritional status and micronutrient status of learners Sibanda (2012) farther identifies other benefits of the SFP which include the following:

- Increase in the attention and concentration of learners to gain cognitive and learning functions. Nutrition affects the development of factors that encourage cognitive development before and after a child is enrolled in school. In addition, conditions such as protein-energy malnutrition and other micronutrient deficiencies can have an adverse effect on attention and concentration in school.
- School meals effectively reduce absenteeism and increase the duration of schooling, educational performance, dropout rates, and repetition.
- It increases community involvement in schools, particularly where programmes depend on the community for preparing and serving meals for learners.
- Schools can teach students to practise healthy eating and food safety.
- Skilled personnel are available to provide follow-up and guidance after the appropriate training of students, teachers and other service providers.
- Teaching children about nutrition can help other people in the community to learn about it.
- Finally, school-based nutrition education has the ability to improve the eating behaviours of the youth.

The implementation of the NSFP faces an array of challenges which range from weak management, inadequate funding, lack of coordination among all sectors involved, lack of training, poor stock control, inadequate standards for food handling to late deliveries and incidences of malpractices (WFP, 2014).

2.8.2 The case of Botswana

The Botswana School Feeding Programme has been documented by the Botswana Institute of Development Policy Analysis (2013). Botswana was historically one of the poorest country in Sub-Saharan Africa faced with hunger and malnutrition. The SFP in Botswana was introduced in 1966 when the country became independent. The country was not self-sufficient in food production, as a result, the Botswana's SFP was started with the financial and implementation assistance of the World Food Programme, a situation which prevailed until 1993. The feeding programme was aimed at relieving short-term hunger, improving school enrolment, attendance and retention rate among school going children. The programme targeted all children in government owned public primary schools from grade 1 to 7. As a result, 330,000 children were fed through 750 schools (Botswana Institute of Development Policy Analysis, 2013).

By this time, the SFP beneficiaries had increased to 300,419 in 672 schools across the country. In the late 1980s, Botswana transitioned to a middle income country, which meant that the government was no longer eligible for the WFP support. When the government took over the programme, it was managed by the Ministry of Local Government. The Ministry of Local Government uses a centralised procurement model.

The government through the Department of Local Government Finance and Procurement Services purchases in bulk, and delivers to districts all the dry or non-perishable food commodities, namely, sorghum grain, UHT milk, beans, samp and vegetable oil. The food supplies are managed by Depot Managers who are supervised by the District Commissioners. The Department of Food Relief Services provides the budget for the running of that department and also provides development infrastructure like school kitchens and equipment (Botswana Institute of Development Policy Analysis, 2013).

At the school level, the Head of Middle Age Stream supervises the SFP, whilst the District Councils manage the decentralised fresh food part of the programme. The design and implementation of the SFP in Botswana has different role players who manage the programme. The Ministry of Agriculture tests the grain like sorghum and beans while the Ministry of Health tests the processed food particularly when the depots get new food consignments. The purchasing of bread and bread spread is decentralised and administered by local authorities. The Botswana Case Study (2013) on National School Feeding Programme notes the need for the inclusion of locally produced food on the menu by indicating the following reasons:

- Most traditional food has a high nutritional value.
- This will alleviate poverty as small-scale farmers will have a readymade market.
- Farmers are willing to participate, but just need to be encouraged to become more productive in order to have large local markets.
- Past experience with the inclusion of locally grown food items such as water melons, baked bread, sweet reed and corn was successful.

One objective of the SFP in Botswana was to create employment for hand stampers and cooks. On the positive side, changes that were made to the menu made meals more diversified and therefore meeting the objective of preventing learners from feeling hungry (Botswana Institute of Development Policy Analysis, 2013).

Despite the positives = observed above, the programme had its share of challenges. The case study highlights challenges related to poor or limited communication and coordination across stakeholders involved in the feeding programme. Additionally, the budgetary allocation to the SFP has not been adequate and there is a discrepancy between what is requested and what is allocated. Moreover, Botswana does not have a policy on SFP but rather use a guideline for the programme. This in turn affects the amount of food actually distributed. Furthermore, a lack of capacity to monitor and evaluate the programme has led to implementation problems. Below are some of other concerns that have been cited by the Botswana School Feeding as affecting the smooth running of the SFP:

- Shortage of transport
- Late deliveries by suppliers/irregular supply of some food commodities
- Some of the food commodities do not comply with the set quality standards
- Spoilage of food commodities due to unfavourable conditions at the warehouses
- An absence of the school feeding programme policy
- Old storage facilities
- Suppliers are sometimes not paid on time
- Inadequate warranted funds to run the programme

- Weak monitoring systems (Botswana Institute of Development Policy Analysis, 2013).

2.8.3 The Case of South Africa

South Africa, introduced its SFP for mixed race and white schools in the 1940s (Sibanda, 2012). According to Daitai, Tshifhumulo and Mukwevho (2018), the primary school feeding programme was established in 1994 as one of the Presidential human right-based lead projects under the Reconstruction and Development Programme in South Africa. The Department of Health initiated the SFP nation-wide under the supervision of the government, and the Department of Education was empowered to implement it throughout the country's municipalities. The aim of the programme was to enhance children's learning abilities, to foster attendance and punctuality, to decrease inequality, to reduce the predicament of hunger among most vulnerable children in the country (Daitai et al, 2018). According to the Kwazulu Natal Department of Education (2011), the programme was initiated as a safety net for assuaging poverty. The Government Gazette (2014, p.6) states that food insecurity, particularly in rural areas, leaves the inhabitants vulnerable due to poverty.

Studies conducted by Masket and Gelli (2013) as well as De Cook et al (2013) reveal better benefits from the South African SFP in terms of educational achievements, nutritional value and student enrolment. Equally, an evaluation conducted by Hochfeld, Graham, Patel, Moodley and Ross (2016) in South Africa concludes that improved nutrition has yielded positive trends which have been seen in the early years of the lives

of disadvantaged children in terms of improved health, cognitive abilities and promoting schooling. These researchers also reveal that the early interventions of this kind serves to close the ability gap between advantaged and disadvantaged children and could also be an important mechanism for reducing the intergenerational transmission of poverty. Furthermore, the researchers collectively observe that the SFP can provide more social benefits in terms of strengthening capacity for school principals, contributing to school infrastructure, and providing employment and business opportunities to community members. A further benefit was that of increased knowledge of healthy foods which learners and food handlers attested to.

Despite the fact that South Africa is considered to be a food secure nation, many households in the rural areas remain food insecure (Daitai et al., 2018). Additionally, at the national level, South Africa is able to produce enough food, however, distribution inequalities negatively affect household food security. Moreover, the lack of economic opportunities, climate change, rising input costs and entitlement failures pose a threat to domestic food production which ultimately leads to household food insecurity (Government Gazette, 2014, p. 12) Additionally, a study conducted by Hochfeld, Graham, Patel, Moodley and Ross (2016) evaluating an in-school breakfast programme in South Africa revealed that despite the National expansion of the SFP and other social protection mechanisms, child hunger still remains a significant challenge due to the escalating rates of unemployment and poverty in the country. It is in light of this view that the SFP emerged as a strategy for embracing local agricultural products.

2.8.4 The Case of Kenya

The Kenya SFP was introduced in the 1980s in different districts and was aimed at the retention of rural girls in schools. Girls in rural areas are usually not allowed to attend school due early marriages, household chores or because women were not considered as equal to men (Langinger, 2011). Alhassan and Alhassan's (2014) study on Kenya's SFP, observes that the programme was specifically aimed at increasing school enrolment, stabilising attendance, increasing completion rates, and improving government's capacity to manage the SFP through training. According to Langinger (2011), Kenya introduced the Home Grown School Feeding Programme in 2009, which targets 538,000 beneficiaries in semi-arid areas, with the intention of reducing malnutrition among learners, increasing access to education, and reducing social pressure that keeps girls away from school. In addition, a target exercise identified twenty-eight marginal agricultural districts with access to markets for the new programme (Alhassan & Alhassan, 2014). This study further reveals that there is no official target for the procurement of food, but 'local' is identified as follows: (i) from parents of learners (ii) within the school zone (iii) near school, in community, or (iv) from the local market and this proposal includes food produced in the whole country of Kenya.

The School Management Committee and School Feeding Sub-Committee directly manage the HGsf programme at the school level. This School Management Committee comprises of the head teacher as a secretary, a chairperson who is a parent and other parents who are members. Schools are tasked by the Ministry of Education to apply the existing financial,

management and procurement experience for purchasing textbooks and other supplies to the SFP procurement model (Alhassan & Alhassan, 2014).

With regards to the Cash Transfer Scheme, the Ministry of Education funds are disbursed directly to the specified school's bank account twice a year for the local purchase of cereals, pulses and oil. The Ministry of Education's HGSF issues local tenders for cereals, pulses and oil whereas parents source salt and firewood. Community participation and involvement is strong and each household is asked to contribute towards the programme. For instance, their contributions include firewood, water, cash for cooks' salaries, and salt. When households cannot contribute, the School Management Committee makes alternative arrangements with the family. The other success is the degree to which SFP is articulated in the national policy framework to help strengthen its potential and sustainability and quality of implementation (Asiago & Akello, 2014).

Despite the great strides that have been achieved by the Kenya SFP, schools' ability to purchase locally grown products are hampered because all schools in the HGSF programme are within semi-arid area, where production capacity is limited (Alhassan & Alhassan, 2014). Another challenge is that the Kenyan SFP lacks uniformity in standards and meal provisions in schools, resulting in weak the implementation thereof (Hamupembe (2016). This is because of implementing the programme differently and because of guidelines that are not followed. Furthermore, schools are overcrowded and without additional facilities to cater for the needs of the pupils. The Kenyan schools also lack dinning spaces and hand washing facilities for pupils participating in the SFP.

2.8.5 The case of Malawi

Tomlinson (2007) states that the Malawian Government started a free Primary Education Feeding Programme for all in 1999. The feeding programme was funded by the WFP in collaboration with Gesellschaft Für Internationale Zusammenarbeit among others. Tomlinson further reveals that the aim of the programme was to increase girls' and orphaned learners' participation in school as well as to reduce short-term hunger which was seen to be the main cause of poor concentration and cognitive functioning and to narrow the gap in dropout rates between boys and girls. Learners were provided with maize meal porridge in the morning. Additionally, girls were given take home rations every month (Hamupembe, 2016).

Davies (2014) explains that the HGSF model has the potential to increase community engagement and participation. This is particularly true when procurement is decentralised, enabling district authorities or schools to purchase food directly from local smallholder farmers and their organisations. Davies (2014) further explains that the Malawi procurement committees which are composed of parents, community members, teachers and pupils receive training in procurement planning, negotiations and delivery terms. This allows schools to negotiate directly with farmers in order to cost-effectively purchase nutritious food. Additionally, schools are provided with a recipe book to guide their choice of food, as well as guide the students' nutritional intake of food.

The Malawian SFP is faced with key challenges of lack of programme sustainability and transfer of learners from non-targeted schools to targeted ones (Hamupembe, 2016). Additionally, the ever escalating food prices place a burden on the overall funding of the programme. Another challenge is the community perception towards the feeding meals and their voluntary involvement to mean that they should benefit directly from it. Hamupembe (2016) further reveals that the communities do not take ownership of the programme as they rather see it as a donor driven or government owned programme.

2.8.6 The Case of Brazil

According to Pye-Smith (2014), the Brazilian SFP started in 1950. It was initially a centralised scheme which only served the neediest children in the poorest areas. In 1988, a new constitution gave a universal right of all children in the public schools to receive some meals in a form of calories rather than a balanced diet. In 2003, a Zero Hunger Strategy was introduced which was aimed at eradicating hunger and poverty. A School Feeding Law was enacted in 2009. Following that, a legal framework for the SFP was created which institutionalised the National Schools Nutritional Policy. This enabled all pupils and students in nurseries, kindergartens, primary, secondary, youth and adult education, with special consideration to children of African descent and indigenous communities to benefit from the programme (Pye-Smith, 2014).

The SFP is coordinated by the National Fund for Education Development and allocates funds for the SFP to Brazil's 27 states and 5570 municipalities. It also sets nutritional targets and is equally responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the programme.

However, the daily implementation of the SFP is provided by the state and municipal education departments and the school themselves. At the national level, the programme is governed through collaboration between the ministries responsible for education, agriculture, social development and finance, whilst at the local level, its success depends on collaboration between local government departments, schools, food producers and local communities - which have been absolutely key to the success of the programme. The councils conduct regular assessments in every school to ensure that learners are getting the right balance of carbohydrates, proteins and micronutrients and also monitor all activities related to the SFP. Infrastructure such as kitchens and dining rooms are in place. Learners are provided with the menu which include fresh tilapia from local fish farms, peppers, broccoli, beetroot, papaya, garlic, cassava, black beans, green beans, lettuce, tomatoes and raw carrot and they are also fed brown rice. Furthermore, nutrition has become part of the teaching in the curriculum for Brazilian schools. In addition, cooks are trained in hygiene and how to prepare meals as per the menus. The sustainable SFP in Brazil generates multi-dimensional benefits which include access to fresh food, nutrition, hygiene, good health, good education, environmentally friendly agriculture and local/rural economic development.

2.8.7 The Case of Cambodia

The Cambodian SFP started in 2008 with the aim to provide meals to pre and primary school children in rural and food-insecure communities (WFP, 2016). The programme helps to increase enrolment, attendance and retention in schools across the country. The lead implementers of the SFP is the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport and the WFP.

The main objective in providing meals to learners in Cambodia is to meet educational goals and to provide a social safety net (WFP, 2016). The WFP handed over significant responsibilities for implementing school feeding meals to the Royal Government of Cambodia in 2013. Furthermore, the WFP works in collaboration with the government to establish a nationally-owned SFP by 2021. The national laws, policies and standards include the National School Feeding Policy and nutritional standards and food safety. School meals are prepared on-site in open cooking areas with charcoal or wood stoves. The menu includes grain/cereals, eggs, meat, fish, green leafy vegetables, oil and salt which are provided as breakfast, lunch or take home rations. All schools have latrines, most have clean water, and some have electricity, piped water and flush toilets. Modalities for providing students with food include in-school meal, take-home rations and conditional cash transfer.

In-schools meals targeting is geographic, as it targets areas with a high prevalence of poverty and poor educational performance, and is also directed to areas with community commitment to implement the programme (WFP, 2016). With regards to successes, Cambodia exhibits strong policy support for the SFP. The government has transposed 90% of the SFP from the WFP to government support. The Cambodian SFP has increased the net admission and promotion rate and decreases the dropout rate. In addition, at the grassroots level, communities and authorities actively collaborate (WFP, 2016). However, Cambodia experiences limited participation from authorities and communities in some areas. It is difficult to find skilled cooks, and there is sometimes insufficient infrastructure such as kitchens, stoves and dining halls for the programme. Additional challenges include unpredictable funding from local authorities and communities, a lack

of clean water and limited inter-ministerial coordination at the sub-national level (WFP, 2016).

2.8.8 The Case of the United Kingdom (UK)

The United Kingdom school lunch programme began in 1879 in Manchester, where the municipality began to provide a free meal to pupils from poor backgrounds who were badly nourished at school (Davies, 2005). In 1906, the Education Act empowered all the municipalities in the United Kingdom to promote the welfare of the nation, and to enhance the teaching and learning processes. Furthermore, Harper, Mitchell and Wood cited in Darko, (2014) note that in 2004, the Secretary of State commenced a programme to improve the quality of the school feeding meals because of numerous benefits it has had in the teaching and learning processes. As a matter of urgency, 220 million pounds were poured into the programme from 2005-2008. The UK government established food-based standards which include the increment in the intake of healthier foods such as fruit, vegetables and oil fish and nutrient-based standards in order to promote an increase in the provision of foodstuffs containing essential nutrients. These standards are aimed at addressing concerns regarding the poor quality of school meals and to improve the nutritional balance of meals that are served to school learners (Nhlapo, Lues, Kativu & Groenewald, 2015). This was also done to improve the knowledge of parents, children and teachers with regard to healthy nutritional diets and healthy food preparation which, ultimately improved pupils' performance and wellbeing. Assessment of the programme reveals that it has had tremendous impact on natives' and immigrants 'children in relation to learning in the country.

2.8.9 The Case of the United States of America (USA)

Gunderson (2013) observes that the United States of America (USA) school lunch programme could be traced to about a century ago. Gunderson (2013) further notes that the United States of America school lunch was born as a result of private societies and associations which were much interested in children's education and welfare in the society. The dropout rate was quite high and increasing among children in the late 1890's. This was caused by the neo-liberal system and poverty among parents. The Children's Aid Society of New York in 1853 initiated a programme to provide free meals to learners in vocational schools in the state. However, this programme was stopped due to financial constraints.

Gunderson (2013) affirms that more municipalities in the United States of America learnt about school feeding lunches from New York and introduced similar programmes in their states. In 1992, the school lunch programme gained statutory support in Philadelphia to provide free meals to students and pupils within the state. In 1908 and 1921, the school lunch started in Boston and Chicago respectively. In the same vein, Mader (2013) indicates that the introduction of the Hunger Free Kid Act in 2010 by Michelle Obama's Health Policy and US Department of Agriculture Lunch Act in 2012 improved the quality of the meals as well as the health needs of the children better than before. The aim was to improve the diet of the children. In order to reduce obesity among children, vegetables and fruits were added to children's meals in both government schools and the private ones in the United States of America.

2.8.10 The lessons from the case studies

The current study focused on the experiences of the implementers of the SFP in two schools in the Zambezi Region of Namibia, learns the following lessons from the above case studies. The *first* lesson is that the decentralisation of the SFP drives the various aspects of the programme from farmers to schools. For example, countries such as Botswana, Brazil, South Africa, Kenya, Malawi and Cambodia have localised their school feeding to embrace the HGSF. The aforementioned cases use the HGSF model because of its potential to increase community engagement and participation.

The countries case studies from Kenya, Malawi, Brazil, and Botswana, have revealed that community participation and involvement is strong. As a result, jobs have been created for service providers such as cooks, caterers, transporters and in the case of Botswana, to the hand stampers and bakers. The *third* lesson is from the South African school feeding scheme. The South African school feeding scheme addressed some issues that are related to food insecurity such as poverty, hunger, unemployment, lack of education, and nutritional and health values to the community. Additionally, the improved nutrition has yielded positive trends which have been observed in the early years of the lives of disadvantaged children in terms of improved health, cognitive abilities and performance in school. Despite these positive achievements, the implementation strategies have blocked the programme's impact in the production of food as well as the creation of a market for local farmers. The *Fourth* lesson is from the Kenyan SFP which has a strong community participation. For instance, each households is asked to contribute towards the SFP. Typical contributions include firewood, water cash for cooks' salaries and salt. When

a household cannot contribute, the School Management Committee make alternative arrangement with the family. The SFP is managed at the school level and most schools are in the HGSF programme. Funds are directly disbursed twice a year to the designated school bank account which minimises the delays and issues related to caterers. The *fifth* lesson drawn from the Malawi case is that the procurement committees which are composed of parents, community members, teachers and pupils receive training in procurement planning, negotiations and delivery terms. This allows schools to negotiate directly with farmers in order to cost- effectively purchase nutritious food. Additionally, they are provided with a recipe book to guide their choice of food, as well as guidance them on how to ensure that students' nutritional needs are met.

The *sixth* lesson observed from the USA case is that the feeding programme has improved the quality of the meals as well as the health needs of the children better than before. With the aim of improving the diets of the children in order to reduce obesity among children, vegetables and fruits were added on children's meals in both government schools and the private ones in the United States of America. The *Seventh* lesson is that all SFP cases cited above except Botswana, have policies for their feeding programmes. For instance, Cambodia has national laws, policies and standards which include which a National School Feeding Policy and a nutritional standards and food safety for the programme. *Lastly*, lessons from Brazil are about activities which help in creating sustainable schools. Such activities include the close cooperation between ministries and departments responsible for health, education, agriculture, social development and finance, the strong participation of teachers, parents and learners to achieve a common goal, comprehensive food and nutritional education involving the use of school gardens as an educational tool,

monitoring the nutritional status of children and their development and purchasing food directly from local family farmers. Additionally, at the national level, the programme results from a collaboration between the ministries responsible for education, agriculture, social development and finance, whilst at the local level, its success depends on the collaboration between local government departments, schools, food producers and local communities. Moreover, the councils conduct regular assessments in every school to ensure that learners are getting the right balances of carbohydrates, proteins and micronutrients and they monitor all activities related to SFP. Infrastructure such as kitchens and dining rooms are in place. Learners are provided with the menu which include fresh tilapia from local fish farms, peppers, broccoli, beetroot, papaya, garlic, cassava, black beans, green beans, lettuce, tomatoes and raw carrot and they are also fed brown rice. Moreover, nutrition has become part of the teaching in the curriculum in most Brazilian schools. In addition, cooks are trained in hygiene and how to prepare menus.

The sustainable SFP in Brazil has multi-dimensional benefits which include access to fresh food, nutrition, hygiene, good health, good education, environmentally friendly agriculture and local/rural economic development. Moreover, from the look of things, finances, strong community participation, management, monitoring and coordination, national laws, policies and standards and efficiency and the effective implementation of activities are key to the success of the SFP and the HGSF programmes. There is no one-size-fits all model, but what should be borne in mind is that the programme should rather be tailored to each different country's context.

2.9 Summary

The chapter has presented a discussion of the relevant literature review that shapes the current study on the experiences of the implementers of the SFP in two schools in the Zambezi region of Namibia. The first section of this chapter explained the conceptual framework followed by a deliberation of the theoretical framework. In this section it was demonstrated that both the conceptual and theoretical frameworks are of paramount importance to the study as they directly form the basis of the current study. The next section discussed the influence of the SFP on education, health and socio-economic consideration. In this section it was illustrated that the SFP is of paramount importance as it is aimed at increasing enrolment, attendance and retention rates of learners and it has the potential to improve the performance of learners that are from poor and vulnerable backgrounds. Equally, discussion observes that the SFP can improve learners' health through the intake of nutritious food, deworming medication and is capable of reducing the proliferation of HIV and AIDS cases.

The SFP is imagined to be a vehicle that could reduce short-term and long-term hunger as well as help in reducing poverty through the provision of school meals, job creation, household food security and purchasing locally produced food. The fourth subsection addressed the challenges faced in the implementation of the NSFP followed by a discussion of the measures to that can be adopted to alleviate those challenges. In doing this, the chapter presented the country case studies pertaining to the implementation of the SFP at both the global and African level. These include the implementation of SFPs in countries like Brazil and America that focus on reducing obesity in learners whereas most

African case study countries focus on reducing malnutrition. With the exception of Botswana, all case countries have SFP policies in place. Equally, apart from Namibia, all case countries have decentralised their feeding programmes to locally produced foods or HGSFP. All in all, the sustainability of the school feeding programmes depend on proper funding, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the SFP activities, the training of stakeholders and a strong parental and community involvement. The purpose discussing the case studies was to help note some lessons that the researcher could draw from the and these would help contextualise and guide the current study on the experiences of the implementers of the SFP in two schools in the Zambezi region of Namibia in the pre-existing body of literature and other countries' experiences. The next chapter provides a description of the research design, strategies and methods that were adopted in the collection and analysis of data in the current study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methods of research followed in order to address the research questions relating to the exploration of the experiences of the implementers of the SFP in two selected schools in the Zambezi Region of Namibia. The chapter defines the concept 'research paradigm' and explains the type of research paradigm adopted in the current study. This is followed by explanations of the research design, population, sample and sampling techniques used. The chapter also provides the description of research instruments used in the collection of data and the results of the pilot study. Furthermore, the chapter explains the data collection procedures and also provides a brief overview of how data were analysed. The chapter ends by highlighting ethical considerations applicable in the current study and how the researcher dealt with them.

3.2 The research paradigm

Cantrell (1993) and Creswell (2003) believe that in conducting a research, the selection of a research paradigm represents a choice of a set of beliefs that will underlie and guide the entire research process. According to Mertens (2015, p. 10) a research paradigm is a way of looking at the world. It is composed of certain philosophical assumptions that guide and direct thinking and action. Implied here is that a paradigm provides a researcher

with a set of concepts - principles and rules that guide the suitable research design and approach, and how the research should be conducted. Bailey (1982) as well as Denzin and Lincoln (2000) submit that a paradigm is a mental window through which a researcher views the world. In other words, a paradigm influences a researcher to make claims about the knowledge and methods used.

Mertens (2015) discusses the various types of paradigms that guide educational and psychological research. These are post-positivism, constructivism, transformative and pragmatic paradigms. Accordingly, the post-positivists hold beliefs about the importance of objectivity and generalisability but suggest that the researcher should modify their claims to understanding of truth based on probability rather certainty while the constructivists view knowledge as socially constructed by the people active in the research process and that the researcher should attempt to understand the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it. The transformative paradigm provides a philosophical framework that explicitly addresses issues of power and justice and builds on a rich base of scholarly literature from mixed methods research, qualitative research, participatory action research, feminist research, culturally responsive research, indigenous research, disability research, and researches in the international development community. Pragmatics is one of the paradigms that provide the philosophical basis for mixed methods research. The emphasis is on actual behaviour, the beliefs that stand behind those behaviours and the consequence that are likely to follow from the behaviour (Mertens, 2015).

Taking the views of Mertens (2015) into context, it can be observed that the paradigms have four basic dimensions namely, ontology, epistemology, methodology and axiology. It is imperative to discuss the first two facets of a paradigm here because the last two facets are discussed under the research design and approaches of this study.

3.2.1 Ontology

The ontological questions are concerned with the nature of reality (Mertens, 2015, p. 14). The researcher observes that different paradigms view ontology in different ways. Therefore, the current study adopts the conceptualisation of ontology from a constructivist approach. According to Mertens (2015), the constructivists explain that reality is not discovered but socially constructed. The objective of the constructivist researcher is to understand the multiple social constructions of meaning and knowledge.

3.2.2 Epistemology

Epistemology explains how knowledge is produced. It is about the nature of knowledge and the relationship between the knower and the would-be known (Mertens, 2015, p.10). In other words, the crux of this paradigm is about knowledge. For instance, the nature of knowledge and how we know what we are supposed to know. Mertens (2015) reiterates that in post-positivism, epistemology entails that the researcher and the participants are to be independent and should therefore not influence each other. On the other hand, the constructivists believe that the enquirer and the inquired are interlocked in an interactive process and therefore, influence each other (Mertens, 2015). The constructivist therefore,

opts for a more personal interaction during data collection. In the Zambezi case study, the epistemology was generated by gathering views through the construction of ideas in a personal interaction between the researcher, and the participants. Epistemology, was thus embraced from a constructivist perspective.

3.3 Constructivist paradigm

The constructivist paradigm as discussed by Mertens (2015) grew out of the philosophy of interpretation and understanding of hermeneutics. Hermeneutics is the interpretive understanding of historical documents to try to understand what the author was attempting to communicate within the time period. The basic assumption guiding the constructivist paradigm is that knowledge is socially constructed by the people active in the research process and that the researcher should attempt to understand the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it. Mertens (2015) furthermore explains that constructivists argue that research is a product of the values of the researcher and cannot be independent of them.

The researcher, quite alert to this possibility of the intrusion of personal values, embraced the constructivist paradigm. The constructivist paradigm is multidisciplinary and the epistemology is socially constructed in realities (Mertens, 2015). It seeks to interpret the experiences and the managers' understanding of the SFP as they implement it. This paradigm is associated with qualitative methods, which create an interactive link between the researcher and the participants in the process of exploring views and understandings of the research universe.

3.4 Research design and approach

The concept 'research' is defined in different ways. Kumar (2014), supports this assertion by explaining that "...textbooks usually adopt one of two main approaches to defining what *research* is". For example, Kumar (2014), maintains that research is a process of *systematic inquiry* that is designed to collect, analyse, interpret, and use *data* to understand, describe, predict or control educational or psychological phenomena or to empower individuals in such contexts'. In this context research is perceived as an organised process of asking questions to collect information that can be used to empower individuals and produce desirable and informed actions. The other way of defining the concept is one that imagines research as "a range of practical skills and activities that are used to conduct particular types of investigations" (Gay et al., 2009). In this study, research is defined as a systematic process of gathering and analysing information, using widely accepted methods.

There are three basic types of research in education, namely quantitative research, qualitative research and mixed methods research (Kumar, 2014). According to Kumar (2014), quantitative research always involves measuring numerically, in some ways. He further contends that some "researchers set out to collect data that measures 'how many', 'how often', 'what percentage or proportion' or 'to what extent is there connection between X and Y'. When the data has been collected, statistical techniques are used to establish and describe the numerical patterns and relationships that exist in the data". Gay et al. (2009) also submit that quantitative research "measures variables in a quantifiable manner". In this study, quantitative research is seen as the type of research method that

employs numerical values to analyze and interpret data. Whereas mixed methods research is described by Kumar, (2014) as the approach that uses the strength of both quantitative and qualitative research.

This study utilises a qualitative research approach. The advantage of using the qualitative approach is that it helps the researcher to get closer to the research subjects and understand the world through their eyes. The other advantage of using the qualitative approach is that it allows the researcher to discuss issues that are significant regarding the study. It focuses on in-depth descriptions and understandings of actions and events (Babbie & Mouton, 2005). Creswell (2007) explains that the qualitative research approach puts the observer in a position to mirror things in the world. It therefore focuses on interpretive material practices “that make the earth that we live in visible”. Creswell (2007) further asserts that the visibility of the world transforms the globe by turning it into a series of represented field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos.

The researcher also adopted the case study design due to the nature of the study. A case study seeks to collect detailed descriptions of a phenomenon in order to ascertain social realities by collecting data through multiple sources of information such as interviews, observations, documents and audio-visual materials (Creswell, 2009). For the purpose of this study, the case studies are the two selected schools which are studied in-depth to collect and analyses data that explains the experiences and challenges of the implementers of the SFP. This is done through the use of multiple methods of data collection such as interviews, discussions observations and content review. With a case study, a limited number of units of analysis are studied intensively. The units of analysis include

individuals, groups and institutions. Case studies involve an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence and seeking personal data from the interviewees.

There are different types of case studies designs - a single case study and a multiple case study (Kumar, 2014). Kumar (2014), further reiterates that a single case can provide insight into the events and situations prevalent in a group from where the case has been drawn. A multiple case study or collective case studies according to Gay (2009) allows the researcher to make claims that the events described at one site are not necessarily idiosyncratic to that site and thus contribute to the researcher's understanding about contextual variations, or lack thereof, across the sites. The use of multiple case studies in educational research is a common strategy for improving the external validity or generalisability of the research.

The type of case study design that was used in this study was multiple and collective case studies which enabled the researcher to study two cases and present collective findings on them (Gay et al., 2009). This type of case study was chosen as it allowed the researcher to obtain information from more than one school. The multiple case studies, also allowed the researcher to observe similarities and differences that featured in both schools. The "cases" being referred to in this study are the two selected schools in the Zambezi Region of Namibia that are being studied to explore their experiences of the implementers of the school feeding programme. The researcher thus collected and analysed their views and experiences with the NSFP in their communities.

3.4.1 Population of the study

In any research, a population is the larger group to which the researcher would like the results of the study to be generalised (Gay et al., 2009). McMillan and Schumacher (2001) also affirm that a population is a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects or events that conform to specific criteria and to which researchers intend to generalise the results of a research. The target population of the study comprised of all ninety two (92) primary schools that provide school feeding meals in the Zambezi Region of Namibia. In this case, the population included all principals, teachers and school board members of all these schools. All the coordinators at the head office and regional levels who are also managing the programme in case schools and all service providers who render services of the school feeding programme to the two schools in Zambezi Region also form part of the population.

3.4.2 Sample and sampling procedures

A sample is defined by Creswell (2012) as a subgroup of the target population that the researcher plans to study for generalising the target population. Gay et al. (2009) explains that a sample is a small number of individuals for a study selected such that the individual chosen will be able to help the researcher understand the phenomenon under investigation. Moore (2000) equally refers to a sample as a smaller group selected from the larger population that is representative of the larger population. The sample for this study comprised of two principals, five focal teachers, a focus group discussion comprising of two school board members, four coordinators - two at head office and two at regional

levels and one service provider that provides school feeding meals in Zambezi Region of Namibia.

There are two different types of sampling procedures. These include probability and nonprobability sampling procedures (Pasco, 2014). The probability sampling approaches include simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling and multi-stage cluster sampling. Included in the list of nonprobability sampling procedures are accidental sampling convenience sampling, purposive sampling, quota sampling, snowball sampling and volunteer sampling (Pasco, 2014). Creswell (2015) reiterates that in a probability sampling which is associated with quantitative research, the researcher selects individuals from the population who are representatives of the population. In the non –probability sampling procedure, the researcher selects individuals because they are available, convenient, and represent some characteristics the investigator seeks to study (Creswell, 2012).

Because this study is qualitative in nature, the purposive sampling procedures was adopted. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006) purposeful sampling means that the researcher searches for information-rich key informants, groups, places and events to study. According to Gay et al. (2009), this kind of sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, investigate, understand and gain further insight into the topic under research and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned. In other words, those samples are chosen because they are likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomenon the researcher is investigating. The study used five focal teachers. This change came because one retired teacher with an in-depth

knowledge of the school feeding programme needed to be interviewed to get her experience on the subject. One school board member who initially was supposed to be in the focus group discussions withdrew from it and did not show up for the discussions. The other focus group discussion which was initially supposed to comprise of three school board members was not held due to various reasons, the researcher ended up with 14 participants which was still a good number to collect data from. These participants were sampled because they were believed to have adequate knowledge and experiences as managers of the NSFPs when they implemented the programme in the Zambezi Region.

3.4.3 Research instruments

The main instrument of data collection were the interview guide, focus group discussions and Observation Chart (Appendix C), a tape recorder and a camera. The interview guide with open-ended questions (Appendix B) were was used to collect data from the principals, teachers, coordinators and service providers. The use of an interview guide with open-ended questions afforded the researcher an opportunity to have an in-depth discussion with participants on their perceptions regarding the implementation of the school feeding programme including the challenges they faced. The interviews were appropriate in that they enabled participants to discuss their interpretations of the world they lived, and to express how they regarded situations from their own point of view.

It also enabled the researcher to probe responses that emerged from interviewees' responses and allowed for the generation of new ideas that led to richer data (Gay et al., 2009). This is explained by Cohen et al. (2000) who postulate that:

The framing of questions for a semi-structured interview considers prompts and probes. Prompts enable the researcher to clarify topics or questions, whilst probes enable the researcher to ask respondents to extend, elaborate, add to, provide detail for, clarify or qualify their response, thereby addressing richness, and depth of response, comprehensiveness and honesty that are some of the hallmarks of successful interviewing. (Cohen et al., 2000, p. 278)

The school board member participated in focus group discussions. The main aim in conducting focus group discussions was to allow the participants to talk, often at great length, about their feelings and about their underlying attitudes, beliefs and values (Moore, 2000). Data from the sites (the two selected schools) were collected using an observation chart (Appendix C). In using the observation chart, the researcher sought answers to questions such as what, who, how, why and when regarding the feeding programme and to observe the behaviours of the learners at meal times. A tape recorder was used to capture data in order to fill the gaps of field notes. Whereas the camera was used to take pictures at research sites, to comprehend the realities of the SFP at both schools.

3.4.4 Pilot study

Lawrence and Worsley (2007) explains that a pilot study is a small-scale preliminary study conducted before the main research to check for feasibility and improve on the research tools. Prior to visiting the two schools for data collection, the researcher conducted a pilot study using one school in Khomas Region. The reason for pilot testing the instruments was to find out whether the research tools were appropriate to collect the desired data. Additionally, the piloting exercise was also carried out to get the feedback needed to restructure interview questions, if it deemed fit. In the piloting exercise, the researcher used a smaller number of participants who had similar characteristics to those of the target group of participants (De Vos et al., 2005). The interview questions were administered to 1 principal, 2 teachers and 2 school board members from the selected primary school. The pilot study revealed that the questions were not vague. It was for this reason that the interview questions were not altered.

3.4.5 Validity

The concept 'validity' is defined by Kumar (2014) as a situation where the findings of one's study are in accordance with what one has sought to find out. From the constructivism paradigm perspective, the goodness or the quality of an inquiry can be judged by its trustworthiness. Trustworthiness in a qualitative study is guided by four indicators that are closely related to validity and reliability. These are, credibility (which involves establishing that the results of qualitative research are credible or believable from the perspective of the participant in the research), transferability (which refers to the

degree to which the results of a qualitative research can be generalised or transferred to other contexts or settings), dependability (which is concerned with whether we would obtain the same results if we could observe the same thing twice) and confirmability (which refers to the degree to which the results can be confirmed or corroborated by others) (Kumar, 2014, p. 219).

To ensure the validity of the study, the following steps were taken into consideration. Firstly, the interview guide with open-ended questions and the observation chart were presented to the supervisors for analysis and critique before they were administered for data collection (Polit et al., 2001). The researcher therefore reconfigured the documents and came up with instruments which ensured credible results. This was meant to ensure the validity, accuracy and meaningfulness of the results that were obtained from the analysis of data on the phenomena under study (Mungenda & Mungenda, 1999). Secondly, triangulation and data sources were used by the researcher in order to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the implementation of the school feeding programme and to cross-check information (Gay et al., 2009). Finally, the researcher also ensured validity of the instruments by piloting the instruments before the main study was conducted.

3.4.6 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness, along with understanding, are features essential to the validity of a qualitative research, and they can be established by addressing the credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability of the study. Reliability, which also mean trustworthiness, is described by Kumar (2014) as indicating the accuracy, stability

and predictability of a research instrument. A research instrument that is able to provide similar results when used repeatedly under similar conditions is described as reliable (Kumar, 2014).

In order to ensure that the research instruments would evince qualities and capabilities to yield good results, the researcher piloted and administered the instruments in order to assess their clarity. Additionally, the researcher had to rely on the participants to provide sincere and truthful information. In order to achieve this, first, the researcher had to ensure that ethical measures were taken into consideration by ensuring that the permission of the participants was obtained in a written form, which the participants signed, consenting to be interviewed. Second, the signed consent form detailed the rights to which the participants were entitled, including confidentiality, anonymity, privacy, voluntary participation and freedom to withdraw from the study. Lastly, the participants committed themselves by signing the consent forms which stated that they will be honest and truthful in their responses.

3.4.7 Data collection procedures

The researcher made appointments with the selected participants of study. Participants consent was obtained during the meeting. In this study, data were collected by employing an interview guide on a one on one basis with principals, teachers, coordinators and service providers as implementers of the school feeding programme in both schools. Focus group discussions were carried out with school board members and some observations were made at the two sites. The researcher recorded the responses and took field notes at

the same time. Permission was sought from participants to audio record the interviews and to take pictures at the sites.

Relevant documents such as Government Reports and relevant policy documents were used to support data collected through interviews. This was also done to provide rich and valid data in order to reduce the risks of validity threats such as bias. In a qualitative research, it is vital to be aware of the need to triangulate data by using multiple data sources. The purpose of using multiple methods during data collecting is believed by Gay et al. (2009) to have the potential of obtaining a more comprehensive picture of what is being studied and to cross-check information - the strength of one method compensates for the weakness of another.

3.4.8 Data analysis

Flick (2000) defines the concept of data analysis in relation to qualitative research. The author explains that qualitative data analysis is the classification and interpretation of linguistic (or visual) material to make statements about implicit and explicit dimensions and structures of meaning-making in the material and what is represented in it. For the purposes of this study, qualitative data analysis is the procedure through which the data collected are methodically organised to facilitate explanation and understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, in this case the experiences of the implementers of the SFP in the two selected schools in the Zambezi region of Namibia. Three approaches to qualitative data analysis that were deemed appropriate in this study are content analysis, interpretative phenomenological analysis and semiotic analysis (see Du Plooy-Cillier &

Cronje, 2014; Kuzu, 2016; Alase, 2017). The section below explains how these methods were applied and how they reinforced one another.

3.4.8.1 Content analysis

The data collected through the interviews and focus group discussion were analysed using content analysis. Content analysis is a systematic coding and categorising approach used for exploring large amounts of textual information unobtrusively, to determine trends and patterns of words used, their frequency, their relationships and the structures and discourses of communication (Pope et al., 2006; Gbrich, 2007). White and Marsh (2006) explain that the data in a content analysis study need to be “chunked”, that is, broken into units for sampling, collecting, and analysis and reporting. To apply this method of analysis, the researcher read through the transcribed notes several times and identified the themes. Through this process the researcher made comparisons of the collected and transcribed data to identify the appropriate and abstract categories and themes. The data were then presented in the form of tables in which they were ordered and sorted in a meaningful way reflecting participants’ codes, themes and responses.

3.4.8.2 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

The data obtained from the interviews and focus group discussions were analysed using the interpretative phenomenological analysis. Alase (2017) explains that interpretative phenomenological analysis is an approach to qualitative research that gives researchers the best opportunity to understand the innermost deliberation of the ‘lived experiences’ of

research participants. As an approach that is ‘participant oriented’, the interpretative phenomenological analysis approach allows the interviewees (research participants) to express themselves and their ‘lived experience’ the way they see fit without any distortion. This assertion means that the interpretative phenomenological analysis has an idiographic focus and aims to offer experiences of a given respondent. In this regard, the researcher examined the transcripts and presented the views of each respondent as obtained from them. Subsequent to the presentation of these experiences are the interpretations of them.

3.4.8.3 Semiotic analysis

The visual data was analysed using semiotic analysis. The word semiotics is derived from Ancient Greek ‘sēmeion’, to broadly mean ‘sign’ or ‘mark’ (Kuzu, 2016). Moreover, the author explains that semiotics is the science of the structure of any kind of arrangement of signs and symbols used for communication. With regards to the current study, semiotics is the tool used for analysing and interpreting the visual images or pictures depicting the physical characteristics and state of infrastructure at the two selected schools and other visuals depicting the school feeding programme. Semiotic analysis is relevant to this study because during the observation sessions, the researcher took pictures to support the word data. The use of semiotics does not only portray the visual data but to also attribute meanings of the visual images or pictures in relation to the context of the school feeding programme in the two selected schools in the Zambezi region of Namibia. The interpretations attached to the visual data would then be used to comprehend the reality of the SFP in two schools in the Zambezi region of Namibia as expressed by the research participants through the various data collection instruments. The purpose of semiotic

analysis in this study is to support the content analysis and interpretative phenomenological analysis.

3.4.9 Research Ethics

Kumar (2014) refers to ethics as moral values of professional conduct that are considered desirable for good professional practice. Ethical issues in qualitative research include informing participants of the purpose of the study, refraining from deceptive practices, sharing information with participants (including the role of the researcher), being respectful of the research site, reciprocity, using ethical interview practices, maintaining confidentiality and collaborating with participants (Creswell, 2012). In the context of the current research, an ethical clearance letter was obtained from the University of Namibia Research Ethics Committee (UREC). Furthermore, approval and permission from the University of Namibia's Post Graduate Studies Committee (APENDIX A), the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture (APENDIX F) and the Director of the Zambezi Region (APENDIX G) were sought before conducting the study.

The following ethical considerations were observed by the researcher prior to conducting the research. The informed consent was obtained from each respondent from the two selected schools and each of them were asked to sign the consent form. The purpose(s) of the research was explained to all participants before interviews were administered. Secondly, confidentiality and anonymity was assured, and ensuring participant anonymity, names of participants do not appear anywhere in the research findings. Codes are instead used to identify participants. Furthermore, the data collected will not to be used

for any other purpose except for the current research and no information contained herein identifies and can lead to the positive identification of participants (Tracy, 2011). Participants' actual names were not mentioned on the interviews and focus group discussion notes. Instead, pseudonyms were used. In this manner, potential harm and discrimination to the participants was minimised. Voluntarily participation was also sought without physical or psychological coercion or harm. In other words, the participants' agreement to be involved in the research was based on a full disclosure of information conveyed to them about the purpose of the study.

3.5 Summary

Chapter 3 presented the research design and methods that were used in the data collection and analysis processes in the current study to explore the scope and structure of methodology that was adopted in the research. The chapter has presented and the concept of research paradigm and components thereof. The chapter has indicated that the qualitative research is rooted in interpretive paradigm. The chapter has also presented the sample and sampling procedures. Sections on data collection procedures, research instruments and data analysis are included. The final part of this chapter included a brief discussion of ethical consideration. The next chapter provides the presentation and interpretation of the results of study.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed research the paradigms and the research design. This chapter presents data extracted from transcripts of the interviews with the researcher conducted with the participants. The presentation and interpretation of data follows the following sequence:

1. Description of the study area;
2. The experiences of the implementers with the NSFP in the two selected schools;
3. The programme implementers' views regarding the influence of the NSFP on education, health and socio-economic indicators in the two selected schools in the Zambezi region of Namibia; and
4. The challenges implementers face regarding the NSFP and how these challenges can be mitigated in the two selected schools.

The researcher presents the views and perspectives of implementers that respond to the concerns of the abovementioned subsections, after which a holistic deduction is made. Because of the confidentiality agreement, the true identities of the participants are not disclosed in this presentation, and thus the presentation of data is done utilising the participants' codes that are shown in table 2 below.

Table 2: Index codes of participants

Code	Explanation of Codes
C1HO	Coordinator 1 for the Head Office
C2RO	Coordinator 2 for the Regional Office
C3RO	Coordinator 3 for the Regional Office
C4HO	Coordinator 4 for the Head Office
PS1	Principal for School 1
PS2	Principal for School 2
RT	Retired Teacher
SBM1	School Board Member 1
SBM2	School Board Member 2
SP	Service Provider
T1S1	Teacher 1 for School 1
T2S1	Teacher 2 for School 1
T1S2	Teacher 1 for School 2
T2S2	Teacher 2 for School 2

NB. Some participants did not respond to some questions and thus are missing in some parts of data presentation.

4.2 Description of the research area

The Zambezi Region of Namibia (formerly known as Caprivi Region), shown in Figure 3 below, lies about half way between the equator and the southern tip of Africa and midway between the Atlantic and Indian oceans. The size of the region is about 14 528 square kilometres with a total population of 90,596 people. Most people in the region depend heavily on small scale subsistence farming. They catch fish, plant crops and raise cattle for a living. The population is also predominantly rural and characterised by poverty and high unemployment rates and as such, its people have limited means to sustain themselves.

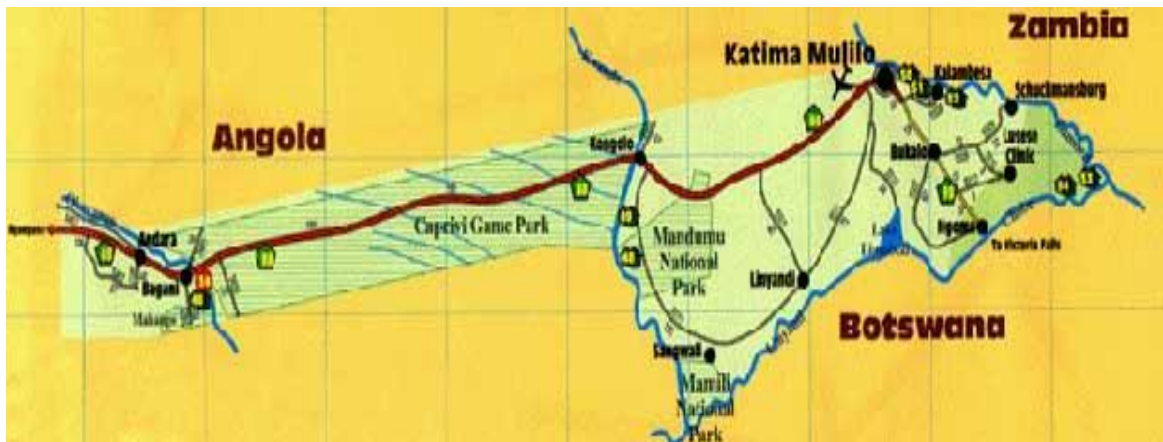


Figure 2: Zambezi Region (formerly known as Caprivi Region), Source: National Planning Commission (2015)

4.3 The experiences of the implementers of the SFP in the participating schools

Section 4.3.1- 4.3.2 presents and interprets experiences of the implementers of the NSFP.

4.3.1 The general experiences of implementers of the SFP in participating schools

The participants were asked to give their views on their general experiences of the SFP and Table 3 shows their responses.

Table 3: The general experiences of implementers of SFP in participating schools of the Zambezi Region

Participant	Summarised responses
T1S1	The NSFP is good for most families in this community because most of them are from poor backgrounds and are mostly unemployed. However, there is less support from community members due to lack of proper compensation.
T2S1	The programme is helping learners especially from poor families, they will have breakfast, when they get into classrooms their performance improves.
RT	The love to feed the needy was priority number one. As teacher counsellors these children were open to share their challenges with me.
T1S2	Is just completing those forms, return end of term reports for the NSFP. The programme has potential to learners' enrolment, attendance and their performance.
T2S2	Our SFP is okay, it helps our learners to come to school
C1HO	Whilst the NSFP attracts learners to school, it also brings additional responsibilities on top of the teachers teaching loads
C2RO	NSFP simply brings food to school learners. I support it fully. It is one of the initiative that we should continue guarding jealously so that our children can learn well at school. Although it may appear that the procurement and the management of the programme may not be perfect as expected, I am sure that it is working in schools.
C3RO	The NSFP has really helped in terms of quality education, learners participate very well because they have eaten something
C4HO	There is more enrolment of learners in schools.

SBM1	The SFP is of paramount importance because it helps orphans and vulnerable learners who are struggling or whose parents do not afford bread and butter on the table.
SBM2	SFP encourages learners to come to school every day and they are happy because they enjoy the food.
SP	Many learners enjoy the feeding programme, they are happy at school and it helps them to learn with fresh minds.

Table 3 demonstrated that the NFSP is positively evaluated by most of the participants because it helps to feed children from poor backgrounds (T1S1, T2S2). The coordinators (C1HO; C2RO; C3RO & C4HO) explained that the NSFP is of utmost importance as it attracts the poor and vulnerable children to schools. The teachers and principals of both schools (PS1, T1S1; T2S1; T1S2 and T2S2) explained that the NSFP is good for children from poor backgrounds because they can get breakfast meals. The school principals shared their experience as follows: *“The NSFP is good for most families in this community because most of them are from poor backgrounds and are mostly unemployed. However, there is less support from community members due to lack of proper compensation”* (PS1). Similarly, PS2 said: *“The NSFP is good for most families in this community because most of them are from poor background and are mostly unemployed. However, there is less support from community members due to lack of proper compensation.”*

SP submitted that the NSFP makes needy children happy while RT observed that she loved to serve the needy and doing so was her first priority. Despite the positive benefits of the NSFP, some of the participants expressed negative views noting that the NSFP is overwhelming on both the teaching and management of the feeding programme (C1HO). One of the coordinators explained that: *though the programme seems to be helpful to*

learners, it might appear that the procurement and the management of the programme may not be perfect as expected (C2RO).

From the above responses, it can be concluded that the participants have mixed experiences of the NSFP. Some of them view it in a positive light in that it helps children from poor background while other view the NSFP negatively because it overwhelms them and complicates their teaching and management duties.

4.3.2 Experiences of implementers regarding their roles and training in the selected school of the Zambezi of Region

Table 4 below, shows the participants’ responses regarding their experiences in their roles and training in the two selected schools in the Zambezi Region

Table 4: Experiences of implementers regarding their roles and training in two selected schools in the Zambezi Region.

Theme	Respondent code	Description of responses
Roles	C1HO, C2RO, C3RO,	To work on a strategy to improve the monitoring and evaluation of NSFP, and the way it is managed and run as well as the management of the procurement processes
	SP	To provide transport to the NSFP meals to schools.
	T1S2, SBM1	My key role is to monitor learners when they eat and to supervise how cooks are serving the food

	PSI, PS1, SBM2,T2S2, RT, C4HO,	Not sure about their roles
Training	C1HO, C2RO, T1S1, RT,C3RO,SBM1,	Received training on NSFP roles
	C4HO, PSI, PS1, T1S1 T2S1, SBM2, T2S2, RT	Did not receive training regarding the NSFP roles

As Table 4 demonstrates, the participants had various roles in the provision of the NSFP. For example, participants C1HO, C2RO and C3ROs' role is to work on the strategy to improve the monitoring and evaluation of the NSFP, the way it is managed and run as well as the management of the procurement processes.

One of the coordinator stated that:

My role is focused mainly at the national level as you know but it is still narrowed down to regions, service providers, to schools as well. So, as from my side, I am mainly involved in ensuring that the SFP is improved from how it used to be in the past, to better the way it is managed and run, to prevent losses and better equip school feeding, implementers to play a better role, to make it more efficient and to be able to track down the progress that we were making with the aims of SFP (C1HO).

Some of the participants explained that their role was to provide transport for the delivery of the NSFP meals to schools (SP). Participants SBM1 and T1S2 explained that their key role is to monitor learners when they eat and to supervise how cooks were serving the food.

It appears that some of the participants PSI, PS1, SBM2, T2S2, C4HO and RT were not sure of their roles. One of the participants explained: *We need to know our roles so that when those parents come for cooking, we can teach them how to do it, but now they just come cook and go, both of us are blind we do not know anything* (T2S2). Hence, it seems that although implementers of the school feeding programme seem to have a significant role to play in the running, monitoring and evaluating the management of the programme, some of them know what is expected of them while some do not. Those who were trained were confident about their roles. However, those who were not sure about their roles were not. This indicates a lack of clarity in terms of the participant's efficiency and effectiveness in their expected roles within the NSFP.

With regard to the participants' views on training for the implementers on the NSFP, Table 4 shows two categories -those that received the training and those that did not receive any form of training.

Participants (C1HO, C2RO, T1S1, RT, C3RO, and SBM1) received training on their roles in the NSFP. The following were some of the outstanding views:

Focal teachers especially the ones who were not trained need to undergo training. Our school principal, she does not have a know how to or rather to operate this feeding programme, though we are assisting her and school board members need to be capacitated. (SBM1)

Equally, PS1 Shares the view and submits that:

I think in future, I was of the opinion that starting from myself as a principal, the teacher councillors, including one of the School Board members; particularly the chairperson should receive training so that we should know how to implement this programme fully. As managers, we need training particularly on the preparation of food so that we can be equipped on how to monitor parents who are handling the cooking part, so that we can understand how to manage the programme. (PS1)

Similarly, the SP had this to say: *“The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture trained us in terms of the handling of bags in warehouses and in schools, we were also trained not to throw bags when we were offloading.”*

Furthermore, C1HO reiterated that

We were trained on how to manage the school feeding programme at national, regional and school levels, so that we could assist those that are handling the SFP on different levels. The training enabled me to manage, track down food losses from Head Office level and all other commodity movements throughout the NSFP food supply chain.
(C1HO)

One Coordinator who was capacitated emphasised the importance of meeting the training needs for all involved in the NSFP:

I think training needs to be conducted at all levels, all different stakeholders involved need to be capacitated.... even at Head Office, let me say, you have some senior officials, they do not understand the importance of SFP, so, I understand that they too, need to receive training or being given a background so that they understand what the programme is all about - especially those who are involved in the disbursement of funds, they should understand why it is important for us to fund this programme. In addition, those that are involved in the procurement need training to understand why it is necessary for them to timely advertise, adjudicate and award these tenders so that there is no disruption in the food supply. (C1HO)

Participants C4HO, PSI, PS2, T1S1 T2S1, SBM2, T2S2, and RT did not receive training on the NSFP. Some of the expressed views are as follows:

No, I did not receive any training; I was only shown how to complete the end of term report which I have to send to the Circuit Office at the end of each term and how to order. It just took only few minutes.
(T1S2)

One of the participants strongly felt that capacity development regarding the school feeding programme was of less importance to her. The participant was not willing to undergo any SFP training in the near future.

She, thus, asserted that:

I am not willing to be trained, because let me say, it is too much for me. I am a class teacher at the end of the term I have to complete those end term reports. I have a lot to do. This is additional work on top of my work. (T1S2)

Based on the above perspectives, it can be observed that there are participants who received training and other who did not receive any form of training regarding their expected roles in the feeding programme. Most participants value training and suggested that there should be continuous training. Some participants did not see that value of receiving training, indicating that they were already overloaded with both their teaching duties and the supervision of the NSFP activities.

4.4 Implementers' views regarding the influence of NSFP on education, health and socio-economic considerations

The purpose of this section is to present the views of the participants regarding the influence of the NSFP on education, health and socio economic considerations in schools 1 and 2.

4.4.1 Educational indicators

Sections 4.4.1.1- 4.4.1.7 present and interpret the perspectives of implementers on the impact/influence of the NSFP on educational factors. .

4.4.1.1 Learner enrolment

The researcher sought to establish information regarding the schools' enrolment trends. The data reflecting enrolment trend is shown in Figures 3 and 4 below for School 1 and School 2 respectively.

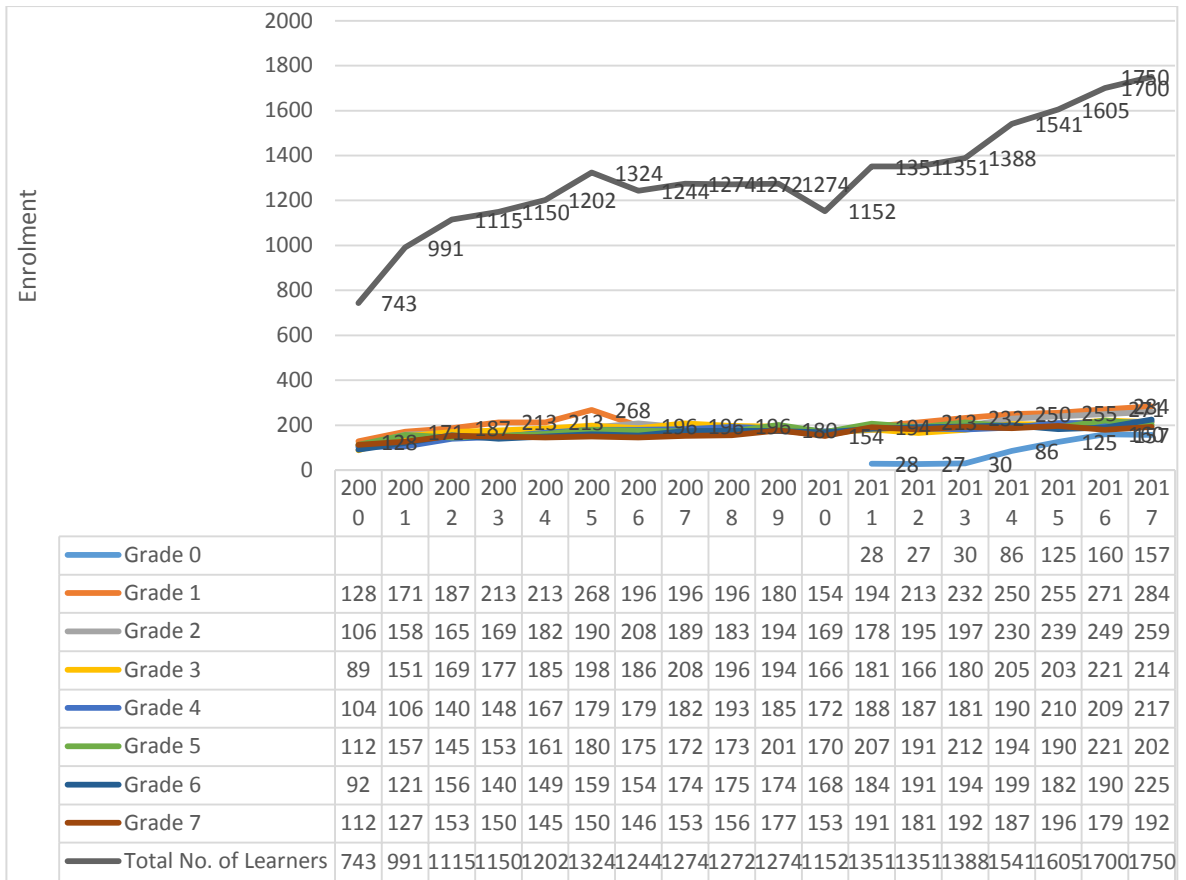


Figure 3: Trends for School 1's enrolment from 2000 to 2017. Source: PSI

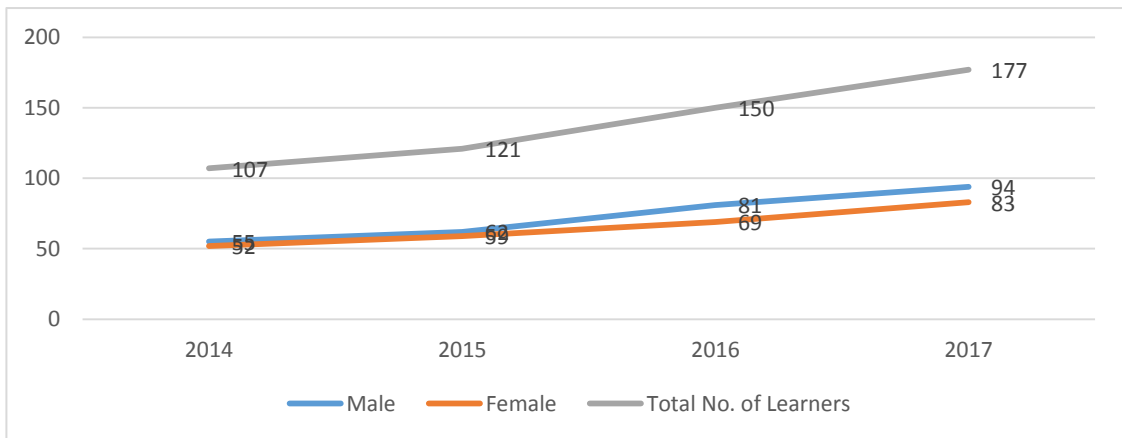


Figure 4: Trends for School 2's enrolments from 2014 to 2017: Source: PS2

As indicated in Figure 4 above, the enrolment of School 2 increased annually from 107 in 2014 to 177 in 2017. The NSFP might have been one of the factors that could have contributed to the gradual increase of learners on a yearly basis.

The increase can be corroborated with evidence from interviews conducted with principals, teachers, coordinators, service providers and through focus group discussions. The interviews revealed the following: The participants T1S1, T2S1, RT, SBM1, and SBM2 were of the view that the NSFP has the potential to increase learner enrolment.

The following view is significant in this regard:

It is very positive, because we have those learners who cannot afford to have breakfast but since they are aware that when I go to school today I will get a meal, they will come, as well as when their school reopens their parents or guardians since the majority of them are orphans, vulnerable and poor, they know very well that our children are going to get something to eat when they go to school, so, they come in great numbers. (PS1)

Furthermore, the RT reinforced PS1's views by observing that:

With regards to the enrolment of the school, our school is semi-rural and semi-urban, so, it is having the highest enrolment in the region, over 1000 learners, most of them come from rural suburb called Cowboy. Learners from these areas are vulnerable. Their parents are not able to take care of them. Most of them are drunkards, they cannot afford to buy food, and they are very poor. So, before we started with the SFP, a lot of learners were not coming to school because of hunger, and they were just street kids and street vendors. However, when the School feeding programme was introduced at our school, our enrolment increased drastically (RT)

Moreover, C1HO also shared in this view and submits that: *“The NSFP has certainly influenced enrolment. People always think that if education is made free, then children will automatically enrol in schools”*.

On the same theme, T2S2 had the following sentiments to share:

Before this programme started, we were having very few learners or when they came to school you could see that they are hungry. We had to take from our food and give them, sometimes when the cooks are not there, you could see the learners going to the kitchen to check if it is really true. You can even hear them talking to each other *“ha kacenu ki tala”* which means that they usually exclaim to say: ‘today we will be hungry, there is no porridge’. When you ask them the reason, they say: We did not eat at home. (T2S2)

One of the participants, (PS2) expressed the following opinions: *“the increase in learner enrolment has been influenced by negative factors because most parents want to use the school as a kindergarten- they bring their children to school while they are still under age”*.

Based on the above views from the participants, it can be noted that most participants at both schools believed that the increasing enrolment rates of learners are attributed to the provision of school meals. These findings were in agreement with the enrolment trends for Schools 1 and 2 as also presented above.

4.4.1.2 School attendance

With regards to the attendance of learners in the two schools, CIHO, C2RO, C4HO, C3RO, T2S1 and T1S1 were in agreement that the SFP contributes to the increase in school attendance. Teachers for school 1 and 2 made the following observations:

On attendance, I will say if some of the learners find out that there was porridge prepared for that week, maybe there was late delivery of the maize blend, you will find some learners will not come to school and some will dodge because they know that there is nothing to eat but when the feeding programme is there, you will find that attendance is highly appreciated by us teachers, because most of the learners are always present. So, the school feeding programme influences the attendance of learners. (T1S1)

Equally, T2S2 expressed similar sentiments and said:

The school feeding programme is really attracting learners to come to school and when learners are in class, there is nothing like, sleeping in classrooms, complaining that today I am sick, I am not well or I am hungry. These learners are okay. (T2S2)

RT in support of the observation submitted that: “...*the attendance improved because of the NSFP*”. Equally, SBM1 shared his experiences and notes that: “...*the programme has contributed 100% to the attendance of learners at our school*”. Similarly, T1S2 said, “...*most learners attend school due to the feeding programme. However, unlike some of the weeks, where we do not have cooks, most of the learners are absent because they know that they will not come and eat anything there*”. Moreover, PS1 and PS2 also concurred with these views regarding the attendance of learners. PS1 had this to say:

With school feeding meals, attendance is positive because learners always come to school because they know that they are going to get something to eat at school. Let me add by saying that when we reopened this term, from the 5th of September we did not have maize meal up until the 1st of November 2017. Just that period of time, the attendance of learners changed drastically, some learners could not come to school, but immediately when we received our consignment, everyone was in school. (PS1)

Equally, PS2 admitted that the NSFP has the potential to increase learners' attendance. PS2 observes in this regard that: *"I have observed that some learners take two rounds, which imply that they go and receive porridge, and after eating they would go back again and collect something and that portion will be kept for lunch."*

The above results indicate that the NSFP has the potential to increase learners' attendance at both schools. However, the findings also reveal that the attendance of learners is often hindered by the absence of cooks and the late delivery of maize blend by service providers.

4.4.1.3 Retention and dropout rates

Below are some summarised views of the implementers' of the NSFP in terms of its influence on the retention and dropout rates.

C4HO submitted that, *"This can definitely be attributed toward the SFP especially for the poor and vulnerable children"*.

C3RO shared these views and notes that:

Yes, I think the retention rate of learners is a bit high due to the provision of meals at school. Again, because of their vulnerability, none of those learners think of remaining at home. So learners are able to go to school. (C3RO)

Similarly, PS1 made the observation that: *“Since the inception of the NSFP, I did not experience some dropouts. Though there are some learners who have transferred from my school to other schools, they did so for various reasons other than just dropping out from school”*. Equally, PS2 shared her views: *“This feeding programme is helping us to keep our learners in school. In terms of dropout rate, I do not think we had any dropouts in our school.”*

In support of these views, RT reiterated that:

There is a positive influence of the NSFP in terms of retention of learners. However, the problem of dropouts is only common in girls since they engage in love affairs with sugar daddies to get money so that they can afford their basic needs like clothing and toiletries. In the process, most of them become pregnant and they ultimately leave school. (RT)

SP also made the submission that: *“Not necessarily dropping out, learners are only absent from school when there are no meals at school. But if we receive maize blend from the supplier on time, we also deliver on time, learners will be going to school”*.

Furthermore, the same theme was discussed during the focus group interviews between the researcher and school board members. SBM1 commented in this regard that: *“The enrolment at my school is quite high, the retention rate is also high, and therefore, the dropout rate has decreased”*. In addition, SBM2 also opined that: *“Our school is the best*

because we always encourage our children to attend school and to enjoy the meals that are provided at school“. Similarly, School 2 admitted to having the same experiences on learner retention and dropout rates attributed to the NSFP. T1S1 was in agreement and explained that: *“The programme keeps learners at school, they come earlier to school and they participate in classes. The reverse is also true that if the dropout is low, the retention rate is high”.*T1S2 further reiterated that: *“Since the feeding programme was implemented, we do not have many dropouts.”*

However, C1HO observed that other aspects other than hunger can influence learner retention patterns leading to their dropping out of school. He commented thus,

If learners do not have enough food to eat, some dropout for these reasons, but this might not be said, but there is evidence that some learners dropout of school because they have nothing to eat. They do not go to school for meals but they rather look for work to feed themselves, their parents or take care of other responsibilities. (C1HO)

Finally, C2HO noted that: *“Some learners usually do not go to school when they are sick; others end up dropping out because of long illnesses. Even though there are other factors that hinder learners from attending school, the NSFP is the main driver that keeps the learners in school.”*

The findings of the study reveal that the availability of school feeding meals assists with the retention of learners in both schools and equally reduce the dropout rates. However dropout rates are also affected by other factors such as cases of girl pregnancies, long illnesses, transfers of learners to other schools or if learners opt to seek for jobs.

4.4.1.4 Learners' performance

The researcher sought to establish the trends of pass rates for School 1 and the results are illustrated in Figure 5 below.

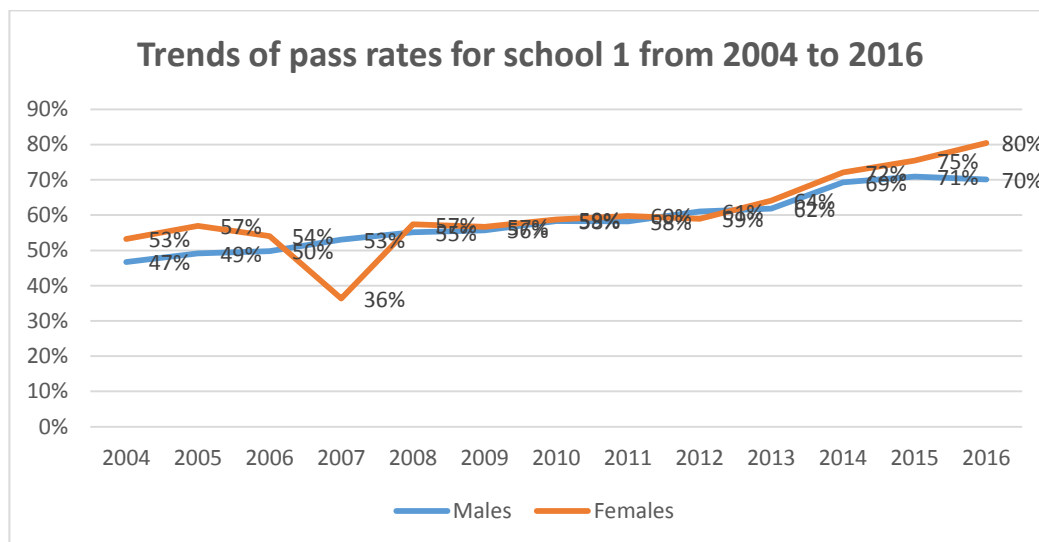


Figure 5: Trends of pass rates for school 1 from 2004 to 2016

Figure 5 above indicates the trends of pass rates of School 1 from 2004 to 2016. The results evince annual improvements in the learners' performance and this has been attributed to the NSFP at the school as well as other factors. In addition, the figure indicates that girl outperformed boys from 2004 to 2006. This could be attributed to

gender policies that have been empowering the girl child for years leaving the boy child behind. However, no data for pass rates was available for School 2.

Based on the above, the researcher posed a question to participants to find out whether or not the NSFP influenced learners' performance. The results from the interviews and the focus group discussions are as follows.

T1S1 and PS1 opined that: "*A hungry learner will not learn properly*". However, T1S1 argued that the performance of learners was fine even before the programme began, while likening the NSFP to something that merely boosts their performance. Equally, T2S1 concurred that: "*The NSFP assists learners to participate as a result, they do perform well.*"

Additionally, the RT in School 1 had this to share regarding the performance of learners "*An empty tummy is always complaining*" (RT), further observing that "*Learners from poor families are always regarded as low achievers. However, after the introduction of the NSFP, together with the long experience, I have seen that the programme has improved the performance of low achievers*".

During the focus group discussion, SBM1 made the following observations, particularly with regards to the OVC:

The concentration span of our learners has improved and more likely, a learner with an empty stomach will not pay attention in class, but a well fed learner will be more likely to concentrate. At the end of the day, they do perform. (SBM1)

SBM2 supported these sentiments by submitting that, *“I believe that this programme is also a factor towards the performance of learners at our school, especially those from a poor background because our pass rate is very high compared to other local schools”*. In the same vein, T2S2 and T1S2 were in agreement and T1S2 opined that: *“when a learner is hungry, he/she cannot perform in class, the opposite is also true: if there is no food, learners sometimes prefer to stay at home because both at home and at school there is no food”*.

T2S2 believed that:

Please maybe you have something to eat, give that slice of bread to this learner ... she is just crying or sleepy, she is hungry. She is claiming that last night they did not have anything to eat. In that state, I believe that, that learner will not perform well. (T2S2)

Furthermore, coordinators of the NSFP also shared their views regarding the impact of the programme towards the performance of the learners.

C1HO noted that:

Definitely, a hungry learner is an angry learner, so a learner that has been fed is happy. Those learners will be able to put on a smile, they will be able to concentrate better in class, they will be able to grasp properly and even be able to ask questions where they do not understand because they have enough energy to participate actively in class. (C1HO)

Additionally, SP and C3RO concurred with these views and the latter remarked: *“Learners who are fed at school are happy because they are not hungry”*. On the same note, SP also observed that: *“Learners are always happy with the feeding meals especially those from the poor background and they perform better in school”*. Similarly, C4HO also remarked that: *“If learners are provided with properly fortified meals together with proper management of the NSFP, they can perform well”*.

On the other hand, C2RO believes that the maize blend ingredients were suggested by experts who have an understanding of the needs of a growing child. He explained that a child needs proteins to grow and he/she also need energy to perform all physical activities. Proteins, sugar and other ingredients are included in the maize blend to cater for a learners’ physical needs.

In contrast, C2RO argued that,

The likelihood would be that learners who are receiving the maize blend perform better, but there are no statistics that show that learners who are receiving maize blend perform better than those who do not receive any porridge from school. (C2RO)

The above results indicate that learners performed well in both schools. These findings were supported by the trends of the pass rates that were shared by School 1. However, other participants argued that it was not appropriate to base the performance of learners on the SFP without a thorough study.

4.4.1.5 Implementers' views on the performance and progression of learners before the NSFP started and afterwards

The implementers' views on the performance of learners before the NSFP started were sought and the following emerged from the corpus of their narratives.

SP shared the following experiences:

Sometimes when you were lucky that day and the teacher was having something to eat, she would give some of her food to the learners. So this helped us a lot because it kept us awake during lessons and we could concentrate in class. I was very happy when I heard that the SFP has been introduced in schools and I feel very happy for those that came after me because they are now getting something to eat. (SP)

RT had this to say: *“To make a comparison, for sure before the NSFP was implemented, the performance of learners was poor and the attendance as well. For now, after the introduction of the programme, we have realised that the performance of learners is improving”*. Equally, PS1 shared the following views:

Our children were very happy, particularly those from the poor and vulnerable background. Before the start of feeding programme they could come to school, during break time they just sit without food to eat and would start begging other children to give them food to eat. As of now, during break time, they just go straight to the kitchen and have their breakfast and this make them to be happy than before. (PS1)

PS2 also opined that: *“Before the programme started, learners would come from home without any food, so it was difficult for them to participate during lessons. However, when the school started implementing it, learners became active”*. SBM1 and SBM2 also shared their experience regarding the sub-theme.

In this regard, SBM1 noted that:

Before the advent of the NSFP, the poor and OVC learners were suffering due to hunger and their performance was low to average. However, after the NSFP was introduced, there was a sharp difference in terms of their performance. They started doing well. (SBM1)

Equally, SBM2 also observed that: *“Before this programme started, our children’s marks were very poor. But as of now, they are performing very well because they are energised by the porridge”*.

Meanwhile, T1S1 opined that: *“Before the feeding programme was implemented, most learners from poor backgrounds were always sleepy and less active in classes. However, when it was introduced, the opposite occurred- learners became active in class and were and are still performing well.”* T2S1 also commented that: *“The programme has improved the performance of our learners- once they have eaten, they concentrate in class and they become active and their performance is always good”*. Furthermore, T1S2 reiterated: *“Those learners that partake in the feeding meals can actively participate in class, unlike previously when they were always sleeping and inactive in class”*. Additionally, C1HO, C3RO, C4HO also expressed their opinions regarding the programme as follows:

C1HO opined that,

Learners who are hungry will not perform any better than those that are fed. But with the introduction of the feeding meals, OVC are getting more energy to focus on their school work. Therefore, they perform better than they could have without being fed. (C1HO)

On the same sub-theme, C3RO submitted that: *“A hungry child would not participate very well in class but if he has eaten something that learner will become very active and his performance picks up. So, there is a difference now and before the programme started”*. C4HO believed that: *“Before the programme started poor learners could not perform maximally. But currently they are performing due to the porridge which is provided to them through NSFP.”*

In contrast, T2S2 argued that: *It is difficult for me to make these comparisons because I was not here before the NSFP started. However, my account on the current situation is that the feeding meals only boosts learners.”* Meanwhile, C2RO confirmed that: *“There is no evidence which shows that learners who are receiving maize blend perform better than those who do not get porridge at school.”*

The above results show that largely, before the advent of the NSFP, learners at both schools were not performing well due to hunger but when the programme was introduced, learners started performing well and equally progressed to higher grades. However, it was also argued by some participants that school meals only boost learners but do not

necessarily influence their performance nor their progression to higher grades because this is a claim that is difficult to confirm without concrete research.

4.4.1.6 The link between NSFP and learner performance

The researcher sought to establish the implementers' views regarding the possible link between the NSFP and learner performance. One of the coordinators (C3RO) shared the sentiments that: *“There is a link because a learner who is being fed is able to concentrate, participate, and ask questions, better than an unfed learner.”* Similarly, RT asserted that:

There is a great link, because immediately a child has something to eat s/he will be encouraged to learn, she will have energy to sit listen and participate in all lessons. I am convinced that the performance of learners is highly achieved through the NSFP. (RT)

Additionally, SP concurs and adds that: *“...this programme improved the learners' performance, because the more the learners are satisfied the higher their performance in class.”* To add to that, SBM1 opined that:

There is a link because a learner who is not well fed will absent himself/ herself from school. He/she will go somewhere to steal or to go and beg. So, which is not a case here, our learners are well fed. So at the end of the day they do perform. (SBM1)

SBM2 also postulates the views that: *“The NSFP improves the performance of learners because the stomach is full”*. Furthermore, C1HO, C2RO and C4HO also contributed the following views on the same sub-theme.

C4HO had this to say:

There is link between the NSFP and the performance of learners. I observed that some learners always return home if there are no meals at school. Such learners miss lessons and their performance becomes poor if the feeding scheme is not available. (C4HO)

Equally, C1HO noted that: *“At the ministry level we are feeding OVC, a deliberate act to feed them makes them concentrate throughout and that they will deliberately also learn and then we get the outcome of course through learning.”* Similarly, PS1 and PS2 expressed submitted their views on the same issue. According to PS1, the NSFP has the potential to improve learners’ performance because the feeding meals give them energy. PS2 reiterated the same sentiments observing that the NSFP aids the OVC and poor learners’ performance. Equally, T1S1, T2S1, T1S2 and T2S2 expressed the following observations.

According to T1S1, *“...the NSFP can be linked to learners’ performance, the programme can aid learners’ participation in classes and they equally perform better.”* T2S1 pointed out that *“...there is a link because when the maize blend is not yet delivered, our learners are not performing well in their classes rather than when their provided with porridge.”*

T1S2 submitted that “...the NSFP has changed the performance of the poor and OVC for the better”, further pointing out that “...the fact is that when a child is hungry he/she does nothing in class and when the teacher encourages him to participate, he/she simply tells the teacher that he is sick, and yet he is not.”

On the contrary, C2RO had this to say:

It is very difficult to link the NSFP with the performance of learners. Performance is attributed to many other factors including, the constitution of the body, how the body works, that is how some learners are better compared to others. The methods applied have attributed to the performance of learners. (C2RO)

The above results indicate some dualism in the findings. While most of the participants believe that a link exists between NSFP and learners ‘performance, others differ, arguing that a study is needed to affirm such claims or observations.

4.4.1.7 The progression of learners in schools

The following are the implementers’ views regarding how the NSFP has influenced the progression of learners in schools.

SP had this to say:

This programme has helped learners to progress in grades and has even reduced the failure rate of learners. This is because learners are always happy at school and they are willing to learn and if kids have something to eat, this will help them to concentrate very well on their studies. They will not doze in class but they will be wide awake to listen to their teachers when they are teaching them. (SP)

Equally, RT believed that: *“Our primary school starts from grade 0 to grade 7. With this feeding programme, our learners are progressing very well up to grade 7.”* T1S2 also noted that: *“Since the inception of the NSFP their performance has changed due to this programme. It can help them to progress from one class to another.”* In the same vein, C1HO added that *“...when learners already know that there is food provided for them when they are at school, even if they did not eat anything from home they are encouraged to come to school.”* C1HO further observes that *“Because learners eat at school, I believe that they are able to gain the energy to concentrate throughout the day.”* In light of this, C1HO further believed that more learners attend school because there is food that is provided to them. Learners now pay more attention in class, and they study harder and this helps them pass and progress to the next grades. C3RO added that: *“Yes, with the implementation of this programme, learners will be able to progress because they are active, they participate and their performance will be very high, definitely they will go to the next grade.”*

Similarly, school board members also shared their view on the foregoing issue. SBM1 observed that learners at his school are excelling both academically and physically because of the school feeding programme. SBM1 asserted in this regard that, “Our learners are fit and healthy, which makes them sharp in the mind”, further observing that learners are actively involved inside and outside the school. In other words, inside, learners are involved in academic activities whereas outside they are taking part in extra mural activities like sports.

Also, SBM2 commented that:

In addition, learners are progressing well because of this programme. Before this SFP, we were having it hard to push our kids to school because they used to go to school and come back home on an empty stomach. But now voluntarily you will find that they are anxious to come to school without any lunchbox, they just take their schoolbags and go. (SBM2)

Furthermore, T2S2 opined that learners progress well in their grades because when they are in class, they will be listening to the teacher. Observing further that with the NSFP, learners are eager to memorise what they have learnt at school. T2S2 further submitted that, “They are not dull, they will remember what they have learnt because there is energy in their bodies”. Meanwhile, the PS2 believed that: “The NSFP helps with the progression of learners since it reduces transfers from our school to other schools. That

is why we have learners that are progressing from grade 1 to grade 6.” In the same vein, PS1 observed that: *“our learners are doing well and they are progressing very well.”*

C4HO argued that:

The NSFP keeps learners in school, as a result, they are able to progress from one grade to the next. For instance, learners will be encouraged to continue with school if proper school feeding meals are given to learners that are less fortunate. (C4HO)

Some proffered different views on the issue. For instance, T1S1 shared her experience as follows: *“on the progression of learners, the NSFP has not done much.”* On the contrary, C2RO argued that: *“...teaching methods need to be aligned to learners’ needs in order for them to do well. I should think that maybe the issue of progression needs a kind of research.”*

The results of the study revealed that the NSFP is of paramount importance to the poor and vulnerable children and has the potential to attract learners to school. The majority of the participants indicated that the feeding programme improves learners’ enrolment, attendance, retention rates, performance and progression of learners to higher grades. However, the study also revealed that the limited participation of parent/community members and the late delivery of food consignments has affected the functioning of the effective implementation of the programme. The latter has equally affected the attendance and retention of learners. Additionally, other participants were not convinced regards the

link between the feeding programme and the performance of learners, suggesting that a study is possibly needed to confirm this.

4.4.2 The health of learners

Sections 4.4.2.1- 4.4.2.3 present and interpret the perspective of implementers on the impact/influence of the NSFP on the health of learners. .

4.4.2.1 Practices that negatively affect the health of learners in relation to the NSFP

The researcher sought to establish practices that negatively affect the health of learners in relation to the NSFP. The following views emerged from the corpus of their narratives:

T2S2 explained that: *“Sometimes learners got injured here, we have to call their parents to take them to the clinic because when they try to take porridge, in the process it pours on them so they get burnt”*. In addition, most participants complained that shortages of basic kitchen utensils like spoons contributes to the health hazards for learners as they usually eat hot porridge using their hand and fingers (PS1, PS2, T1S1, T2S1, T1S2, T2S2). T2S1 affirmed that: *“Our learners are only using their hands instead of spoons”*.

Infrastructure was another issue that emerged from the narratives. SBM1 and SBM2 observed that: *“Our kitchen structure is not well built, from a health perspective, when the wind blows, dust accumulates in pots”*. T1S2 also voiced the same concerns and iterates that: *“When you look at our kitchen, it is really not good. During this rainy season, once it rains heavily, our learners will not eat at all, it will be difficult to kindle the fire”*.

T2S2 confirmed by noting that: *“Our kitchen has a temporal structure, when it rains, those sinks are sometimes blown out by wind and the porridge become affected by dust”*. On the same issue of infrastructure, the storerooms and warehouses where maize blend bags are kept could also negatively affect the health of learners if proper infrastructure is not constructed. The lack of infrastructure can result in the schools’ failure to adhere to good health practices.

Another participant C3RO, observed that sometimes the maize blend is kept in classrooms on the floor where it can be contaminated. It is supposed to be kept in proper storerooms. PS1 noted that some cooks put on their uniforms but others do not. T1S2 further emphasised the point of health practices as follows: *“...some of the learners do not want to eat the porridge fearing that they will have a running stomach or diarrhoea.”* PS2 further added that: *“Where we store our maize meal, I do not know whether you feel like looking at that place. We do not have food storage for our maize meal. It is in one of the classrooms on the floor”*.

As can be seen from the findings above, a diverse number of negative practices affect the health of learners and these include among others, the lack of spoons and this results in learners eating hot porridge with their bare hands which results in some of them being burnt. Lack of proper kitchen and storerooms also fuel meal contamination. The uncleanliness of some cooks and lack of proper food handling by them results in learners being affected by foodborne diseases like diarrhoea.

4.4.2.2 Implementers' views with regards to NSFP in relation to learners' nutrition

The researcher sought to establish the implementers' views with regard to the NSFP impact/influence on the learners' nutrition. The following views emerged from the corpus of their narratives: C1HO explained that, *“In some houses, kids eat the same type of food, it is maize meal from January to December so, when you substitute it with something which is blended with rich nutrients it makes it more nutritious”*. Interestingly, C1HO contradicted themselves by pointing out that the most commonest challenge that is being observed is that the food that learners eat in school is the same throughout. C1HO further argued that there is no diversification in the meals or rather balanced diet. Additionally, C2R0 commented that they had so far observed that when a child receives a balanced diet, as in this case. The school feeding meal, the cases of malnutrition decrease. He also emphasised the point that as an inspector of schools, they has also not heard reports from nurses and doctors that school going children in the circuit are malnourished. Furthermore, C3R0 confirmed that the maize blend is a very nutritious product as it contains protein contents, vitamins and contents of iron and calcium. He further attested to this by affirming that, there is definitely a change in terms of how learners look like before the school feeding meal and afterwards.

In response to the enquiry, C4H0 stated that:

Before the start of the NSFP, some learners especially those from poor families and those that are vulnerable reported being always sick, for example they were experiencing headaches, sleepy and weak due to hunger and malnutrition but when the school feeding was introduced such cases and absenteeism were reduced. (C4HO)

Furthermore, SBM21 and SBM2 had the following views on the question. SBM2 noted that *“Our children are active, they look healthy. I think there is something good in their meals”*. SBM1 supplements these views by observing that: *I would like to add on what she has just said, the health of our learners has improved and this could be attributed to the feeding meals they are provided at school.”*

T1S1 and T2S2 provided contradictory views. T1S1 submitted that, *“The impact is just little, I noticed that learners’ meals are not diversified. In fact, learners are taught in school that it is not appropriate for them to eat the same type of food, they should rather eat a variety of food to have a balanced diet.* T2S1 further observed that: *“In my view according to health standards, I do not think that the porridge is doing much in terms of learners’ nutrition, because they are only eating the same meal every day”*.

T2S1 suggested that it could be better to add something like fruits, vegetables, rice with soup or milk, oil, fresh and tinned fish with stiff porridge to the menu of the NSFP in order to supplement the porridge and to boost the learners’ health. T2S2 commented that: *“What*

else can learners get besides porridge? Well, their health has improved although they just eat the same diet every day. I think they need a balanced diet instead of relying on porridge alone". T1S2 further argued that "In that porridge, I believe there are many ingredients like milk and salt, once learners eat it, they will be able to get different minerals. So, it improves their health". RT also submitted that: "If this meal which the vulnerable learners are receiving is well blended, with soya, sugar, milk and salt it is balanced and I discovered that it improves the learners' health". In the same vein, PS1 observed that: "So far, particularly the OVC and the poor children who are among other learners in our school, do not have any case of malnutrition".

PS2 in the same regard also opines that:

The food which is provided by the ministry is good for learners because it is a mixture of maize meal, sugar and milk. However, what I have noticed from our learners is that some wash their hands before receiving the food but some run straight to the kitchen without washing their hands. (PS2)

Finally, SP also shared views on question as by observing that: *"I have no idea on that issue."* As can be seen in the above narratives, participants were largely of the view that the school feeding meals provide the needed nutrients to learners. However, some of the participants while having favourable views about the nutritional status of meals also made some contradictory views towards the NSFP. They indicated that the school feeding meals

lack variety and therefore need to be diversified to improve the nutritional status of the learners' meals.

4.4.2.3 Implementers' views with regards to NSFP influence on learners infected with HIV and AIDS

The following are the implementers' views with regards to the NSFP influence on learners infected with HIV and AIDS.

RT shared the following views on the issue:

Some of our learners were sick and infected by the HIV virus, so when the programme was not introduced, these learners' health was very bad, very bad that others were having sores all over their bodies. They looked so thin, unhappy and discouraged. (RT).

RT further observed that School 1 is a semi-rural school and that three quarters of those learners who were infected with the virus were coming from that settlement. Some parents from the same settlement are ignorant, they seem not to mind whether their children have eaten something or taken medication. When the NSFP was introduced, these learners received what RT termed a "balanced meal". After getting this meal for a while, RT claims to have discovered that most of the learners' health had improved. In addition, SBM2 had this to say: *"Our learners are active, even their health, as we know that there is this disease of HIV. There are some who are positive but now they look fit because of the meal that they take per day."*

Furthermore, SBM1 confirmed this by saying:

I would like to add on what she has just said, the health for our learners have improved, some learners like she had pointed out, are on ARV, therefore this porridge need to boost their immune system as it is imperative that a person cannot take these drugs on an empty stomach. This porridge helps a lot in that such learners can take these drugs after eating. So, we have learners of that situation, it is not a secret in our school.

Meanwhile, PS1 opined that: *“The meals are good, they seem to suppress most diseases.”* Equally, PS2 also said: *“We need to encourage our learners especially those with ill health to partake in the porridge in order for them to improve their health.”* T2S2 had this to say: *“I think more needs to be done in terms of the meals in order to boost the immune systems of learners that are poor and vulnerable, especially those who are affected by HIV/AIDS.”* On the same subtheme, C3RO observes that: *I think the feeding meals enable learners especially those who are infected with HIV and AIDS to take their medications regularly”* Similarly, C4HO responded that: *“I do not know as to how, however, I have realised that food can energise a sickly looking person, so, even learners with such ailments can get energy from the feeding meals too.”* Additionally, C2RO submitted that: *“HIV and AIDS is a serious disease. Well, the porridge might not be very much effective on those learners who are sick. However, it can improve their health”*. C1HO, reiterated that the maize blend is good for the learners’ health. However, more needs to be done to improve the learners’ health in general. T1S2 also shared their experience: *“I wish if we could provide a balanced diet to our learners, I think even the*

health of those who have HIV/AIDS could be improved.” T2S1 also said: *“To tell the truth, porridge alone will not help a tot, more needs to be done especially when we talk of HIV/AIDS.”* T1S1 also commented on the same issue by noting that: *“I feel that porridge should be provided together with other foodstuff for it to make a difference.”* SP had this to say: *“Despite the fact that the OVC who might have HIV/AIDS are provided with porridge only, I believe that it can make a slight improvement with their health’.*

As can be seen in the above narratives, school feeding meals have been imagined to boost the learners that were affected by HIV and AIDS. This is because those learners could not take their medication without meals. Therefore, the NSFP assisted them to regularly take their medications. Similarly, the study revealed that school meals improved the nutritional status of learners.

However, this issue had dualistic responses as other participants differed and expressed that more needed to be done, like the diversification of the school feeding meals in order to improve the nutritional status of learners. Additionally, the study also revealed that certain practices that negatively affect the health of learners in the operationalisation of the NSFP include the uncleanliness of some cooks, most learners do not wash their hands before meals, the lack of proper infrastructure like kitchens and spoons, secured storerooms and dining room, which could fuel water and food borne diseases.

4.4.3 Socio-economic considerations

4.4.3.1 Implementers' views with regards to the influence of NSFP on poverty reduction

The following are the implementers' views with regards to the influence/impact of the NSFP on poverty reduction.

In responding to this enquiry, PS1 posited that:

Since the SFP was introduced, learners came to school and they really concentrate in class, so definitely in future also on completing their secondary school and tertiary institutions they will start helping themselves, their guardians or parents as well as the entire nation, I can see that definitely it assist a lot. (PS1)

Similarly, T2S1 submitted that: *“With the provision of school meals, the OVC and poor learners are enabled to complete their education careers. Ultimately, they become employed, they sustain themselves and their families. I think that way, poverty can be reduced.”*

Equally, T1S2 observed that:

Let me give an example of a woman who is cooking this week, when you look at that woman, she is from a poor family background. So, once she comes to school and cook on a Friday, she will get two bags of maize meal. That will reduce her poverty because at least her family will get something to eat for a week or two (T1S2).

Moreover, C2R0 emphasised that the NSFP could influence poverty reduction and explained that the elderly people who are 60 years and above as well as the OVC are receiving pension grants from government. C2R0 further noted that money that parents were supposed to use to buy food for the child or that the child should carry to school is saved and can be used for other things like buying shoes for them. C2R0 observed that parents will not worry about food that their children should carry to school because that is catered for through the NSFP. In this regard, C2R0 believed that the NSFP has an impact on poverty reduction. Furthermore, C4H0 submitted the following in support of what C2R0 alluded regarding poverty reduction through the NSFP: *“The feeding programme could alleviate poverty since parents are assisted to feed their school going children and the same school feeding programme is keeping learners in schools to enable them to develop themselves.* T1S1’s experiences were not different from those of C4HO. T1S1 supported the assertion by noting that the NSFP can reduce poverty in some poor and vulnerable communities.

Meanwhile, C1H0 believed that:

Can you imagine a child who comes from a needy homestead who is determined to study but cannot due to unavailability of food, now has an opportunity to do so because there is food available through the NSFP? So this child might become a future teacher, doctor, nurse, policeman or a future entrepreneur, so the extra income this child is able to plough back into the already impoverished family where he grew up from, so through education and employment and knowledge can be able to fight poverty. In addition, in future we anticipate that people will grow food at local level, closer to schools then they will have a market and they will become the producers of food for schools. That can greatly tackle poverty.

“In addition, C3R0 concurred with C1H0 with regard to the NSFP’s capability to reduce poverty through its embracing of local produce from local farmers. C3R0 also believed that if implemented well, the NSFP has the potential to reduce poverty.

C3R0 commented that:

In my understanding, the community will be selling their products to the school and in return, the school will be buying the local products from the local community within their area. That is the way it might benefit the community, in that sense it can reduce poverty. (C3R0)

By contrast, C3R0 argued that the SFP is just a meal that is served at school, it is not even drought relief, and so, it is difficult to say that it can alleviate poverty in their homes. In the same vein, PS2 also argued that they could not see the manners in which the SFP would reduce poverty.

These were PS2's reasons:

The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture did not employ our people or has not arranged that they should be given anything like salaries. They are just saying they should work for the sake of the children. The Ministry should meet the parents halfway because those people have many responsibilities. They are supposed to voluntarily collect firewood , fetch water from the borehole, construct the kitchen and storerooms, take part in kitchen cleaning, cooking and saving children without remuneration (PS2).

The above narratives illustrate how the participants of the study had divergent views regarding the impact of the NSFP towards poverty reduction. Some participants agreed that the SFP edifies parents by feeding their children while others believe that this can only happen when they ultimately complete their studies. Some believe that proper compensation for cooks as well as the introduction of locally produced food can reduce poverty too by providing jobs to locals markets and by extension, to local famers.

4.5 Challenges implementers face regarding the SFP

Tables 5 presents the challenges that are faced by the implementers of the NSFP.

Table 5: Challenges that are faced by implementers of NSFP

Respondent code	Challenge	Description
PS1,PS2,T1S2,T2S2,T1S1,T2S1,RT,SBM1,SBM2	Kitchen utensils	Inadequate pots, spoons, plates and dishes.
PS1, PS2,RT, C3RO, T2S2, T1S2, PS1, C1HO, SBM1, SBM2	Infrastructure	Lack of proper structures e.g. kitchen, storerooms and dining rooms.
PS1, PS2,T1S1, T2S1, RT, T1S2, T2S2,	Compensation of cooks	Mode of compensation not accepted by parents/ cooks.
PS1,PS2,RT,T1S2,T2S2, SBM1,SBM2,	Provision of firewood	Parents unable to provide firewood. Participants feel it is not a viable option for fuel.
PS1,PS2,RT,T1S2,T2S2,T1S1, T2S1,SBM1,SBM2	Some parents being uncooperative	Parents/ community absent themselves from their roles. Their participation very minimal.
PS1,PS2,T1S2, SBM1,SBM2T2S2,T1S1,T2S1	Lack of chairs for learners	Learners sit on ground during meal times.
PS1, PS2,T2S2,C4HO,T1S1, T2S1, RT, SBM1	Training	Lack of training and limited training is a hindrance to the implementation of the NSFP
PS1, PS2,T2S2,C1HO,	Time factor	The NSFP affects the teaching and learning processes.

SBM1,SBM2,T1S2,T2S2,T1S1, T2S1, PS1, Ps2	Parental/community participation	Very minimal, affects effective implementation of the NSFP
SBM1,SBM2, T2S2	Long distances	Parents walk long distances or some need taxi fares to attend to the NSFP services
T2S2,C3RO,T1S2, C1HO,RT, SBM1, PS2, C2RO	Monitoring of schools	Central and Regional managers do not visit schools
T1S2, C3RO, C1HO,T1S1,T2S1	NSFP burdensome to some staff	Staff feel overwhelmed by the NSFP-no time for monitoring and evaluation
PS1, PS1, PS2,T1S1, T2S1, RT, T1S2,T2S2,PS2,RT,T2S2,SBM1,SBM2,	Absence of cooks	Lack of parental commitment hampers the provision of meals.
SBM1, SBM2, RT, T1S1, T2S1	OVC and poor learners teased	Other learners mock them for eating porridge.
C2RO, C1HO, PS1, PS2 C3RO, C4HO,	Absence of the NSFP policy	Absence of policy hinders efficient implementation and accountability for implementers of the NSFP
C2RO, C1HO, PS1, PS2 ,T1S2, T2S2, C3RO, C4HO, SP,	Poor coordination, monitoring and management and sustenance of the NSFP	Orders of meals not properly done due to training gaps, maize bags not delivered on time, bureaucratic procurement systems and decentralisation of the NSFP are still a challenge
SBM2,SBM1,T2S2,C2RO,T1S1, T2S1, T1S2	Meals lack quality	Porridge is tasteless, meals lack variety.

RT, PS1, PS2, T2S2,SBM1,SBM2	Parents lack time for home chores	Very few are committed, burdened by cooking and other services
C3RO, T1S2, T2S2, PS2	Theft of maize blend bags	Several reports of theft of maize blend bags in schools by community members
C3RO, C2RO, SP	Bad roads	It is difficult to transport maize bags to some places during rainy seasons and flood areas due to bad roads. Food sometimes becomes spoiled.
SP, C2RO, C1HO, C3RO	School managers being uncooperative	Some principals being uncooperative to service providers
C3RO, PS2, T2S2, PS2	Maize blend not well kept	Maize blend is not kept on pallets in the storeroom, but kept in classrooms, on the floor.
C3RO, C2RO, C1HO	Understaffing	Understaffing at regional level
PS1, PS2, T1S1, T2S1, T2S2	Overcrowded classrooms	NSFP causes overcrowded classrooms

According to Table 5, participants such as PS1, PS2, T1S2, T2S2, T1S1, T2S1, RT, SBM1, and SBM2 concede that they faced challenges related to the lack of kitchen utensils like spoons, pots, plates and dishes as they implemented the NSFP.

In fact one of the participants argued strongly on this challenge:

The challenges we face are related to kitchen utensils that we use for the SFP. Like spoons, our learners are using hands to eat instead of spoons and our school cannot afford to buy spoons for our learners. The plates, dishes and pots are few, we only have two pots, when learners are many; some will not get anything. (T1S2)

Equally, the challenges that emerged from the focus group discussion with school board members were similar to the above. Figure 6 and 7 respectively corroborate the challenges pertaining to lack of kitchen utensils or cutlery like spoons for learners, measuring spoons and cooking pots which are needed in the day to day implementation of the NSFP.



Figure 6: Learners eating porridge with their hands at School 1. Picture taken by Rejoice Khama



Figure 7: Status of kitchen utensils used at School 2 for school feeding meals. Picture taken by Rejoice Khama

Figures 6 and 7 show that one of the common challenges of the NSFP is the lack of cooking utensils. The figures further illustrate that learners do not have a sitting shelter and as such they sit on the ground in small groups during meal times.

From observing Table 5, participants PS1, PS2, RT, C3RO, T2S2, T1S2, PS1, C1HO, SBM1, and SBM2 raised the challenges of lack of proper infrastructure. Infrastructure refers to the temporary structures used as kitchens. The responses demonstrate that classrooms were being used as storerooms for maize meal and also show a lack of dining rooms for learners. Regarding this PS1 observed that: *“On cooking area, our kitchen as you have observed this morning, is not conducive.* PS2 said: *“The food storage, we do not have food storage for maize meal, the bags are in one of the classrooms.”* PS1 also raised concerns over the place where learners sit when they have their meals. PS1 said

the following: *“I think you have observed, our learners just sit on the ground, no chairs or even some long benches where they could sit when they eat.”* T1S1 echoed the principal’s views noting that: *“...like now it is the rainy season, the place is wet, so our learners are forced to eat whilst standing or they sit on a wet ground.”* Similarly, SBM1 commented that: *“The kitchen is not well built, from a health perspective, when the wind blows, dust accumulates in pots”*. Figure 8 corroborates the challenge pertaining to lack of infrastructure



Figure 8: Quality of a kitchen of one of the schools for NSFP at School 1. Picture taken by Rejoice Khama

PS1, PS2, T1S1, T2S1, RT, T1S2 and T2S2 admitted to having the challenge of the compensation for parent cooks.

PS1 remarked that:

The compensation of our cooks is a problem here, and a serious challenge. They are demanding some compensation. I support their claim of compensation because they are coming from poor backgrounds. Look, instead of the cooks going to markets to sell what they have in order to get money to sustain themselves, they will be coming to school for two weeks where they would not be paid. (PS1)

Moreover, T1S1 explained that the issue of the payments for cooks is a challenge and she affirmed that they always complain that they also have a lot of work that they need to attend to at their homes. However, they are made to leave their home responsibilities to go and attend to the NSFP, of which at the end of the week, they only get maize bags instead of money. On the same issue of compensation of parent cooks, RT added that since parent cooks live in town, they need money to sustain themselves. According to RT, only 2 or 3 parents were committed, and would volunteer to cook for their children for the whole year. RT further observed that parents also complain about not having time to look after their families because of the NSFP commitments. Instead of them going to the market to sell what they have in order to get money to sustain themselves, they would be going to the schools for two weeks, where they would not be paid, to assist in the NSFP.

The other challenge raised by PS1, PS2, RT, T1S2, T2S2, SBM1 and SBM2 was of the provision of firewood by parents (See Table 5). With regards to this challenge, PS1 remarked that getting firewood is also a concern when it comes to urban areas - the schools

had to buy firewood and the challenge is in that they did not always have enough money. This, according to PS1 was a very serious problem. To reinforce the aforementioned challenge, SBM1 noted that:

Since it is an urban school, we face an acute shortage of firewood, which is our source of fuel. Truly speaking, it is the responsibility of parents to provide firewood to keep the programme going but unfortunately, as you can see it is an urban school, so there is no way we can force parents to fetch firewood for our learners and it is within the parameters of the town council it can cause deforestation. The other issue is that some parents do go to work, there is no way they could abandon work and go in the forest to collect firewood. (SBM1)

It was also noted by PS1, PS2, RT, T1S2, T2S2, C3RO, T1S1 and T2S1 that other parents were uncooperative in terms of fulfilling their perceived roles. SBM1, made submissions regards to the challenges of cooks that were not serious with their roles, and that their weekly attendance was very poor. The respondent argued *“Cooks are not willing to carry out their tasks optimally simply because it is tough when a person does a non-remunerated exercise, you do not take it seriously, and it is the biggest challenge ever of poor attendance by cook”*.

C3RO raised the challenges of the lack of proper cooking facilities and emphasised the need for a joint venture. The government is providing the maize blend to the school and now the community has to come in and construct cooking shelters and storerooms. Parents

do not fully perform their roles. C1HO also explained that some challenges arise from the parents not cooperating, in that not all of them were volunteering to supply firewood as a contribution. They do not volunteer to cook or fetch water or even build a kitchen. C1HO posits that the roles of parents have become problematic because they want to be remunerated for performing those roles.

From Table 5, it can be observed that participants PS1, PS2, T1S2, SBM1, SBM2, T2S2, T1S1 and T2S1, admit to the NSFP facing the challenge pertaining to the lack of chairs for learners at meal times. In this regard PS1, referring to the eating area where learners sit when they have breakfast, remarked that: *“I think you observed, learners just sit on the ground even during this rainy season, no chairs or even some long benches where they could sit when they eat”*. (See figure 6)

According to Table 5, PS1, PS2, T2S2, C4HO, T1S1, T2S1, RT, and SBM1, as implementers of NSFP experienced challenges related to training. The aforementioned participants were not aware of their roles in the NSFP because of a lack of training. C2RO explained that food orders do not arrive in time and thus schools sometimes experience food shortages. The participants explained that sometimes the focal point teacher forgets to order the correct number of maize bags, resulting in fewer than needed bags being received. C2RO also added that the issue of placing orders online can be a challenge. For instance, at times when the focal teachers are placing orders, they press a wrong button on the computer and that changes the information on the orders. He further added that all this boils down to lack of capacity building for the implementers of the NSFP. The lack of

training as well as limited training seems to be a hindrance to the effective implementation of the NSFP (See section 4.3.2).

The other challenge raised by PS1, PS2, T2S2 and C1HO was of the delay in serving the meals.

PS2 remarked that:

Time is very much affected, we experience some delays and some class cutting because our learners need time to line-up, time to receive that hot porridge, time to eat, time to wash their hands and their plates. This implies that some learners will miss the first period from break because they will still be eating. (PS2)

Equally, T1S2 observed that: *“We need more time for this programme, by the time we finish supervising cooks and learners, almost one period or so has elapsed, this negatively affects other subjects.”*

According to Table 5, participants T2S2, C3RO, T1S2, C1HO, RT, SBM1, PS2 and C2RO believe that the central and regional managers of the NSFP do not visit the schools in question to monitor how the programme is running.

T2S2 exclaimed that:

You know what? I am worried about those people who are monitoring this programme here in the Zambezi Region. They do not come to see the situation on the ground, and we usually see the company that supplies food. We do not know whether we have bosses or what. We do not know them, they do not visit schools. Maybe if they visit our schools, we might have an opportunity to ask questions. (T2S2)

Moreover, C3RO observed that some challenges are born out of a lack of the proper management of schools:

Other challenges arise from our core-implementers in schools who are principals. It looks like they sometimes are too busy, they neglect the programme and they just push it to the focal teacher and this teacher would struggle in terms of organizing what is supposed to be organised with the community. Some principals are managing the programme, some are not managing it on a school level (C3RO).

Accordingly, T1S2, C3RO, C1HO, T1S1 and T2S1 attested that to some staff members, the NSFP seemed to be a burden. T1S2 argued that:

It is too much for me, I am a class teacher. At the end of each term I have to compile those end of term reports. I have a lot to do, it is additional work on top of my work. (T1S2)

Similarly, C3RO also explained the challenge resulting from teachers assuming many tasks. C3RO stated that:

At the regional level we are only two and at the same time we are dealing with hostels. So, sometimes, it has become a challenge, like for this year, I have never visited any school with the SFP in order to monitor and see what is happening there, to see whether the storerooms are kept clean, whether there is proper shelter. We are understaffed; we need two additional staff members. (C3RO)

SBM1, SBM2, RT, T1S1 and T2S1 raised the challenge pertaining to complexities arising from monitoring the programme in addition to their daily teaching loads. C1HO raised this issue with the understanding that teachers already have their normal teaching loads and some extra-curricular activities, so they feel very much overwhelmed and overburdened by the fact that they are required to monitor the NSFP and at the same, teach. Another challenge that was raised by SBM1, SBM2, RT, T1S1 and T2S1 was with regards to some of the learners tormenting the OVC and poor children for eating porridge. T1S1 noted that: *“Some learners who are eating porridge that side are sometimes being mocked by their fellow learners. They laugh at them saying they are eating porridge because they are poor and so on.”*

Similarly, RT confirmed that:

There are some learners, those who are proud, they always tease those learners that are poor and vulnerable while eating porridge. They say that “you are eating porridge because you are poor”. So, those learners become demotivated, especially those who are in grades 6 and 7 - their emotions are so sensitive. Though would be hungry, they would stop eating the porridge because they would be afraid that their friends will laugh at them. (RT)

Another observed challenge was regards the management and sustenance of the NSFP (C2RO, C1HO, PS1, PS2, T1S2, T2S2, C3RO and SP). When probed on the issue, C1HO argued that bureaucratic procedures take time because one needs to prepare a tender document with the right specifications, and it has to go through the right scrutiny process if it has to be approved, signed off and then one has to advertise for tenders from suppliers/service providers. C1HO further remarked that there is a period needed for the advertisement to run and a period to evaluate and adjudicate the bids, the award period and the notification of award and then buying of the food from the service providers. This has been observed to be a very lengthy process. Furthermore, C1HO noted that some service providers are new and lack the necessary experience, because they have to start from the beginning and tend to be in a learning situation.

The issue of the lateness in the delivery of foodstuffs was also observed as a challenge by C2RO, C1HO, PS1, PS2, T1S2, T2S2, C3RO, C4HO and SP alike. Regarding this, PS1 voiced the sentiments that: *“When we reopened this term from the 5th of September we did not have maize-meal up until the 1st of November. In just that period of time, the attendance of learners dropped drastically. Some learners could not come to school”*. Equally, C3RO also observed the challenge faced by transporters in terms of delivering the maize blend in flood prone areas. C3RO noted that due to the challenges of floods, the maize blend sometimes got wet and spoiled and even delayed on the way to the destination schools. These delay negatively affect the school feeding programme.

Another very commonly observed challenge was that the food lacked variety as the learners are fed the same meal daily. One of the participants also noted that another challenge arose from the fact that the NSFP was only catering for learners between Grades 1 and 7. The respondent argued that when these same needy children had progressed beyond Grade 7 they are now are not fed.

SBM2 also shared these views regarding the quality of the NSFP food:

The porridge is tasteless, our learners complain too much about this issue, though we encourage them to eat the porridge. They ask for sugar or even sweet aid. Some are poor as they are part of the low-income group, they cannot afford bringing sugar and sweet aid every day. (SBM2)

On the other hand, C1HO, conceded that there are challenges faced because of the decentralisation process of the NSFP to the regions, remarking that:

We have tried to decentralise the programme. We are busy, but we can already see challenges from the first stages of decentralisation. Regions are unable to pay timely, they are not able to monitor its effectively, and they will rely on the Head Office sometimes to knock on them to say hello, how far is the progress in terms of deliveries?
(C1HO)

C1HO also added that the NSFP relied heavily on government funding. C4HO affirmed this observation by submitting that: *“The increasing number of learners who take school feeding meals, places a demand on the NSFP which in turn causes overcrowded classrooms and also budget increases”*. C1HO also added that challenges such as the absence of proper storage facilities as well as the issue of not having a SFP Policy adversely affected its effective implementation.

Another challenge noted by the participants was that of proper storage as sometimes the maize blend is not kept well, for example in places like storerooms. Instead, it is kept on the floors of classrooms sometimes and not on the pallets as is the standard. It has been observed that in some schools, it is kept in the classrooms, on the floor rather than in storerooms. Furthermore, the coordinator at the regional level (C3RO) raised another challenge of the theft of maize meal bags. C3RO noted that the storage rooms are

sometimes broken into by members of the community and foodstuffs stolen. This was also reported by T2S2 at School 1.

C3RO submitted that another challenge culminated from parents, reiterating that there are some schools whose community members are obstinate to volunteer to do their envisaged roles in the NSFP. Furthermore, C3RO reiterated that the maize blend would sometimes overstay their lifespans after being kept for some time without being cooked for learners such that the consignments from the school had to be given away to other schools. Furthermore, C3RO complained that there is a paucity of policy since the programme was introduced - they only have been issued with a manual. C3RO further explained that it is important to have a school feeding policy because it could assist in the implementation of and accountability for the NSFP.

SP observed that it was sometimes very difficult for them to deliver the maize blend, especially during the rainy season and in flood areas due to bad roads, which made it difficult for them to access schools. Secondly, the other challenge SP noted was of school stamps which were hard to get as the delivery note that they used needed to be stamped and signed by the receiving officer.

SP commented that:

So you find that you after you have driven for about 200 km to go to a certain school, on reaching there, there is no stamp. So it really makes it difficult for us to drive again the same distance back to the same school just for a signature and to obtain the school stamp. (SP)

Lastly, the other challenge SP raised was that some schools were uncooperative. According to SP, for example, sometimes they could make arrangement that their truck would be at a school, for example, at 14h00 and request the receiving officer to be at the school at that time (to receive the maize blend in order for that manager to verify and count the number of the bags, to sign and stamp delivery order), only to find the school deserted with no one to receive that consignment. This, according to SP, would then make it very difficult to achieve the NSFP goals.

In brief these findings from the study raise critical challenges in the implementation of the NSFP in that, while it is acknowledged that the NSFP supports the learners' education and health, the lack of essential utensils such as spoons, pots hampers the smooth running of the programme by teachers. Negative remarks made by some learners to the OVC and poor children have also been viewed by participants as a form of humiliation to such learners and discourages them from eating the meals and subsequently from coming to school. To some teachers, the NSFP has become burdensome and equally discouraging, especially looking at their teaching loads coupled with the management of it. Few parents who cook for learners were considered by teachers as overwhelmed by conflicts between roles at home and school, and ultimately their prioritising of their roles at home resulted in them to abandoning their duties of cooking at the schools, ultimately bringing the programme to a standstill.

The above narratives demonstrate that principals, teachers, school board members, coordinators and service providers alike shared views of what they considered critical challenges to the NSFP. These included, chief among them, the lack of kitchen utensils,

chairs and tables, the lack proper infrastructure such as kitchen, dining places and storage facilities, the lack of cooperation and minimal involvement of communities in the programme due to the absence of proper compensation and a general lack of training for most implementers. Participants also noted the existence of challenges regarding the management and the sustenance of the NSFP which include among others, the lack of monitoring of the NSFP at schools, the absence of a NSFP policy and the decentralisation of the programme and late deliveries of consignments. Participants argued that it was difficult to effectively run and manage the NSFP with all the setbacks they raised.

4.6 Observation findings

In order to strengthen the quality of data obtained from interviews and focus group discussions, the researcher decided to use the observation chart to capture more data.

4.6.1 Observation findings for School 1

The researcher used an observation chart during school visits at meal times in order to have an in-depth understanding of the NSFP. The purpose was also to get answers to questions such as: What?, Who?, How?, Why? and When? with regards to the administering of food to learners, the equipment used, the infrastructure in place, the type of fuel used, their source of water, people who prepare and serve the food, time when meals are given and the behaviours of learners during meal times.

The researcher observed that bags of the maize blend were usually more than what the schools required for the term and the bags were kept in a storeroom on pallets. She further noted that the storage facility was well maintained, even though it appeared to be small as it was initially not meant for the programme but other prior purposes. Furthermore, during the visit, the researcher also noticed that cooks were without aprons while preparing food for learners. Added to this, the researcher was quick to observe that the type of meal that learners were being served was soft porridge and it was served by the cooks under the supervision of the teachers. The researcher also observed a heap of fire wood in the kitchen as seen in Figure 9 below. Finally, the kitchen was clean, but was a temporary structure made of clay and wooden poles and required some improvements, as further revealed by Figure 9 below.



Figure 9: A heap of firewood used as a source of energy for the cooking of SFP at School 1 during meal time. Picture taken by Rejoice Khama.

The researcher further observed that tap water and toilet facilities were available at the school. The plastic plates used by learners and the pots used in the preparation of the food

were not enough to cater for a double session school - spoons and serving utensils were few. The researcher further noticed that learners from poor and vulnerable families were the ones benefiting from the NSFP while learners from better families brought their own food from home and others could afford to buy food from the tuck-shop. The researcher also observed some learners adding sugar or sweeteners to their porridge. It was observed by the researcher that only a few of the learners used spoons while most of them seemed to be struggling as they ate hot porridge with their bare hands. It was further observed by the researcher that the larger component of the learners washed their hands as most of them rushed to the kitchen.

Finally, the researcher observed that learners sat on the ground to eat and others ate while standing. This is because of the glaring absence of dining facilities. The school environment was wet but clean. The researcher also noticed an abandoned school garden with withered plants as shown in Figure 10.

4.6.2 Observation findings for School 2

The researcher used an observation chart during her visit to School 2 at meal time to collect in-depth data that could aid in understanding the functionalities of the NSFP. The purpose was also to get answers to questions such as: What?, Who?, How?, Why? and When? with regards to the administering of food to learners, the equipment used, the infrastructure in place, the type of fuel used, their source of water, people who prepare and serve the food, time when meals are given and the behaviours of learners during meal times.

The researcher noted that the bags of the maize blend in stock at the school were enough for that term and they were kept on the floor in one of the classrooms. She further observed that the classroom was well maintained but it was not a secure storage facility. Moreover, the researcher was quick to note that the meal that was served to learners was soft porridge. It was also noted that the porridge was served by the cook at 10:00am (break time) and was supervised by a teacher on duty.

The researcher was also quick to observe a pile of fire wood in the corner of the kitchen, thus confirming that the type of fuel used in the preparation of the food for learners was firewood. Also, the temporary structure used as the kitchen was clean. However, there was dust and rain water in the kitchen. The researcher observed that only one tap was available for the whole school. Plates and pots were also available but were not enough - there were very few spoons and utensils. The researcher further observed that all learners benefited from the NSFP. Meanwhile, only a few learners washed their hands as the rest ran straight into the kitchen. A learners were observed using spoons to eat while most of them used their bare hands for eating.

The researcher further observed that learners who received food sat on the ground in a circle while others ate while standing as depicted in Figure 6. The researcher noted that learners were sharing sugar, sweeteners and slices of bread. At the same time the researcher observed some pre-primary learners who were unable to carry their plates and had to be assisted by older learners. Finally, the researcher observed that the school environment was kept clean but wet due to rain.

4.7 Ways to mitigate the challenges faced by implementers of the NSFP

The study solicited views of the implementers' of the NSFP regarding how their roles could be improved. PS2 suggested that: *“The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should build a proper structure for the school for that programme to run smoothly. For example, we should have the kitchen and the storage together because the school cannot afford that.”* Additionally, T2S1 further suggested that the school needs a permanent structure where learners can sit and eat, as well as a kitchen where the cooks can prepare the porridge to avoid contamination that can create health hazards. On the same issue of infrastructure, C4H0 reiterated that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should build more classrooms to accommodate all learners and to also include infrastructure such as storage facilities, a kitchen and a dining hall in the design plan of building schools.

On the question of the provision of firewood as source of energy for cooking, one of the school board members suggested that: *“My opinion is that the government must provide gas or electric stoves as you know it is an urban school, it is like primitive to use firewood.”* He argued that firewood causes air pollution and requires labour as well. He further argued that when it is raining, making fire is tough.

T2S2 also stated:

I think they should give us a permanent structure, the one we have is a temporal structure. You know when it rains those sinks are blown out and the cooks wait for it to stop that is when they will try to kindle the fire. (T2S2)

The quality of the food was also a concern. C1H0 submitted that the food that learners eat is the same throughout the year without any form of variety. He therefore suggested that diversifying the food menu by the government could be a good initiative to cater for the learners' health needs. Equally, one of the school board member (SBM1) complained, "*...the porridge is tasteless and our learners complain too much about it.*" However, she suggested that the government should look into the issue of improving the taste of the porridge.

Similarly, T2S2 also opined that: "*I was of the opinion that the Ministry responsible or the coordinators of the programme or the government should look into and revise the implementation of the SFP. Instead of only providing porridge, they should also provide rice from Kalimbeza with soup or milk, fresh fish or tinned fish and stiff porridge.*" T2S1 further suggested that the school feeding menu should also include foodstuffs such as fruit, stiff porridge with relish like meat, fish, cabbage, potatoes and some vegetables. These foodstuffs do supplement the porridge that the learners eat.

The improvement of the school feeding meals was another aspect of concern. SBM1 suggested that the government should improve the quality of the meals so that it accommodates all learners to avoid the discrimination of learners. In addition, PS1 wished for an opportunity where the ministry would support them to extend the programme to include the whole school instead of confining it to the OVC and poor children only.

With regard to the lack of parental involvement in terms of cooking, all participants were of the view that they were rendering crucial services like cooking, serving food to learners, erecting kitchens and storerooms, fetching water and collecting firewood. Most participants felt that some of those responsibilities were beyond their capacity due to lack of skills. They also said they were handicapped due to poverty and vulnerability. C1HO commented that they were unable to address the payment of cooks in the immediate future. C1HO therefore suggested that in the meantime, they needed to motivate, train and capacitate people to understand their roles in the SFP.

Other suggestions to mitigate challenges faced by implementers of the SFP were mentioned by SBM2: *“Cooks are not willing to carry out their tasks optimally simply because it is tough. It is tough when a person does a non-remunerated exercise, you do not take it seriously”*. In addition, PS2 stressed that, *“The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should properly formally employ cooks to get a salary because they cannot work for a long time without remuneration”*. C4HO further emphasised the fact that cooks are not always available in some schools - they need compensation in the form of money to cater for their other needs. In the same vein, C3R0 also felt the need to motivate cooks. However, C3R0 understood it to be too costly to execute. C3R0 suggested in this regard,

the following: *“Other schools are just improvising by using cleaners to take such responsibilities. In some other areas conservancies have taken the responsibilities to pay the same people for cooking, collecting firewood and fetching water”*.

Regarding the challenge of the lack of training as well as limited training, nearly all participants noted that capacity building was of paramount importance and it was needed in almost all the categories of implementers. The following were their views on how these challenges could be mitigated or addressed:

PS1 and T1S1 suggested that:

I think in future, I was of the opinion that starting from myself as a Principal, focal teachers including the school board members should receive that training especially the preparation part so that we should be aware on how to monitor people who are handling the cooking part of the programme, maybe we will understand better so that we should know how to implement this programme fully. We need guidelines (PS1).

Equally, SP emphasised the observation that the people that need to be trained are service providers who receive the maize blend in the warehouse and those who are responsible for transporting the blend to schools as well as the blenders. More so, C1H0 suggested that training needs to be conducted at all levels - all stakeholders involved need to be capacitated. For example, at the head office, senior officials that are involved in the procurement need training. At the school level, principals and parents require training in

order for them to fully understand their roles in the SFP. He further suggested that there is also a need to train people to adequately budget for the NSFP.

Furthermore, T2S1 added the following:

I was suggesting that they should train us, like those people who were handling this programme. We should be trained on how to handle the maize blend, there should be a mini workshop. Also, the cooks should be taught about health issues, how to be healthy themselves and how to keep themselves clean because it is one of the things that is hindering some learners to eat porridge. (T1S1)

Finally, C2R0 had this to say about how to address the challenge of lack of training and limited training:

There is a need for continuous training for all implementers of SFP, the newly appointed and old ones. It should not be a once off training but one should take cognizance of the fact that the world is changing and it is therefore dynamic. Anything that change there must be regular training, so I prefer that after every two or three years there should be training conducted. We also need training on data collection, which is the Namibian Information System, on how to capture information. So, the answer is training, once all stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities, they definitely come forth and close gaps (C2RO).

With regard to challenges faced by poor and vulnerable children of being teased by ‘better’ learners when they eat porridge, RT suggested that teachers and counsellors need to discourage those learners who were teasing others and they should also encourage the OVC and learners from poor backgrounds to partake in the NSFP during their life skills lessons and that they have to emphasise much on this issue. On the other hand, the teacher of School 1 reiterated that they had made attempts to handle it. She explained that sometimes the teachers do not allow those learners who insult the OVC and poor learners to go to near the site where they serve porridge. It is for this reason that they only allow learners who consume the porridge to be there. She further explained that those learners who tease others should also be referred for counselling to help them understand the situations of those learners who are poor and vulnerable.

On the challenge brought by the management of some schools being un-cooperative to service providers, SP (transporter) of the maize blend shared the following views: “*We have decided that we will go over the radio to make announcement on the delivery schedule for that week.*” Additionally, when it comes to the accessibility of schools due to flooding and slippery roads, SP suggested that those schools should receive their consignment earlier so that when the rains and the floods come, they just deliver in schools that are not difficult to reach. SP further advised teachers and service providers to take cognisance of the fact that they are all parents to these OVC and poor learners. SP further emphasised that the needs of those learners should be met on time, as long as it is still working hours. She further emphasised the need for all stakeholders in the NSFP to work hand in hand with each other for the sake of those poor and vulnerable children.

With regard to the measures taken for late deliveries by service providers, this is what the C3RO suggested as a mitigating factor:

In the case of service providers (tenderers), we can hold accountable that specific person who signed the contract for late deliveries and sometimes missing bags from the consignment to replace them as well as to urge them to deliver bags timely. (C3RO)

He further suggested that it was essential to conduct regular meetings with tenderers to update them about complaints that were being received from schools regarding late deliveries and missing bags.

On the measures to decentralise the SFP, this is what C1HO suggested in order to address it:

The decentralisation of the SFP could be among other activities which needed a long term solution because we want to see regions adequately running this programme with minimal assistance from Head Office. At the same time we wish Head Office could try to monitor the programme and the region could run the programme. (C1HO)

In response to some delays, which were experienced during break time when the food is served, PS2 suggested that if a school was capable of having spoons and plates in place, the cooks could start serving porridge before learners come out for break time. By so doing, all learners could have known where their grades get their food. PS2 observed thus:

“So they are collecting porridge which is being prepared and served in advance”. With regard to the challenges culminating from coordinators failing to visit schools in order to monitor the NSFP, this suggestion was given by T2S2:

I would suggest that the coordinators should really come and see our schools. They must visit all schools with the SFP to see how learners eat so that they find the cause of the problem and then get the solution to those problems. (T2S2)

C3RO concurred with T2S2 and reiterated that they were overwhelmed with work because they were understaffed to the extent of sometimes neglecting attending to the school feeding activities. In this regard, C3RO suggested that the Regional Office should be given at least two positions to enable them to effectively monitor and supervise the NSFP.

On the challenge of not having a policy for the NSFP, C3RO and C4HO felt that it was of paramount importance to have a policy rather than just a guideline. This would help in the proper implementation of the programme. People who are mandated to implement the programme can be held accountable using the policy. C3RO stated that, *“Without a policy how can people be held responsible for neglecting their responsibilities?”*

4.7.1 Mitigations regarding the alleviation of short-term hunger

With regards to mitigation of how the NSFP could reduce poverty, participants proffered divergent views. The following narratives emerged under the subthemes on the alleviation

of short-term hunger, poverty reduction on a long term basis, poverty reduction through child training, job creation and food security through decentralisation and promotion of localised food production.

On the potential of the NSFP to alleviate short-term hunger, T1S1, RT, SP, SBM1 and SBM2 had expressed quite similar views. In fact their views collectively are generally summarised and well captured by the T1S1 who submits that:

This programme can reduce poverty in some communities especially for learners that we are dealing with. For example, these learners will be coming from their homes, where they do not have anything to eat but when they come here at school, they will be getting something to eat. That in itself is a good way to reduce poverty in the learners' families. (T1S1)

T1S1 also noted that parents can also contribute to poverty reduction in their families by encouraging their children to attend school. Similarly, the RT echoed the same sentiments and believed that the NSFP provides one nutritious meal to the OVC and the meal energises these learners encouraging them to stay in school. This potentially ensures that after completion of school they might get better jobs and live better lives than those of their parents. In this way, poverty could be reduced. One of the School Board Members (SBM1) stated that they have a school garden and they sell their products to low income groups as a form of fundraising while some of the produce is given to learners, especially the OVC, to supplement their diet.

Figure 10 below shows a garden at School 1. SMB2 concurred with SBM1 and commented that: *“It is true, and this is because the children do enjoy those vegetables that we provide and sell at our school.”*



Figure 10: *A school garden to support the NSFP at School 1. Picture taken by Rejoice Khama*

In addition, SBM1 suggested that the goal to achieve the alleviation of short-term hunger the can also be addressed by providing afternoon meals for Grade 4 up to 7 learners who always return to school in the afternoons for extra classes.

Further to this, TIS2 asserted that the NSFP can alleviate the parents' short-term hunger problems and commented thus:

It can reduce poverty, let me give an example of a lady who is cooking this week, when you look at that lady, she is from a poor family or background. So, once she comes to school and cook, on a Friday, she will have two bags of maize meal. That will reduce poverty, at least they will get something to eat for a week or two. (T1S2)

SP added that the programme was introduced for the purposes of alleviating poverty, believing further that the feeding programme assists needy people who cannot provide for their children and ensures that the children can come to school, get something to eat and learn. SP further observed that this is another way in which the government is trying to alleviate poverty in Namibia.

4.7.2 Mitigating poverty reduction on a long-term basis

With this regard to this sub-concern, some of the participants (PS1, C1HO and C2RO) believed that the NSFP has the potential to reduce short-term hunger and can in the long run reduce poverty.

PS1 submitted the following views:

Like at our school, the majority of the learners are gradually progressing to secondary schools, due to the aid of NSFP. Like in our situation as Africans, if that child gets educated and starts working, that child will start helping himself/herself, his/her guardians or parents as well as the entire family. (PS1)

In the same vein, the Coordinator of the NSFP at Head Office (CIHO) explained:

It is only education, employment and knowledge that can enable one to fight poverty. So, since the NSFP is able to contribute toward all aspects that allow the child to complete school and become somebody, it is greatly contributing towards poverty reduction. (CIHO)

CIHO further explained that the implementation of the NSFP can be improved by encouraging all in the NSFP to participate fully in their prescribed roles. Public Private Partnership (PPP) initiatives towards the feeding programme can be used to assist the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture to sustain this programme. Furthermore, RT commented that donors and business people in the region should once also donate food for the learners. Finally, C2RO alluding to the fact that the school feeding programme mitigates poverty since parents are assisted in feeding their children and the same programme is keeping learners in school to enable them to develop themselves.

4.7.3 Mitigating poverty through child training

T2S2 and C1HO believed that if learners are properly trained, the school feeding programme could in the long run improve food security and at the same time reduce poverty in the learners' families.

The T2S2 commented in this regard, that:

Schools can grow vegetables to support the SFP, this can be feasible because schools have subjects like Agriculture within which learners should be trained to grow their own vegetables at their homes. We need a school garden where learners could learn how to grow vegetables. By so doing, we will not rely on the Government to give them drought relief food or hand-outs. (T2S2)

C1HO reiterated that: *“Learners need to be trained especially on how to plant vegetables, fruits and crops at school. They should also be taught entrepreneurship skills so that when they are of age, they will be able to sustain themselves”*. T2S2 further emphasised that through this training the schools and learners could in the future produce their own vegetables and maize and get money.

4.7.4 Mitigating poverty through job creation

Job creation was noted by participants as one of the factors that could reduce poverty. Some of the participants (C1HO, SBM2 and T1S1) indicated that the NSFP has the potential to create jobs and profits.

CIHO remarked that:

We do have service providers that are contracted through tender processes to render service towards the feeding programme. In doing that we are busy sharing resources across different business entities and are also busy spreading the wealth so that eventually there is another adverts relationship that they are employing many other people directly and indirectly. (C1HO)

Most participants (PS1, PS2, T2S2, SBM1, T1S1, and T2S1) believe that the NSFP can also create jobs for the parents who prepare the food for learners. SBM1 and T1S1 respectively stated the following in this regard, SBM2 said: *“The Government should look into the issue of cooks, to employ them permanently with a proper income because we require them to cook for the whole year.”* Equally, T1S1 observed that: *“The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture must come up with something else, cooks should get something at the end of every month.”*

4.7.5 Suggestion on to improve Food Security through the decentralisation process/localised food production

Another observed challenge is that the government is spending a lot of money on the NSFP. C2RO explained that they were very happy when the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture gave an instruction to schools to start developing gardens in their backyards to grow vegetables, carrots and fruits. C2RO also had an understanding that with local gardens, people could start supplying what is required locally instead of buying maize meal from other countries. Local people must start producing what is required for the school feeding programme so that small farmers could start selling to the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture.

The C2RO gave the following example:

If a community member has a 2 hectare garden, this person can grow what he/she knows will be required for government to mix up in the blend so that it becomes cheaper in terms of transport, for the reason that do not have to travel long distances to find what they want for the children. For instance, locals can grow tomatoes, carrots, fruits and even groundnuts to meet the government halfway. (C2RO)

C2RO further explained that the importation of goods is very expensive because of levy charges and transportation. C2RO noted that these costs can be cut if locals start producing these foodstuffs locally. Furthermore, if small scale farmers start producing food, they create jobs and get money from selling their produce to schools. This reduces poverty. Equally, C4HO suggested that the Government of Namibia through the Ministry

of Education, Arts and Culture should allow local farmers to produce and deliver foodstuffs to schools so that they also benefit through it. For example, through this, jobs could be created and markets for farmers could be readily available and food security could be realised in the Zambezi Region as well as in the whole country. T2S2 remarked that when locals produce food for the programme, they could help ensure that the region has enough food to sustain the programme.

T2S2 gave the following example:

The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture can help the schools with projects like a vegetable garden and those vegetables can be sold to get something. Another one can be that of a chicken project and other projects that can strengthen the SFP in order to meet government halfway. In turn, the money that we get from sales can help us to buy buckets, plates, cooking utensils and benches and tables that are needed for the feeding programme. It is expensive to get food from other countries, and as we know the government is complaining about money. It is better to buy food locally because it also reduces poverty. For instance, at school learners will be told that this is Kalimbeza rice, it is produced in our region. In the same manner learners can be encouraged to go and try to produce their own food at their homes. By so doing food can be available and poverty can go down. (T2S2)

The results demonstrate that participants had different views on how to reduce poverty among learners, parents and community members alike. Some participants believed that

poverty has being alleviated among learners though the provision of school meals and in another way - parents are being assisted to feed their children. Other participants opined that poverty can only be reduced through education, employment and knowledge especially when learners have ultimately achieved their educational goals and start working. Other participants indicated that poverty can only be reduced through child training, proper compensation of parents through job creation and empowering communities through the production and purchase of locally produced foodstuffs for the NSFP.

4.8 Summary

This chapter presented the results of the study obtained from interviews, focus group discussions and the researcher's observations, which methods sought to explore the implementers' experiences regarding the implementation of the SFP. The first part of this chapter is the description of the study area. This was followed by the presentation and interpretation of data reflecting the views of participants on the impact of the NSFP on the learners' education, health and other socio-economic considerations. The main outcome of the study is that with the proper management of the feeding programme, there is potential to assist poor children and OVC to have access to quality education, meet learners' health needs and the NSFP could equally reduce poverty among communities. The next subsection was about the observation results. The last two subsections discussed the challenges which were faced by participants as well as possible ways of mitigating them thereof. The study noted an array of challenges with regards to the NSFP which ranged from the lack of proper utensils and infrastructure, the absence of a NSFP policy,

the lack of insufficient training, limited community participation due to lack of proper compensation, theft, bad roads, overload of activities, understaffing, the late delivery of consignments, poor coordination of activities and the weak monitoring, evaluation and management of the programme. Potential mitigation processes were suggested in order to improve the programme. The next chapter presents a discussion of the implications of the study results presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The NSFP is of paramount importance to the Namibian nation, including the Zambezi Region. It is used as a vehicle to address inequality and other social injustices resulting from events that occurred in the past. The programme is also used to promote access to educational opportunities by all the poor and vulnerable children in Namibia in general, and the Zambezi Region in particular (WFP, 2014). The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the data presented in Chapter 4, linking it to the pre-existing literature to establish common connection between the data of this research and the existing literature. The data is also discussed in order to establish the extent to which it responds to the research questions and objectives. This discussion follows the following sequence:

1. Biographical information.
2. The experiences of the implementers of the NSFP at the participating schools in the Zambezi Region of Namibia.
3. The programme implementers' views regarding the influence of the NSFP on the education, health and socio-economic indicators at the two selected schools in the Zambezi Region of Namibia,
4. The challenges implementers face regarding the NSFP and how these challenges can be mitigated at the two selected schools in the Zambezi Region of Namibia.

5.2 Biographical information

The results of this study recorded the views of 14 participants from diverse backgrounds which were anonymously captured and analysed (Chapter 4, Table 2). It is important to note that, due to the fact that this was a small scale – case study, the research was limited to only two schools in the Zambezi Region. Secondly, owing to the fact that this is a qualitative study, the participants drawn from the population were few in order to study the phenomenon in-depth. The research findings will also not be generalised to other places in Namibia (Creswell, 2009) but they can help to understand the context of the NSFP. Additionally, with the use of multiple methods to collect data, such as interviews, discussions, focus group discussions, observations and content review, the number of participants (14) was deemed to possess the potential of providing a holistic picture of the situation in the two selected schools in the Zambezi Region. Moreover, the results also indicate the location of the study site, which is the Zambezi Region (formerly known as the Caprivi Region), lying on the southern tip of Africa (Chapter 4, Figure 2).

The researcher chose to study the Zambezi Region of Namibia because it is known to her to be one of the poverty stricken regions and equally providing NSFP meals to learners. The study region also reduced linguistic barriers which could have affected the research if it had been conducted in other regions - particularly in terms of funding restrictions, translations and so on. Implicit in the discussion is the importance of the theoretical framework which guided the study of the experiences of the implementers of the school feeding programme in the two schools in the Zambezi Region of Namibia. The capability

approach is important to the study because of its proclivity to demonstrate the abilities of implementers in the schools to perform functions of the NSFP.

5.3 The experiences of the implementers of the NSFP at the participating schools

Sections 5.3.1 – 5.3.2 discuss the data in relation to the experiences of the implementers of the NSFP in both the selected schools.

5.3.1 The general experiences of implementers of NSFP at the participating schools in the Zambezi Region

In terms of the implementers' experiences of the NSFP, the results of the study demonstrate that the introduction of the NSFP in schools was of vital importance to assisting vulnerable and poor learners. Participants also revealed the importance of the NSFP by emphasising that the programme helps needy learners and/or learners whose parents are unemployed to have at least a single guaranteed meal for consumption so that they can attend school and acquire an education (Chapter 4, section 4.3.1). The study also revealed that there is a need for the government, through the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, to provide meals to learners in order to encourage them to attend school. Consistent with this idea, Bundy et al. (2007), Darko (2014), Ellis (2012) Davies (2014), Hamupembe (2016), and Daitai et al. (2018), among others, assert that the SFP is of paramount importance as it has the potential to provide meals to needy learners to reduce hunger and improve the learners' nutritional needs, thereby enhancing the teaching and

learning processes. This evinces that the NSFP is aligned to international trends that envision the eradication of hunger in peoples' lives (WFP, 2012).

Despite the positive experiences shared by participants regarding the programme, some of them revealed that the procurement and the management of the programme seemed to not be in line with what was expected. Some of participants further revealed that though the programme seems to be helpful to learners, there is limited support from community members due to the lack of proper compensation for community members who volunteer to cook the meals for learners (See chapter 4, Section 4.3.1). In relation to community/parent involvement, the NSFP Report (2013) indicates that in as much as community participation is considered to be an axis on which the NSFP should be revolving, parents and communities are not aware of their roles and responsibilities as outlined in the NSFP Reference Manual (n.d). Additionally, the findings of the study indicate that most participants feel that the programme relies too heavily on community contributions without proper incentives. This was imagined to have contributed to the low level of their participation from community members. Implied here is that the community seems to be overwhelmed by their roles anticipated such as cooking, constructing kitchens and storerooms as well as the provision of firewood.

5.3.2 Experiences of implementers regarding their roles and training at the two selected schools in the Zambezi region

The participants of the study also shared their experiences regarding their anticipated roles in the NSFP. These functions include among others, working on a strategy to improve the monitoring and evaluation of the NSFP and the way it is managed and run and to manage the procurement processes, the supervision and monitoring how cooks as well as controlling learners during meal time (see Chapter 4, Table 3, Section 4.3.1). Other participants indicated their role as those of transporting food consignments from warehouses to schools in the edifying the implementation of the programme.

The results of the study evinces in this regard, the existence of two categories of implementers - those of that received training and those that did not. Those that received training were confident about their roles and could articulate them well. Those who were not trained expressed the following reservation: *We need to know our roles so that when those parents come for cooking, we can teach them how to do it, but now they just come cook and go, both of us are blind we do not know anything* (T2S2). Dei (2014) further indicates that the lack of capacity, knowledge and skills in black role players in South African communities (including Namibia, then South West Africa) would be attributed to them being disadvantaged during the apartheid era (WFP, 2014).

5.4 The influence of the NSFP on education, health and socio-economic considerations

Sections 5.4.1 – 5.4.3 discuss data pertaining to the NSFP in relation to educational concerns, the health of learners and other socio-economic considerations.

5.4.1 Educational factors

The findings of the study reveal that the NSFP is of paramount importance to the poor and vulnerable learners as it acts as a safety net which attracts them to attend schools, where they get free meals and equally have access to education. These factors are consistent with observations by Cheung and Perrotta (2010) who report that children in communities with any of the Food For Education (FFE) programmes were 10% more likely to be in school and would remain in school for a total of 1.8 more months longer than those in communities without any interventions. Dei (2014) argues that the SFP serves to attract children to school and retain them for the period within which they will be there. Though there was largely a connection between the literature and the findings of the current study, there were also a slight variations. For instance, other factors impacting student enrolment and retention such as the transfer of learners and long illnesses which were observed in the current study are not be, as far as the current research has established, references nor confirmed by the pre-existing body of literature reviewed.

The study revealed a dualism in the findings with regard to the enrolment of learners. For instance, some participants believed that the NSFP has had a positive impact on enrolment, whereas only one participant harboured mixed conclusion (see Chapter 4, section 4.4.1). The Annual Progress Report (2014) and Hamupembe (2016), concur with the study indicating that the NSFP has contributed to the increased enrolment of learners. In the same vein, the SFP in Togo has been expanded to cover 92 schools due to its tremendous impact on school enrolment. Tomlinson and Buhl (2007) exclusively focused on the exploration of the SFP's influenced increases of the enrolment and retention rates of girl child, which is in contrast to the current study that was more inclusive. Sulemana's et al. (2013) note that the SFP in Ghana has influenced the enrolment rates of learners in both positive and negative ways as, while numbers have increased, this has also resulted in the congestion of classrooms in schools. Those who had mixed conclusions are corroborated by Figures 3 and 4. These figures confirm this by indicating the gradual increase of learners on a yearly basis. However, Figure 3 (see Chapter 4, Section 4.4.1) shows a decline in enrolment as evidenced in 2006 to 2010 which eventually picked up until 2017.

Findings from both the participants as well as enrolment figures of both schools reveal that, in addition to the impact of the NSFP, other factors seem to also have impacted the enrolment of learners. Some of the factors include the introduction of pre-primary at School 1 in 2011 and the introduction of free primary education in all schools by the Namibian government.

Some participants had mixed feelings and reiterated that the NSFP influences learners' enrolment in a rather negative way. They submit that parents now bring babies that are underage to school in order to alleviate the hunger at home as the child would start to also receive free meals under the NSFP. This situation seems to reveal an impression that such parents run away from their responsibilities of taking care of their babies and would instead prefer to dump them at school. In other words, in as much as the NSFP increases the enrolment of learners, some parents now abuse the programme by enrolling under-age children in school.

The study also revealed that the NSFP was instrumental in stimulating the improvements in the attendance behaviours and numbers of learners at the schools. Participants explained the positive effect of the NSFP on the attendance of learners (See Chapter 4, Section 4.4.2). The study also notes that while the school feeding meals are an incentive for school attendance, it should be borne in mind that some of the difficulties that learners face in accessing education related to the operationalisation of the NSFP include the absence of cooks and the lack of food at schools due to late deliveries by the service providers (See Chapter 4, Section 4.4.2). Munyiri's (2010) observations support the above findings as they reveal similar experiences in Kenya. Munyiri (2010) explains that the SFP's performance with Kenyan pre-school children reflects an improvement in their enrolment and attendance.

The NSFP Implementation Report (2014) indicates that out of a total of 53% of schools which fed learners every day, 27 % of schools benefiting from the NSFP provided meals to learners on more than half of the school days, whereas 20% fed learners on less than

half of the school days. A total of 30 schools reported not to have fed learners on any school day. The report further reveals that the common reason for not serving porridge to learners was due to the cooks' absence and/or non-availability of food at school. The researcher observed during the study that the NSFP has the potential of attracting learners to school. However, the capability gap brought about by the minimum participation of the parents/community need to be addressed. The results indicate that the NSFP positively influences retention and dropout rates (see Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3). This finding of the study is supported by the view from Tomlinson (2007) who, focusing the role of SFPs in increasing enrolment and retention of girls argues positively for the SFP. However, it is important to note that even though it is evident that the SFP is the main factor that keeps the learners in schools, there are a number of other factors that negatively affect learner retention in schools. Some of the major factor observed include, among others, the transfer of learners to other schools, early pregnancies among girls, long illnesses and decision to quit school and seek for employment.

On the same theme, PS1, provided the trends for School 1's enrolment (See chapter 4, Figure 3), which revealed that the enrolment at School 1 has been on the increase annually from 743 in 2000 to 1750 in 2017. However, a decline in enrolment was evidenced in 2006 to 2010 after which it increased until 2017. The increase from 2011 was attributed to the fact that pre-primary was introduced that year as well as the implementation of the NSFP. Equally, PS2 shared trends for School 2's enrolment (See chapter 4, Figure 4) with the researcher, which indicated that the enrolment at School 2 was also increasing annually from 107 in 2014 to 177 in 2017. The gradual increase in the number of learners on a

yearly basis might have been, among other issues, attributed to the introduction of the NSFP.

Trends for learner enrolments to both School 1 and School 2 corroborated with the evidence from the interviews conducted with the principals, teachers, coordinators, a service provider and the focus group discussions, that the NSFP influenced the enrolment of learners in both schools. The study also revealed that the NSFP has had an influence on the performance and progression of learners. The results in Figure 5 for School 1 (See chapter 4, Section 4.4.4) illustrate encouraging trends in learner pass rates. Unfortunately, the trends for pass rates for School 2 were not available to be part of this discussion. From the interviews and the focus group discussion with the implementers of the SFP, it emerged that the performance of schools and the output of the work of learners have remarkably improved since the introduction of the NSFP (See chapter 4, Section 4.4.4). What is encouraging is that most of the participants (See chapter 4, Section 4.4.4) indicated that the NSFP encourages learners to learn, it also gives them energy to sit, listen and participate in all lesson activities. The participants also felt convinced that the performance and progression of learners to higher grades can be attributed to the advent of the feeding programme. Similar effects of the NSFP were reported in the reviewed literature.

The World Bank (2012) explains that the NSFPs are used by most countries worldwide to achieve educational goals through the consideration of the learners' outputs in schools and outside schools. It can be argued that earlier studies were equivocal about the link between nutritional deficiency and cognitive performance. However, subsequent evidence has

shown that even a short-term lack of food can lead to a reduction in concentration, ability to process and comprehend information and verbal fluency (Bennett, as cited in Tomlinson, 2009).

The observation here is that the participants from the two selected schools in this study of the impact of the NSFP in the Zambezi Region perceive the NSFP as a vehicle that boosts the learners' performance. They believe that the opposite is also true, that a hungry child will always be sleepy, and lacks concentration. At the end of the day, they are regarded as slow learners, failures or low achievers. This reflects the learner trends that the participants experienced before the programme was introduced in schools. Additionally, participants were largely in agreement that the meals had improved the children's learning abilities because they would no longer worry about what to eat but would now focus on their studies and concentrate on what the teachers are teaching them (See Chapter 4, Section 4.4.4).

5.4.2 The health of learners

On the practices that negatively affect the health of learners in relation to the NSFP, most participants expressed worry about the uncleanliness of some of the cooks who prepared the food for the learners. Participants indicated that some cooks bring their dirty babies to the kitchens, even observing that some of the babies are brought to the cooking areas despite having running noses (See Chapter 4, Section 4.3.5.1). The way some of the cooks dress can be seen in Figure 9 above. They have been observed to handle food while at the same time attending to their ill babies and this has been seen to discourage some of the

learners from eating meals. Another issue that was raised by the majority of participants to have equally affected the learners' health was the absence of proper dining facilities (see Chapter 4, Section 4.3.5.1). One of the participants observed that, *"Like now it is the rainy season, our learners are forced to sit on the wet ground or they eat whilst standing"* (See Chapter 4, Section 4.3.5.1).

The researcher's observations in Figures 6 and 8 (See Chapter 4, Section 4.3.5.1) correspond with the data obtained through interviews and the focus group discussions which indicate that the lack of proper infrastructure poses a health hazard for the learners. For instance, instead of learners are forced to sit on wet ground due to the lack of benches or chairs and this can easily facilitate the spread of water borne diseases like worms, which affects the epidermis of the skin. Furthermore, participants were concerned about the lack of kitchen utensils to the extent that cooks had to sometimes bring kitchen utensils from their own homes, as evidenced in Figure 7 above. Participants were also worried about the lack of spoons for learners as demonstrated by the learners who are eating in Figure 6 (see Chapter 4, Section 4.3.5.1). Most learners in both schools under study ate hot porridge with their bare hands again posing a threat of burns. Furthermore, the researcher observed during her visit to the schools that most learners did not wash their hands before partaking of the meals. They were seen running and standing in irregular queues for the porridge without washing their hands, a recipe for the spread of germ caused diseases.

On the issue of whether or not the SFP has had an impact on learners' nutrition, participants expressed divergent views. From the study conducted, most participants believed that the provision of food to learners can improve their nutritional status thereby

reducing the levels of malnutrition among learners (See Chapter 4, Section 4.3.5.2). Better still, the majority of participants also believed that the school feeding programme meal should be enriched with protein, sugar and salt – ingredients which they felt were essential to the learners’ livelihood. They further explained that learners from vulnerable backgrounds and children from poor families, who were frequently sick or weak or sleepy, exhibited improved health with the introduction of the meals (See Chapter 4, Section 4.3.5.2). The findings on the fulfilment of nutritional needs for learners are consistent with those of Langinger (2011), Tomlinson (2007) and Darko (2014) discussed earlier in the literature and collectively argue that the link between health and education is being acknowledged and that there is evidence that the children can benefit from the nutritional intervention provided through the NSFP. Though not revealed by the study, the literature revealed that the deworming programme seems to be very crucial regards the learner’s health. Levy (2012) underscores this notion as he argues that parasitic worms can make children behave abnormally because of anaemia and related diseases. The introduction of the deworming aspect of the feeding programme in schools and the provision of iron and iodine, support the learners’ health in relation to retention, attendance and children’s output.

Interestingly, the study also revealed some contradictions as some participants maintained that even though they believed that the NSFP improves the nutritional status of learners, they joined those who were adamant by indicating that more needed to be done regarding the possibility of providing nutritionally balanced meals (See Chapter 4, Section 4.3.5.2). The participants asserted that learners were supposed to eat a variety of foodstuffs as they were taught in school unlike eating the same type of meal every day. It was argued that

food that learners eat at school is the same throughout - there is no variation in it. This is in line with submissions by Bundy et al. (2007) who argue that it might be difficult to reverse some of the damage of early nutritional deficits. There is evidence from literature that the introduction of the deworming exercise in schools that offer the SFP as well as the provision of iron and iodine to learners support their health in relation to retention, attendance and children's output. This is in sharp contrast to what the participants in both schools recounted on the NSFP. Implied here is that, in as much as the NSFP has the potential to cater for the nutritional needs of the learners, the researcher is of the view that more needs to be done in terms of food diversity.

With respect to the NSFP's influence on learners that are infected by HIV and AIDS, results from the study reveal that the SFP boosts their immune system. Most participants agreed with the notion that most learners that are affected by HIV/AIDS are on ARV tablets and their parents do not properly administer medication to them or even mind whether their children have eaten something or not. Participants have come to the realisation that the porridge which learners get at school boosts their regular intake of their medicine as they cannot take their medication on an empty stomach. It appears from the study that those learners who were infected by HIV and AIDS were of ill health, but current, they looked fit and healthy because of the introduction of the school feeding meals. In the same vein, the findings of the study corroborate the reviewed literature from UNAIDS (2011). UNAIDS revealed that the SFP and lunches had a potential to minimise the HIV and AIDS virus infection rates among school children. Consistent with the findings of the study, Tomlinson (2007) views the HIV and AIDS pandemic as a

permanent emergency that need government's response to food security and nutritional interventions.

The study further reveals that the SFP assists learners who are infected with HIV and AIDS and those living in extreme poverty to enrol in school. Additionally, the findings are in line with the Namibian national policy of 2003 on HIV and AIDS, which addresses the need for the inclusion of learners to participate in the school feeding schemes to ensure their access to free and quality basic education. The findings of the study also corroborate the findings of Darko (2014). Darko (2014) explains that HIV and AIDS affected communities need a lot of food items because the disease aggravates the cycles of inadequate nutritional intake and malnutrition among the people and the orphans. On the other hand, Jukes et al. (2008) reports that the SFP in South Africa has played a vital role in reducing the spread of HIV and AIDS among young girls. The study reveals that HIV and AIDS have been reduced due to the long hours that girls spend in school as well as the availability of food which was felt to have even reduced the rate of commercial sex work and the unnecessary errands that could lead to rape and infections.

5.4.3 Socio-economic considerations

The findings of the study with regards to the potential influence of the NSFP on poverty reduction revealed that the advent of the school meals has assisted in reducing short-term hunger and poverty among some poor and vulnerable learners (See Chapter 4, Section 4.4.6). The study further revealed divergent responses on the matter. The first group of participants believed that the NSFP has the potential to reduce poverty among learners it

provided food for them, in the process, reduce hunger. In turn this helps them to access education, concentrate in class, remain in schools and also improve their performance (See Chapter 4, Section 4.4.6). Furthermore, the study indicated by staying in schools, after achieving their educational goals, those learners from poor background and the OVC benefiting from the NSFP have the potential to become future teachers, doctors or nurses and thus improve the quality of their lives and those of their guardians/parents. In such circumstances the income they would get would potentially assist their parents through them ploughing it back into their currently impoverished families (See Chapter 4, Section 4.4.6).

Most participants also expressed the belief that it is only through education, employment and knowledge that one can manage to fight poverty (See Chapter 4, Section 4.4.6). This implies that the NSFP is envisioned by some of the respondent to the panacea for reducing poverty in the long-term. On the same issue, the second group of participants believed that the NSFP reduced poverty among parents from poor backgrounds it assisted them with feeding their school-going children (See Chapter 4, Section 4.4.6). This translates to the programme having the potential to reduce the short-term hunger problem for learners and can equally be argued to have the potential to reduce poverty among parents by alleviating their feeding responsibilities. Additionally, the study observed that the NSFP can also reduce poverty as it provides jobs to service providers such as blenders and transporters through the tender award process (See Chapter 4, Section 4.4.6).

In contrast, the study also notes that some of the participants were of the opinion that it was difficult to believe that the NSFP could alleviate poverty especially among parents as they were currently participating as voluntary non-remunerated workers, a condition that was seen to be not sustainable (See Chapter 4, Section 4.4.6). Some participants argued that this could only be possible if the programme could be decentralised by embracing the local produce from local farmers within their area to benefit the community. It is believed that the latter option could create jobs and markets for those farmers and employment for locals who could be working on those farms and markets (See Chapter 4, Section 4.4.6). It was observed that the NSFP represents a variety of ways to potentially reduce poverty among learners, parents and the community at large. Among them, are those that address short-term hunger among learners, job creation for service providers and equally assisting parents to feed their children. In contrast, the study notes that the NSFP could only reduce poverty through the decentralisation of the programme so that it can directly benefit people at the grassroots. What is implied here is that a strong NSFP that is locally owned, incorporates contributions from local communities and responds to their specific needs. The findings of the current research with regards to the NSFP's potential to contribute to poverty reduction are consistent with Darko's (2014) submissions that learners from poor homes are likely to go to school without food and if they do, they are less likely to learn. He further emphasised that hunger and poverty have a direct link with the learners' educational performance.

Asiago and Akello (2014) argue that the general effects of poverty have seen many families spending many days without food and are often forced to seek assistance from the NSFP in order to ensure their children at least eat something and have an opportunity

to go to school and learn. Also Bundy et al. (2009) emphasise the point that the NSFP is among the several safety-net programmes that have a long-term benefits for learners. The programme will not immediately increase the family's household income, but in the long run, it is possible that consistent schooling could increase the children's income when they are grown up and start working. This will in turn potentially help in breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty. Regarding the issue of poverty reduction through job creation, Afoakwa (2012) affirms that the NSFP creates employment by issuing local tenders to the producers of the foodstuffs and delivery services for the foodstuffs cooked for the children in schools. People such as local farmers get an income from the sale of their produce like cereals, grains, tubers and vegetables. Local communities equally get jobs as service providers such as in the delivery of food and the preparation of school meals. The similarities of the findings of this study and the literature reviewed can be observed comparatively with the Kenyan and Botswanan examples. In those countries job creation applies to service providers such as tenders for the provision of food and transportation.

In contrast to the findings in the literature, another finding of this study is that job creation for local farmers and for service rendered by those involved in the preparation of school meals does not feature with regards to the two schools under study. This implies that although the NSFPs are adopted worldwide, the manners in which they are implemented differ. For instance, in some countries like Kenya, foodstuffs like cereals, tubers, vegetables and grains are provided to learners. In Botswana, NSFP meals include corn, soya milk, vegetables, oil, sorghum, beans, canned meat, stew and bread, whereas the Namibian version of the NSFP only provides learners with porridge. It could also mean

that the NSFPs in the aforementioned countries have empowered school communities through the provision of foodstuffs unlike in the case of schools under study.

The researcher's visits to Schools 1 and 2 yielded more data that edified the data collected through interviews and focus group discussions. Her observations enabled her to answer questions such as what, how, why and when regarding the implementation of the programme (See Chapter 4, Sections 4.6.1 – 4.6.2). For instance, the researcher identified the type of meals served (which was porridge), the fuel used (was fire wood), and that the utensils used for cooking and serving at both schools were not appropriate (See Figure 7 in Chapter 4, Section 4.5). The researcher also noticed that both schools used temporary infrastructure as kitchens (See Figures 8 and 9 in Chapter 4, Section 4.6.1 and 4.6.2). A small storeroom was used to store maize blend bags for School 1 and a classroom was used for storage purposes at School 2 and these were both verified. These storerooms were not secured adequately to safe keep the school's feeding consignments. School 1 had adequate water taps and toilets, whereas School 2 had only one (1) water tap and there was an apparent lack of sanitary facilities at a latter school. This implied that the availability of running water and sanitation at School 1 could promote safe health practices, unlike the situation at School 2 that seemingly does not reflect safe health practices. School 2 had no garden at all but School 1 had a garden with withered plants (See Figure 10, Chapter 4, Sections 4.6.1 – 4.6.2) which was used as an edifier to the programme. It was difficult to believe that the garden in place could improve the lives of those needy learners – especially considering the state it was in.

The researcher was able to observe the people involved in the preparation of meals (See Figure 8, Chapter 4, Sections 4.6.1 – 4.6.2), those who supervised learners and cooks (teachers) and how the food was administered to learners. The researcher observed that most learners looked hungry and were in real need of the food. She could notice that most of the learners who benefited from the meals were not washing their hands before meals, but rather shuffled in irregular queues for the porridge. Furthermore, the researcher noticed that meals were provided to learners at 10:00am and she also noticed that the serving of the food, the eating time and washing of dishes after meals ate into the first teaching period after the break time. And she was also quick to observe that the learners did not have a dining room or spoons, and as such, they sometimes sat on the wet ground while eating their hot porridge with their bare hands (See Figure 6, Chapter 4, Sections 4.6.1 – 4.6.2). After the researcher's visits, she affirmed that the implementation of the programme was essential to the livelihood of the poor, vulnerable children and their parents alike. It therefore needed to be strengthened, properly managed and augmented by community participation.

5.5 Challenges implementers face regarding the NSFP

The data collected through interviews and from the focus group discussions revealed an array of challenges faced by the implementers of the NSFP (See Table 5, Chapter 4). This is consistent with the views expressed by Davies and Dei (2014), who submit that, though significant strides of progress have been made regarding the HGSP programmes, many challenges still remain, especially in developing countries.

The challenges that are enumerated in this study are mainly due to lack of kitchen utensils and pots, as well as spoons and plates for learners such that learners eat porridge with their bare hands as depicted in Figure 6 (See Chapter 4, Section 4.6). There is also a lack of proper infrastructure as depicted in Figures 8 and 9. For example, the kitchen, storeroom and dining room as shown in Figure 6 (See chapter 4, section 4.6). The, cooks sometimes also refuse to cook because they need financial or some other form of compensation which schools cannot afford. The food consignments for School 1 are sometimes given to other schools due to lack of cooks and for fear that they will go bad. A study conducted by Darko (2014) reveals the challenges of the overcrowding of learners and the resultant lack of furniture as one of the negative impacts of the NSFP.

Some observed challenges relate to parents who are uncooperative and are obstinate to fulfil their community participation role as expected in the operationalisation of the NSFP. The participation of the parents tend to be very poor at both schools, as they fail to provide firewood and to build proper infrastructure. Participants argued that this was largely due to poverty and a general lack of commitment. The few who volunteer to do the cooking claim that they now do not have time to attend to their families as well as their roles at home because of their commitment to the NSFP. The lack of training and/or limited training of the implementers has been observed to be a hindrance to the effective implementation of the NSFP. Only a few of the participants conceded to have received training whereas the majority of them have not (See Table 5, Chapter 4) and as such lack skills to efficiently execute their roles. Khama (2014) submits that most school board members in the Zambezi Region of Namibia lacked training regarding their anticipated roles in the NSFP.

Other observed challenges affecting the implementers of the NSFP include the following: the lack of monitoring skills, the lack of knowledge regarding their roles, the lack of skills regarding placing online orders as well as tender procedures which are seen to delay the purchasing processes and thus result in delays in the NSFP processes. This also culminates in delays in the delivery of services by service providers due to orders that were processed late because of the unavailability of funds, bad roads during floods and rainy seasons, unskilled service providers who lack the necessary skills and experience, schools being regarded as uncooperative by service providers and late deliveries of maize blend by service providers.

All the challenges affected the learners' attendance rates and have the potential to possibly raise the absenteeism rates and equally affect the performance rates. The participants also observed that their maize blend was sometimes delivered a week or two before the term ended and this caused spoilages during holidays as the maize blend would not be used for some time. In addition, during the decentralisation process, delegated tasks such as payments are not done timeously. Most of the participants complained that there was no variety in the food given to learners. The learners are fed the same diet all the time - porridge. Theft was also a big challenge hindering the successful implementation of the NSFP. Also the NSFP has resulted in overcrowded classrooms as learners are attracted by the food to attend school. Learners from affluent families have been observed to also tease or mock the OVC and those from poor backgrounds for eating the porridge. Participants perceived this form of humiliation suffered by the OVC and other poor children to be challenge in the implementation of the NSFP as the OVC and poor children are discouraged from continuing to eat the meals and subsequently from coming to school.

Remarkably, while the NSFP in Namibia is being supported by various legal frameworks, to date, no NSFP policy exists. The absence of a policy might compromise the implementation, monitoring and evaluation, coordination and accountability of NSFP activities. Furthermore, participants complained that the involvement of regional staff members in the schools was very minimal. The participants generally felt this might compromise the successful implementation of the programme. Understaffing at regional offices was also a major concern that was raised by some of the participants and this was observed to have negatively impacted the effective implementation of the NSFP activities, especially the monitoring as well as the coordination of activities in schools.

Some finding of this study could not be linked to the pre-existing body of published data. For example, the observation that teachers fill the service gap brought culminating from the absence of cooks, and the challenge resulting from the fact that the HGFSP is not yet part of the NSFP. The other challenges that could not be linked to existing studies is with regards to the observed instances of learners from affluent families teasing or mocking the OVC and those from poor backgrounds for eating the porridge as well as the apparent lack of diversification in the learners' feeding meals and that some learners burn during meals because they use their bear hand due to a lack of spoons.

5.6 Ways to mitigate the challenges faced by implementers of NSFP

The participants recommended the following possible solutions to mitigate the observed challenges.

5.6.1 Utensils

The NSFP in Namibia enjoys government support. Therefore a need exist for the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture to provide kitchen utensils. The schools need more spoons and Kango plates for learners, measuring jars, gas/electric/solar stoves, cooking pots and uniforms for cooks. The implementers of the NSFP confirmed that they were incapacitated because of the apparent lack of the aforementioned utilities. The lack of these implements also delays the cooking, serving and eating processes and thus negatively impacts the learning time and undermines the overall performance of the programme. It is for these reasons that all these utensils are needed and the Namibian government should strive to provide them. These observations are also supported by Ellis (2012).

5.6.2 Infrastructure

The majority of the participants suggested that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should build proper structures for the programme to run smoothly. There is need for well ventilated and secured storage facilities to avoid spoilage of the maize bland and burglary, a dining hall for learners and a kitchen where cooks can prepare and serve food to avoid food contaminations and cooking delays. It was further suggested that the Ministry should also build more classrooms to accommodate all learners. The findings of the study share affinities with the literature which revealed that parents and caregivers are not able to provide cooking and eating utensils, soap and adequate storage (Ellis, 2012). This can also be observed in the photographs taken at the schools by the researcher part in the study's data collection process. It also would seems that many parents within the communities

surrounding the schools battle with poverty, unemployment and adverse socio-economic conditions and this also negatively affects the smooth operationalisation of the NSFP.

5.6.3 Provision of firewood

On the challenge of securing firewood as a source of energy for cooking, the majority of the participants reiterated that it was difficult for parents to provide firewood considering their economic backgrounds, especially that they hail from rural set ups. It was suggested by the participants that the government, through the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, should rather procure gas or electric stoves, especially at schools with electricity. The argument here was that firewood causes air pollution and deforestation. The securing of firewood for cooking is also labour intensive. It was also further argued that it is difficult to use firewood for cooking during the rainy season especially considering the apparent lack of proper infrastructure. This concern did not feature in the literature reviewed.

5.6.4 Food quality

The participants also raised concerns of the fact that the food which learners eat lacks variety. They suggested that diversification of the food basket by government would be a good initiative to cater for learners' education and health needs. It was further suggested that the alleged tasteless porridge should be improved. Participants also suggested that instead of only providing porridge, the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should also provide locally produced Kalimbeza rice with soup or milk, fresh or tinned fish and

even stiff porridge. The participants also imagined that meat, potatoes and some vegetables should be added to the menu of the NSFP to supplement the porridge. It was further indicated by the majority of participants that these suggested additional foodstuffs had the potential of increasing the learners' micronutrient intake which was considered to be crucial for good health. The data revealed that the suggestion of providing locally produced food in the NSFP corresponds with international trends described in the literature review. On this issue, the emphasis by participants in on the quality of food (which they believed was not up to standard) and diversification of food for the programme. For instance, pupils that benefit from the NSFP in Finland are given a well-organised and supervised balanced meal free of charge (FNBE, 2008). However, Botswana's case correlates with the current study in that the quality of food provided in the programme is a concern and thus participants went on to even suggest the inclusion of locally produced foods on the menu (BIDPA, 2013). The literature review confirms that in countries like Malawi and Zambia, the HGSFP has been introduced and has resulted in schools serving rich meals made from fresh traditional food that promote diet diversification (Davies, 2014). This is a lesson which Namibia can emulate.

5.6.5 Community or parental participation in the NSFP

There is generally an observed poor community or parental level of participation in the NSFP (See Table 5, Chapter 4). There seems to be resistance from members of the community to become more involved unless they are remunerated (See Table 5, Chapter 4). For instance, according to the NSFP Manual (n.d), parents should render crucial services like cooking, serving food, erecting kitchens, storerooms and collecting firewood,

providing spoons, protecting the school premises and organising three meetings per year to deliberate on the NSFP activities. The attainment of these milestones has proved to be an uphill struggle. This finding is consistent with the observations made by Ellis (2012) and BIDPA (2013), who confirm that parents or caregivers are unable to execute their roles maximally due to a lack of capacity. As a result, their participation was rated to be minimal and this compromised the quality of service delivery. The implication is that in as much as community participation should be considered as crucial towards the NSFP, the findings of the study reveal that parents seem to be overwhelmed by their envisaged roles. It was therefore suggested that parents should be seriously committed and involved so that they own the NSFP. However it was also advised not to overburden them with activities and it was also important to consider possibilities of providing them with proper incentives.

5.6.6 Training implementers of the NSFP

Training plays a critical role in equipping people with skills. However it has been established that only a few of the participants were trained whereas the majority lacked capacitation. This made the implementers of the NSFP unable to efficiently execute their mandated roles and responsibilities as expected. This implies that insufficient training coupled with late payment of supplies, delayed deliveries of services by service providers, the poor management of the programme and weak monitoring and evaluation systems could have equally hampered the efficiency and effectiveness of the NSFP. The importance of training managers of the NSFP is supported by literature as evidenced from Davies, (2014), BIBPA (2013), Ellis (2012) and Langinger, (2011). It was therefore

suggested that all implementers of the SFP at different levels, from Head Office, Regional Office, Circuit Offices, to schools and communities be provided with continuous training on how to handle the programme.

5.6.7 Mitigating the effect on poor and OVCs from being mocked

The findings of the study revealed that learners from affluent families mock those from poor and vulnerable backgrounds who receive meals through the NSFP. As a result, those learners became discouraged such that despite being hungry, they stopped eating the porridge for fear of being mocked and humiliated. The affected learners began excluding themselves from the feeding programme because of this fear of humiliation. It was suggested that teacher counsellors should start to discourage those learners from mocking and teasing others. Meanwhile, the counsellors should encourage the OVC and poor children to eat porridge during their Life Skills lessons. It was suggested that teachers responsible for the NSFP should not allow learners known to mock others within the proximity of the site where the porridge is served. It was further suggested that those learners who teased others be sent for counselling to help them understand the situation of the poor and vulnerable learners. Although this finding is observed in the current study, it was not mentioned in the reviewed literature, therefore it was not possible to relate it to international trends. Social ills and the humiliation of poor children and the OVC is evident in the current study, which militates against the access education by the poor and OVC. More needs to be done in terms of supervision in order to guard against this behaviour.

5.6.8 Late deliveries by service providers

Late deliveries of the maize blend often resulted in the lack of meals to serve learner on some days and subsequently contributed to the reduction of the attendance, retention and performance rates of learners. Additionally, consignments of the NSFP bags went to waste due to delays in distribution which often arose from the lack of capacity by service providers. It was reported in the local press that a company contracted to distribute bags of maize meal since January, was unable to distribute them to various schools in one of the regions. It was further reported that due to spoilage, the consignment of maize bland was taken to the dumpsite and set alight (Cloete, 2016). These findings correlate with literature in the Botswana case study which maintains that the NSFP in that country always experienced transportation problems and the problem of food spoilage due to unfavourable conditions at the warehouses (BIDPA, 2013). It was suggested that, with the support of the NSFP policy, which is yet to be developed, service providers should be held accountable for late deliveries and spoilage and that missing bags from the consignments should be replaced by the culprits. It was further suggested there was a need to conduct regular meetings with service providers to urge them to deliver bags timeously and even to update them about the complaints from schools. The researcher supports the calls for the improvement of transportation and storage facilities and that service providers need to be monitored more frequently to avoid late deliveries, burglaries and food spoilage.

5.6.9 Coordination and monitoring activities

The findings of the study revealed that schools experienced poor monitoring of the NSFP and a general lack of field visits to schools by coordinators to monitor the progress of the programme (See chapter 4, Section 4.7). The participants complained that they lacked the sufficient skills to effectively discharge their expected duties. One participant felt incapacitated and emphasised that, “...*the programme was just dumped on us, to blindly operate*” (T2S2). One coordinator confirmed that lack of school visits, indicating that they were understaffed and therefore overwhelmed by work. This resulted in the coordinators neglecting their duties of supervising the NSFP activities. This means that there is lack of training among the implementers on how to handle and manage the NSFP. There is insufficient staff to undertake the required roles at both national and regional levels. The Permanent Secretary of the MoEAC emphasised that the attainment of the NSFP objectives will only be possible if its implementation is properly tracked and guided through regular and well-targeted reporting of the progress being attained and challenges being faced at every level (Ikela, 2014). The literature reveals the need to investigate the existing coordinating systems at the district level and the national inter-ministerial committees must hasten to solve the problem (BIDPA, 2013).

The implications from these observations are that the coordination and monitoring of the SFP is weak. This inevitably compromises the monitoring of the programme at all levels. It was therefore suggested by most of the participants at the regional office that two extra posts be created at the Regional Office to reduce the burden and contribute to the effective implementation of the NSFP activities by coordinators. Regular visits to schools as well

as effective monitoring and evaluation systems were also suggested by participants as solutions to the problems.

5.6.10 Namibia SFP policy

The finding from the study demonstrate that the absence of the NSFP policy is a major concern. Interestingly, the literature also confirms the assessment from the findings with regards to the importance of the policy by observing currently there is only a manual in use but it has not been updated regularly for too long (Ellis, 2012). The researcher is of the opinion that the NSFP manual that is in use needs to be verified to avoid misunderstandings regarding the right use of the document. The study further revealed that the presence of the manual in schools is not an indication that its procedures are followed as it only provides guidelines which do not warrant any accountability. It is for that reason that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture is encouraged to develop an NSFP policy which could assist in articulating the roles and responsibilities of those involved or the proper implementation of the NSFP so that the implementers can execute the tasks efficiently and can also be held accountable. The researcher strongly support the proposals for the development of the NSFP policy in order to improve the implementation, design, monitoring and evaluation processes as well as the management and governance of the programme.

In attempting to respond to the research questions, it is important to contextualise the NSFP. The SFP received political support from government in Namibia and as such, a manual was developed to guide the activation and implementation of the feeding

programme. However, despite the positives, over the years it has been characterised by inadequate management, implementation capacity, and lack of proper monitoring system (WFP, 2014). This in itself led to inefficiency, a lack of commitment from management and community members in performing their role in the implementation of the programme as such, the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture recognised the quality of the NSFP had been compromised and militated against accountability to their stakeholders. The findings of the current study indicate that the School Feeding Manual in place only provides a guideline with regards to the implementation and does not compel implementers to account for their roles and responsibilities (C1HO & C3RO). It can also be noted that quite a stretch of time has elapsed without the feeding manual being updated (Ellis, 2012). The study also observes that there is a general lack of commitment in the execution of implementers' roles due to a lack of skills, as indicated in the findings (PS1, T2S2, C1HO, C4HO, T1S2). This is an indication that the implementers of the NSFP in the two schools are not aware of their roles and responsibilities. The findings of the study also demonstrate that the communities of the two schools in question are expected to play a role in the NSFP. However, participants felt that the NSFP programme in the two schools, relies heavily on community contributions without proper incentives - a situation which was felt to have contributed to the low level of participation. Furthermore, limited staff at regional offices (C3RO & C1HO) was cited to be a major concern by some participants who felt that such a scenario has militated against the effective implementation of the NSFP activities especially the monitoring as well as the coordination of activities in schools. The researcher concurs with these findings and therefore suggests that staffing norms be put in place in order to expand the staffing capacity and incorporate additional monitoring activities to match the demands that come

as a result of the expansion of the feeding programme. Additionally, the researcher has observed that the School Feeding Manual (n.d) in place does not clearly stipulate the specific details of the programme design and management, which raises questions as to whether managers of the SFP at the two schools are able to perform their roles and responsibilities regarding the programme. The aforementioned aspects can be well articulated in the NSFP policy, rather than a guideline. The researcher further argues that the School Feeding Manual has served its time and that a specific NSFP policy, which details accountability and management mechanisms to help ensure programme quality and efficiency should be developed. The reviewed literature is also in agreement with the findings - that a development of a NSFP policy is needed to fill the implementation gap.

5.6.11 Alleviation of short - term hunger

The current study also observes that the meals that are provided to poor learners and the OVC in schools through the NSFP have the potential to reduce poverty as they positively have an impact in alleviating short-term hunger in the learners. It was also suggested by the participants that the NSFP be maintained as it represents another way through which the government tries to alleviate poverty in Namibia. One participant observed that in order to strengthen the NSFP, the school at which they are posted has set up a vegetable garden as shown in Figure 10 (See chapter 4, Section 4.7). The produce from the garden is sold to low income groups and some given to poor learners to supplement their home diets. The researcher can also attest to the presence of the garden. However, the school garden looked abandoned during the researcher's visit to the school. The garden had only few withered plants and it was difficult for any observer to measure its productivity. On

the same issue, the researcher also noted that there was no garden or sanitation facility at the School 2. The need for supplementary feedings provided by the school through the garden project is in line with observations by Darko (2014) who submits that hunger among children diminishes their mental development by reducing their ability to think, react and participate in the learning process. Thus learners need proper feeding through a balanced diet in order to concentrate and perform well in school. The study further revealed that the NSFP has been used as a tool to mitigate short-and long-term hunger issues at school and by extension, at home. Briggs (2008) asserts that the provision of a meal or snack at the beginning of the day or mid-morning alleviates short-term hunger and has been linked to increased awareness, activity and learning. Tomlinson (2007) underscores this notion and argues that if NSFPs are implemented properly, they have the potential of impacting on what Tomlinson (2007) terms ‘short-term food security’. This equally refers to short-term hunger. In as much as the NSFP improves the learner enrolment and attendance rates, together with effective school garden initiatives, it has been felt to be a big relief to short term-hunger and poverty among communities.

5.6.12 Poverty reduction on long-term basis

The study indicated that as much as the SFP has the strength to reduce short-term hunger, it can in the long run, reduce poverty. This was envisioned to be achievable through education with the support of the NSFP and employment. The NSFP has been seen to have greatly contributed towards poverty reduction on a long-term basis. Other participants felt that engaging different stakeholders who could contribute in kind can sustain the programme for the development of tomorrow’s leaders. Consistent with these findings,

the NSFP Manual of the Ministry of Education, (n.d) indicates that the NSFP cannot function effectively in isolation and therefore should be implemented in collaboration with other relevant ministries to strengthen and achieve the school feeding programme's outcomes. It is believed by many of the participants that collaboration with other development partners leads to the sustainability of the programme. In the same vein, Tomlinson (2007) believes that a link between the school feeding exercise and food security can improve and enhance educational outcomes. Tomlinson (2007) further believes that the aforementioned improvements are linked to short and long term food security. The researcher concurs with the above findings in a sense that poverty reduction on a short-term and long-term basis is crucial for the attainment of SDGs 1, 2, 4 and 10.

5.6.13 Poverty reduction through child training

The study revealed that if learners were properly trained, they could in a long run improve their health, education, food security and at the same time reduce poverty in their currently poor and needy families. It was suggested that schools should have gardens to grow some vegetables to support and the suggested for schools to diversify the food menu for the NSFP. With Agriculture available as a subject in schools, learners should be trained to grow vegetables, crops and fruits, so that they are able to produce their own food in the future. As a result, this could results reduced levels of poverty because as learners would no longer solely rely on the government for food and other hand-outs.

These findings are confirmed by the Global Policy Brief, No. 3 of 2015 which submits that school gardens can contribute to the learners' understanding of farming and nutritional principles among learners. It further affirms that school gardens can supplement fresh produce to schools and can also encourage the development of home gardens. In the same manner, Tomlinson (2007) concurs with the finding that the child-to-child approach as a nutritional intervention should have a nutritional education aspect. Part of this reasoning is that children are the ones that teach their parents nutritional concepts, as a result an educational component delivered to children will also benefit the entire family. Implied here is that learners will learn through involvement in various agricultural and health related activities at school and will in turn share this knowledge with their families and their communities at large. This is also a viable option for addressing long term –poverty reduction.

5.6.14 Mitigating poverty through job creation

From the study, it has also merged that the NSFP can reduce poverty through job creation activities. Some people are given tenders for food processing and transportation. Additionally, participants suggested that the NSFP could also create jobs for cooks, only if they could be permanently employed with a proper incentive/remuneration rather than using them on a voluntary basis.

However, unlike in Namibia, the Botswana case study (2013) revealed that parents do not contribute to the NSFP on a voluntary basis but are employed and earn money for services such as cooking and hand stamping. It is evident from the findings of the study and

literature that the processing of food in the NSFP has, and can still have an important contribution to job creation which represents a direct positive impact on food security and the incidence of poverty.

5.6.15 Food security through decentralisation process and localised food production

What emerged from the study is that participants were largely concerned about the huge amount of money which is spent on the NSFP. They suggested the introduction of locally produced foodstuffs in the NSFP as a viable option to remedy this. The reasoning behind this is that school gardens will produce vegetables, crops and fruits. Local farmers will produce maize and groundnuts. This will go a long way in supporting the NSFP instead of the current situation in which the government is purchasing all the food items from other countries. By so doing costs relating to importation, transportation and levy charges could be drastically cut. In return, jobs could be created for local people and markets for the local farmers' produce would also be readily available. In the same regard, food security could also be realised in the Zambezi Region and across the country. Another suggestion from the participants was that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should assist schools with projects such as vegetable gardens and chicken projects which could help support the NSFP and diversify the diet. It was further suggested that the money from the projects should assist schools in buying buckets, plates, cooking utensils, benches and tables that are needed for the programme. Consistent with these suggestions are case studies from countries such as Chile, Brazil and Malawi for example, who use different mechanism for the decentralisation of school meals (Global Policy Brief. 3 of 2015). Equally, Botswana has also managed to locally procure food items and process them.

Preparation of meals is done by community members (BIDPA, 2013). Based on ideologies proposed by Devereux (2015), one objective of the NSFP as a food security instrument is the promotion of local food production. This programme can be used as an instrument for strengthening local farming in many countries because foodstuffs would be purchased from local farmers (Daitai et al. 2018).

The researcher believes that poverty reduction through the provision and promotion of locally produced food is a possible long term solution. As observed by the current study, there is no proper link between the NSFP at the two selected schools and local food production. If the NSFP is decentralised and includes in the future, goals for supporting policies which promote the serving of locally produced food, locals can be capacitated and poverty can be reduced. As a result, jobs are created within communities, ready markets are also created for farmers and the costs for transporting goods from other countries can be drastically reduced.

5.7 Unpacking of the conceptual framework

Hereunder (in Figure 1) is a schematic representation of the importance of the NSFP as earlier demonstrated in the conceptual framework, and in which the relationship between the NSFP management, indicators and potential outcomes are depicted.

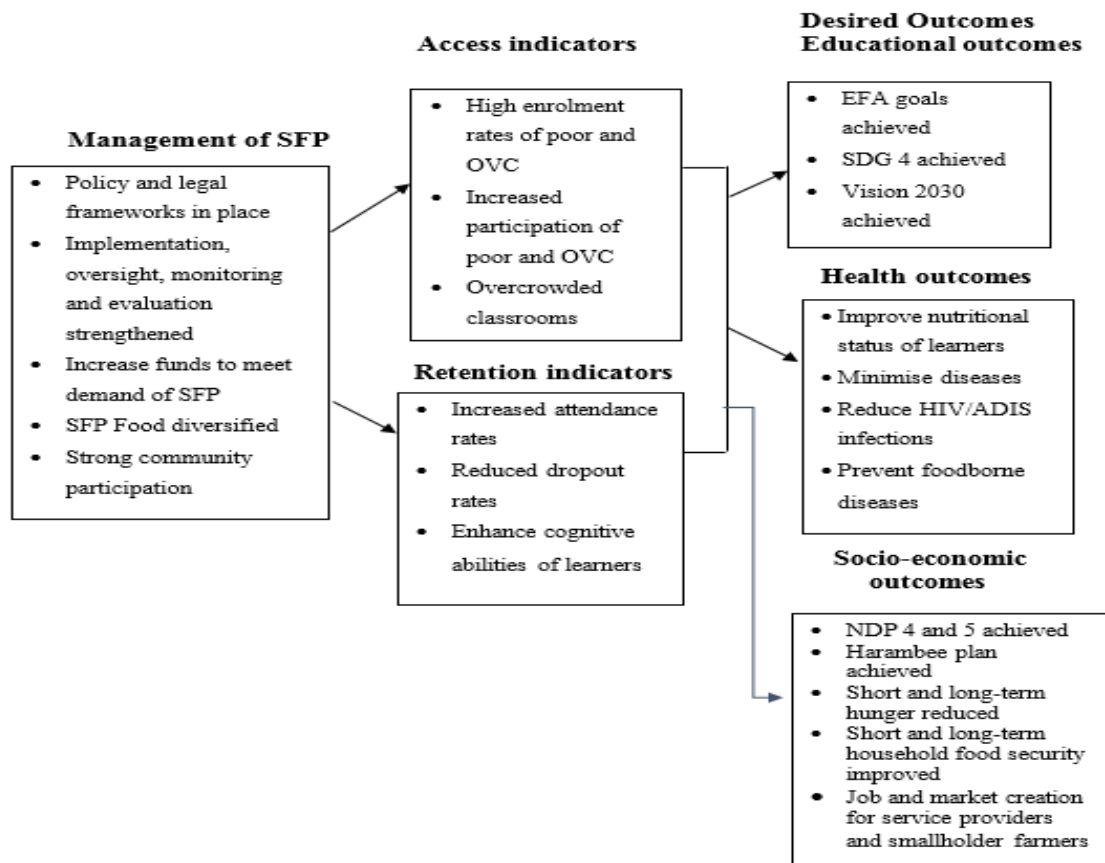


Figure 1: The conceptual framework demonstrating the relationship between the NSFP management, indicators and potential outcomes.

The researcher developed the above conceptual framework in Figure 1 as part of her original contribution to new knowledge. The literature reviewed as well as the research

findings of the study reveal that the NSFP is of paramount importance to children from poor backgrounds as well as the OVC.

5.8 Management of SFP

With regard to the management of the NSFP, the literature demonstrates that the quality of the NSFP has been compromised over the years due to inadequate management, implementation capacity and the lack of monitoring capacity as well as a lack of a proper monitoring system (WFP, 2014). Equally, the findings of the study reveals that the procurement and management of the programme seem not to conform to what is professionally accepted and expected (C3RO). The study also notes that the absence of the NSFP policy, together with the weak coordination and monitoring of activities and minimal community participation due to lack of proper compensation weakened the implementation of the programme. These blemishes are thus serious setbacks to the implementation and management of the programme.

5.9 Access and Retention indicators

The reviewed literature demonstrates that access, which includes enrolment of learners to school is advocated for by Tomlinson (2007) who submits that SFPs have the potential to increase the enrolment and retention of girls in school. Equally, the observations of the study, through enrolment trends and interviews and focus group discussions, indicate an increase in the number of learners due to the NSFP. However, the capability gap brought about by the minimum participation of the parents/community need to be addressed. The

results indicate that the NSFP positively influences retention and dropout rates (see Chapter 4, Section 4.4.3). However, even though it is evident that the SFP is the main factor that keeps the learners in schools, there are a number of other factors that negatively affect learner retention in schools. Some of the major factor observed include, among others, the transfer of learners to other schools, early pregnancies among girls, long illnesses and decisions to quit school and seek employment.

5.10 Educational outcomes

The research findings as well as the literature reviewed also indicates that the implementation of the NSFP has successfully addressed the enrolment of the poor children and OVC to school. However, the setback brought about by the minimal participation of cooks, the lack of food, and lack of proper monitoring of the programme have compromised learners' retention rates, the programme implementation and the attainment of desired educational goals.

5.11 Health outcomes

Findings of the study reveal that the NSFP has the potential to yield good results if good health practices are adhered to at the schools in question. However, the health of learners at both schools is compromised due to observed challenges which include among others, lack of proper infrastructure (kitchen, dining place and storage facilities), lack of spoons, negative practices by cooks and learners as well as the lack of food diversification. This is consistent with the views expressed by Davies and Dei (2014).

5.12 Socio-economic outcomes

According to reviewed literature, the NSFP has the potential of reducing poverty as it can be used as an instrument for strengthening local farming in many countries because foodstuffs would be purchased from local farmers (Daitai et al. 2018). In contrast, the study reveals that the SFP only creates jobs for service providers such as blenders and transporters whereas cooks are not properly compensated. Additionally, locally produced meals are not included in the NSFP as meals are not diversified. Moreover, the programme has the potential to reduce poverty through child training (Tomlinson, 2007). However, the study notes that no trace of poverty reduction through child training.

It is in light of these observations that the researcher suggests the management and implementation process represented above in Figure 1 for the implementers of the programme in the two schools under study. The researcher therefore suggests that the programme needs to be effectively managed in order to meet the desired goals and benefits. The researcher also suggests the need for a speedy development of an NSFP policy, with proper implementation, monitoring and evaluation of activities being strengthened and with increased funds availed to meet the demands of the programme. Food diversification as well as strong community participation need to be in place. In turn, the access to education and retention in school for the children from poor backgrounds and the OVC can then be realised. This intervention will finally assist implementers of the NSFP in achieving the set/desired educational, health and socio-economic goals/outcomes of the programme in the two selected schools under study from the Zambezi Region.

5.13 A critique of Maslow's theory

Maslow's theory indicates that when your first level of needs is satisfied, you move to the next until you reach the last level of self-actualisation. In the case of these two schools, when food is provided to those poor and OVCs they go to school. However, when school feeding meals are not provided to them through the NSFP, they fall back, they do not come to school, stay at home and therefore will not move to the next level as per Maslow's theory. Meanwhile, there are some learners at School 1 who come from better families and do not need NSFP aid because their parents can provide basic necessities (in this case) for them. When food is provided for them, the children from poor backgrounds as well as the OVC are motivated to continue learning - concentrate in school - and in future realise their ambition by progressing to higher levels of the hierarchy. The latter learners are also supported by Maslow's theory of human needs because they have already moved up in the hierarchy as compared to the poor and OVCs whose parents are unable to provide food to them when they go to school. Those two groups of learners are not at the same level in School 1. It is for this reason that learners from better families are mocking others.

Maslow's theory of human needs advocates upward movement and therefore supports those learners from better families. However, Maslow did not see this type of scenario that if food is provided to the poor and OVC by the third part, they stay in school because the hunger is sustained and there is a possibility for them to move up in the hierarchy. Whereas, once this food is not provided to the poor and OVC by the third party which in this case SFP service providers, those learners fall back and it becomes difficult for them to have those physical needs fulfilled and equally they will be unable to move to the next

level. Despite Maslow's strides regarding the human needs, his theory seems to only support those that are able to progress and can climb the hierarchy of needs. Equally, the theory is silent regarding those learners who are not provided with food and finally falls off the hierarchy. Therefore the researcher sees a gap in Maslow's theory of human needs that needs to be bridged in order to include those (in this case, learners) who fall back/ off the hierarchy of human needs.

5.14 Contribution to knowledge

The conceptual framework (Figure 1) which the researcher created, contributes to knowledge as it demonstrates the relationship between the NSFP management, indicators and potential outcomes. This can be realised, because if proper management of NSFP activities is adhered to, the retention of children from poor backgrounds and OVC can be fully realised in both schools. Equally, desired educational, health and socio-economic outcomes can be attained and finally improve the implementation, coordination and monitoring of the programme. The knowledge gap indicated by the researcher in Maslow's hierarchy theory also contributes to knowledge.

5.15 Summary

In this chapter the research findings were discussed in relation to the reviewed literature, comparing experiences in Namibia to those of other nations. The first section of this chapter highlights and discusses the general experiences of the implementers with the NSFP in two schools. The results of the study demonstrate that the introduction of the

NSFP in schools has been critical to the welfare of, and educational access by the vulnerable and poor learners, whose parents are unemployed and unable to provide them with decent meals. The NSFP has contributed by allowing such learners to be fed at school so that ensures that they have equal access to education. Another observation from the study was that, though the NSFP attracts learners to school, the participation of community members in the programme is very minimal and thus derailing the progress and implementation of the NSFP. The section further notes that only a few of the participants were properly trained and could effectively perform their mandated roles in the NSFP. On a sad note, most implementers of the programme were not trained at all and thus lacked the skills, to effectively execute their roles.

The second section presented the implementers' view on the NSFP's influence on education, health and other socio-economic consideration. With regards to educational benefits, the study observes that the NSFP had the potential to positively impact learner enrolments, attendance and retention in schools. However, the study observes some contradictions in views among the participants with regards to the learners' performance and progression in schools, in that some were in agreement that the programme had the potential to attract learners to school, while others disagreed - indicating that a thorough study was needed to confirm such opinions and claims.

From a health perspective, the study observes that currently the NSFP is characterised by negative health practices such as the uncleanliness of some cooks that prepared food for learners. Other related issue that equally affect the learners' health was the absence of a dining place, resulting in learners sitting on the wet ground during rainy seasons. With

regard to learners that are infected with HIV and AIDS, results from the study reveal that the NSFP has the benefit of boosting their immunity and encourage them to take their medication regularly. On the issue of the nutritional status of learners, the study recorded divergent views, as most of the participants believed that the provision of food to learners can improve their nutritional status thereby reducing levels of malnutrition.

However, some participants, including those who earlier agreed, also argued that more needs to be done with regard to diversification of the meals' menu in order to improve the nutritional status of needy learners. Temporary kitchen structures which the researcher observed at the schools are seen to be a health time bomb and pose a potential hazard to learners because of the threat of food contamination. Furthermore, the researcher observed during her visit to the schools that most learners did not wash their hands before eating, and ate porridge with dirty hands and that most of them sat on wet ground to eat while a few of them ate while standing. These circumstances could potentially fuel the spread of foodborne and waterborne diseases.

With regards to other socio-economic considerations, the study submits that the NSFP potentially provides a host of different ways to reduce poverty among learners, parents and the community at large. Among the immediate benefits of the NSFP are that it can address short-term hunger among learners, promote job creation opportunities for service providers, and equally has the potential of assisting parents to feed their children. In contrast, the study observed that the NSFP could only effectively reduce poverty through the decentralisation of the programme in order for it to benefit people at the grassroots and through learners' training and capitation.

The last section of the chapter presents a discussion of the challenges that the implementers face in executing their NSFP mandates and how these challenges can be mitigated in schools in the Zambezi region. The study revealed that the major challenges faced include, inadequate kitchen utensils, spoons and plates for learners, the lack of proper infrastructure like kitchens, storerooms and dining rooms, unacceptable modes of compensation for cooks and very minimal voluntary community participation. Other challenges have also been observed to result from the lack of training and/or limited training, that the NSFP disrupts the teaching and learning processes, parents need taxi fares to attend to the NSFP services, the lack of monitoring of schools, the NSFP is burdensome to implement for some staff members and that the OVC and poor learners are often teased by some learners at meal times.

The absence of a NSFP policy was also considered a hindrance to the effective implementation of the programme as well as that sometimes orders for meals are not timeously delivered, maize blend consignments are also not delivered on time, the bureaucratic procurement systems delay service delivery, the decentralisation of the programme is still a challenge, the meals lack standard quality and variety, the school management is considered often uncooperative to service providers and that bad roads delay deliveries by service providers, are some of the major challenges further highlighted by the participants.

The chapter also provided suggestions of how these challenges can be mitigated in the schools in the Zambezi Region. In terms of utensils, infrastructure, food quality and provision of firewood, the study suggests that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture

should seek funding to procure these. On the challenge of limited community/parental participation, it was strongly suggested that there should be consideration by the same ministry not to overburden parents with roles and instead introduce the payment of acceptable remuneration to encourage parents to take up the roles.

Regarding training for all implementers of the NSFP, ongoing training was considered to have the potential to enhance the effective implementation of the programme. With regards to the problems culminating from the mockery and humiliation of poor children and the OVCs, teachers are encouraged to discourage learners who mock others from going to the eating areas. The teachers, it has been suggested, should also counsel the unruly learners so that they also appreciate the situation of the poor and the OVC which is different from theirs. Furthermore, the teachers should also encourage affected learners to continue having their porridge and not feel ashamed or humiliated.

With regards to the NSFP policy, it was strongly recommended that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should develop a NSFP policy which could assist in articulating the roles and responsibilities of those involved or the proper implementation of the NSFP and to make the mandate for its execution to be possible to hold people accountable over. On the issue of late deliveries by service providers, it was suggested that with the support of the NSFP policy, which is yet to be developed, it could become possible to hold service providers accountable for late deliveries, spoilage or missing bags from consignment.

With regards to the NSFP's potential to alleviate short-term hunger, it has been observed that the NSFP has been a big relief to short term-hunger and poverty among communities. It was observed and concluded that poverty reduction on a long-term basis cannot be achieved through the NSFP alone, with suggestions that the MOEAC needs to work in collaboration with other relevant ministries to strengthen and achieve the school feeding outcomes and to ensure the sustainability of the programme.

It was also suggested by the participants that poverty reduction on a long –term basis could also be achieved through child training, job creation and food security which can become possible through the decentralisation process and the utilisation and promotion of localised food production processes. The next chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study. These are made in order to potentially facilitate the improvement of the current situation and practices regarding the provision of the NSFP in the two selected schools and other schools which implement the programme.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The NSFP is one of the strategies introduced by the Namibian government to address the problem of inequality and other social injustices for poverty stricken children as well as OVC to access educational opportunities (WFP, 2014). The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the main findings drawn from the important research themes which were discussed in the previous chapter. The first section of this chapter presents the summary of findings and conclusions.

This section is divided into three parts. The first part summarises the experiences of the implementers of the NSFP in the participating schools as observed during the research. The second part is a presentation of the summary and conclusions regarding the observed influences of the NSFP on education, health and other socio-economic considerations. The third part of this discussion summarises and draws conclusions from the collected research data pertaining to the challenges that the implementers face in the implementation of the NSFP and the possible ways to mitigate these challenges. The last three sections of chapter discuss the recommendations emanating from the study, the contributions that the study has made and finally the suggestion for possible directions for further/future study.

6.2 Summary of findings and conclusions

This section presents the summary of findings and conclusions drawn from these findings drawn from an exploration of the experiences of the implementers of the NSFP in the participating schools.

6.2.1 The experiences of the implementers of the NSFP in the participating schools

The general experiences of implementers of the NSFP in the participating schools in the Zambezi Region demonstrates that the introduction of the NSFP in schools was of invaluable importance to the vulnerable and poor learners. The results illustrate the importance of the NSFP in that it has assisted the needy learners and/or learners whose parents are unemployed and struggle to feed them. The NSFP has ensured that these groups of children are able to at least get something to consume (at least one meal per day) in order for them to stay in school and have access to an education.

Despite the positive experiences shared by participants regarding the programme, some of the participants revealed that the procurement and the management of the programme was not to be in line with what was expected. Some of participants further revealed that though the programme seems to be helpful to learners, the limited support from community members hampers the progress in implementing the programme.

It had also been observed that some of the implementers are ignorant of their anticipated roles in the NSFP. Adequate training is thus required to conscientise them regards their roles in order to improve the monitoring and evaluation of the NSFP and improve the way it is managed. The management of procurement processes, supervising and monitoring how cooks execute their tasks and control learners during meal time need to be improved in order to facilitate the smooth function if the programme. Others indicated that their role in the programme was that of the company holder who transports food consignments from warehouses to school feeding schools, which facilitated the implementation of the programme, monitoring and evaluation and management of the programme.

It would also appear that some of the implementers received training on their anticipated roles while others did not. Those that received training were confident about being able to execute their roles and could articulate them while those that did not receive any form of training called on the need for training at all levels of NSFP decision making. Based on the above, it can be concluded the NSFP is vital and training of the implementers is desired.

6.3 The influence of NSFP on education, health and socio-economic considerations

This section presents a summary of findings and conclusions regarding the influences of the NSFP on identified educational factors, the health of learners and socio-economic considerations.

6.3.1 Educational factors

The research established that the NSFP is of paramount importance as it addresses the social and physiological needs of the poor and vulnerable learners by providing them with at least one guaranteed meal a day. In this regard, it acts as a safety net which also attracts them to enrol at and attend school with the confidence that they will get free meals and equally also have access to education. The NSFP is instrumental in positively impacting on the attendance rates of learners at school. It seems that the school feeding meals are an incentive for school attendance. It should be borne in mind that some of the difficulties associated with the provision of meals at schools that learners face, which also affect their access to school include the absence of cooks for meals provided at school and late deliveries of food consignments by service providers. It appears that the NSFP has also had an influence on the performance and progression of learners. It emerged that the learner performances at the schools and the output of the work of learners have remarkably improved since the introduction of the NSFP. The NSFP encourages learners to learn, the food they receive also gives them energy to sit, listen and participate in all lesson activities. This was not the case before the advent of the NSFP.

6.3.2 The health of learners

The practices that negatively affect the health of learners in relation to NSFP observed by the research are among others, the uncleanliness of some cooks who prepared food for learners. Some cooks were observed to be coming with their dirty babies - some with running noses. The lack of proper infrastructure poses a serious health hazard. For

instance, instead of learners only benefiting from the NSFP, they sit on wet ground due to the lack of benches or chairs. This can easily facilitate the spread of water borne diseases like worms, which affect skin epidemics. Furthermore, participants expressed concern about the lack of kitchen utensils to an extent that cooks had to bring kitchen utensils from their homes.

Second, the question of whether or not the NSFP has had an impact on the learners' nutrition produced divergent views from the participants. Participants believed that the provision of food to learners can improve their nutritional status thereby reducing the levels of malnutrition. Furthermore, the majority of the participants also believed that the school feeding meal is enriched with protein, sugar and salt which they felt were essential to the children's livelihoods. These participants further explained that learners from vulnerable backgrounds and children from poor families, who were frequently sick or weak or sleepy, had remarkably improved health wise since the introduction of the NSFP meals. The NSFP's influence learners that are infected by HIV and AIDS had been regarded as positive because, results from the study reveal that the NSFP meals boost their immune system. Participants have also come to realise that the porridge which learners get at school boosts their regular intake of their medicine as they cannot take their medication on an empty stomach. It appears from the study that those learners who were infected by HIV and AIDS were of ill health, but due to the NSFP their health has been observed to have had remarkably improved.

6.3.3 Socio-economic considerations

The NSFP has been argued to contribute to the reduction of poverty because the advent of the school meals has assisted in reducing the short-term hunger and poverty among some poor and vulnerable learners. Based on the results of the study, the conclusions that can be made is that most learners were in need of NSFP.

6.4 Challenges implementers face regarding the NSFP

The implementers of the NSFP submitted that they experience a number of challenges in the implementation of .the programme. The following are some of major ones submitted by participants:

- Some parents being uncooperative,
- Central and regional managers do not monitor schools,
- Lack of knowledge and limited skills regarding their roles,
- Mode of compensation not acceptable by parent/cooks,
- NSFP affect teaching and learning process,
- Parents unable to provide firewood for fuel,
- Insufficient spoons, pots, plates, stoves, uniforms for cooks and other kitchen utensils,
- Maize bags not well kept in secured storage facilities, they were kept in classrooms on the floor,
- Parental/community participation very minimal,
- Parents walk long distances or some need taxi fares to attend NSFP services,

- Lack of chairs for learners,
- The absence of an NSFP policy,
- Delays in the delivery of services by service providers due to orders that are late owing to the unavailability of funds, bad roads during floods and rainy seasons,
- Spoilage of the maize blend because it could not be delivered timely,
- The lack of diversification of foodstuff and meals lack quality,
- Uncooperative school managers,
- Poor coordination, monitoring and management of activities,
- Understaffing at regional offices,
- Teachers and community members overburdened by their roles,
- Parents/community members unable to attend to their home chores due to services rendered at schools,
- Theft was also a big problem in the successful implementation of the NSFP,
- Also the NSFP causes overcrowded classrooms,
- Learners from affluent families tease or mock the OVC and those from poor backgrounds for eating the porridge. Participants perceived this to be a humiliation suffered by OVC and other vulnerable children.

The challenges enumerated above largely relate to a lack of proper management and poor coordination of the programme activities, lack of parental commitment, lack of skills, poor food preparation and diversification, poor service delivery and lack of storage and physical facilities like kitchen and dining room.

6.5 Ways to mitigate the challenges faced by implementers of NSFP

The following were the main suggestions proffered by the participants that could mitigate challenges faced by implementers

- **Utensils:** The NSFP enjoys government support. Therefore a need exists for the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture to provide kitchen utensils. The schools need more spoons, measuring jars, Kango plates for learners, gas/electric/solar stoves, cooking pots and uniforms for cooks.
- **Infrastructure:** The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should build proper structures for the NSFP to run smoothly. There is need for well ventilated and secured storage facilities to avoid spoilage and burglary, a dining hall for learners and a kitchen where cooks can prepare and serve food to avoid food contaminations and delays during cooking
- **Provision of firewood:** The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, should rather provide gas or electric stoves, especially at schools with electricity. The argument here was that firewood causes air pollution and deforestation. The search and collection of firewood is also considered labour intensive. It was further argued that it is difficult to use firewood as a source of energy for cooking during the rainy season especially considering the poor infrastructure at the schools.
- **Food quality:** I was observed that there is need for food diversification because the food caters for learners' education and health needs. Learners should also be fed other forms of food different from the porridge which is currently their daily meal.

- Community or parental participation: It was suggested that, because parents must own the NSFP, their commitment and participation should improve. However, was recommended that the parents should not be overburdened with activities and that the NFPS implementers should also consider providing them with proper incentives, especially the cooks.
- Training implementers of the NSFP: All implementers of the SFP at different levels, from Head Office, Regional Office, Circuit Offices to schools and communities, need continuous training on how to handle the programme,
- The problem of the poor and OVCs being mocked: Teachers responsible for the NSFP were encouraged not allow learners who mock the poor children and OVCs near the site where porridge is served. It was further suggested that those learners that were abusing others be sent for counselling to help them understand the situation of the poor and vulnerable learners,
- Late deliveries by service providers: The late deliveries of food stuffs negatively affected the attendance, retention and performance of learners. Additionally, some consignments of the NSFP bags went to waste due to delays and the lack of proper storage. It was suggested that the service providers should be held accountable for late deliveries and spoilage of foodstuffs.
- Coordination and monitoring activities: The implementation of the NSFP must be properly tracked and guided through regular and well-targeted reporting of progress being attained at every level and coordinators should also visit schools regularly.
- Namibia NSFP policy: The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture is encouraged to develop a NSFP policy which might assist in articulating the roles and responsibilities

of those involved or guide the proper implementation of the NSFP so that the executors can be held accountable for the manners in which they implement the NSFP.

- Alleviation of short - term hunger: The produce from the garden should be sold to low income groups and some given to poor learners to supplement their home diets.
- Poverty reduction on a long-term basis: It was suggested that schools should have gardens to grow some vegetables to support and diversify the meals menu for the NSFP. With Agriculture as a subject in schools, learners should be trained to grow vegetables, crops and fruits, so that they are able to produce their own food in the future. As a result, poverty could be reduced as they will not solely rely on the government for food and other hand-outs.
- Mitigating poverty through job creation: It was suggested that the NSFP should also create jobs for cooks - only if they could be permanently employed with a proper income rather than using them on a voluntary basis.
- Food security through decentralisation process and localised food production: There is need for the incorporation/adoption of locally produced foodstuffs as a viable option to remedy the problems of delayed deliveries as well as menu diversification. The reasoning behind this is that school gardens will produce vegetables, crops and fruits, while the local farmers will produce maize and groundnuts – and this will result in a more broadly diversified menu for the NSFP.

The above recommendations suggest the need for infrastructure, the need for energy and facilities, the improvement in the food quality, the need for a NSFP policy as well as socio-economic needs and proper management of the NSFP.

6.6 Recommendations

Based on the results of the study the recommendations expressed in sections 6.6.1 – 6.6.4. The recommendations are based on the Capability Theory because they promote training and capacity development. The Maslow's Hierarchy of human needs is demonstrated through the recommendations that illustrate the physiological needs and equipment that are needed for children to attend school and have adequate SFP.

6.6.1 Recommendation to the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture

The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture is strongly encourage to urgently develop a Namibian School Feeding Policy. The policy will then be used to address the following:

- Help strengthen the NSFP's potential for sustainability and quality implementation.
- Develop an implementation plan for the programme.
- Develop a mechanism for monitoring policy implementation to ensure a link between policy and practice.
- Ensure guidance for the improved health and nutrition of learners through the provision of a fortified and diversified nutritious diet which contributes to improved school attendance, participation and progression into other grades.
- Ensure the sustainability of the programme by providing linkages between the NSFP and locally produced foods and supporting not only the poor and vulnerable children but the community at large. It is expected that the policy should mention and incorporate various beneficiaries including small holder farmers and link them to the

NSFP thereby creating jobs and developing markets for their produce to improve livelihoods.

Other recommendations to the MoEAC are the following: *Firstly*, the MoEAC needs to provide all implementers of the NSFP (such as principals, teachers, coordinators, school board members, learners, cooks, service providers and community members) with effective and sufficient training that will empower them to effectively carry out their roles and responsibility as well as to reduce hunger and diseases. *Secondly*, the school curriculum must also be revamped to provide Agricultural content that can assist in training learners on how to grow vegetables, fruits and crops for sustainable development.

Thirdly, the learners and schools need to be provided with sufficient bowls, spoons, plates, pots, utensils, electric stoves and adequate infrastructure such as proper kitchens, secured storage rooms and dining rooms must be standardised to become part of the school design plan. *Fourthly*, cooks must be provided with uniforms and be compensated in monetary terms for services delivered. *Fifthly*, the ministry needs to provide sufficient and stable financial resources in good time in order to avoid late deliveries by service providers. Adequate human resources are also needed in order to operationalise the programme effectively as well as to avoid the lack of monitoring and evaluation that is currently blamed on understaffing. *Moreover*, the coordination of the NSFP at regional, central and at inter-ministerial level needs to be strengthened.

The structure shown in Figure 11 below is suggested in this regard.

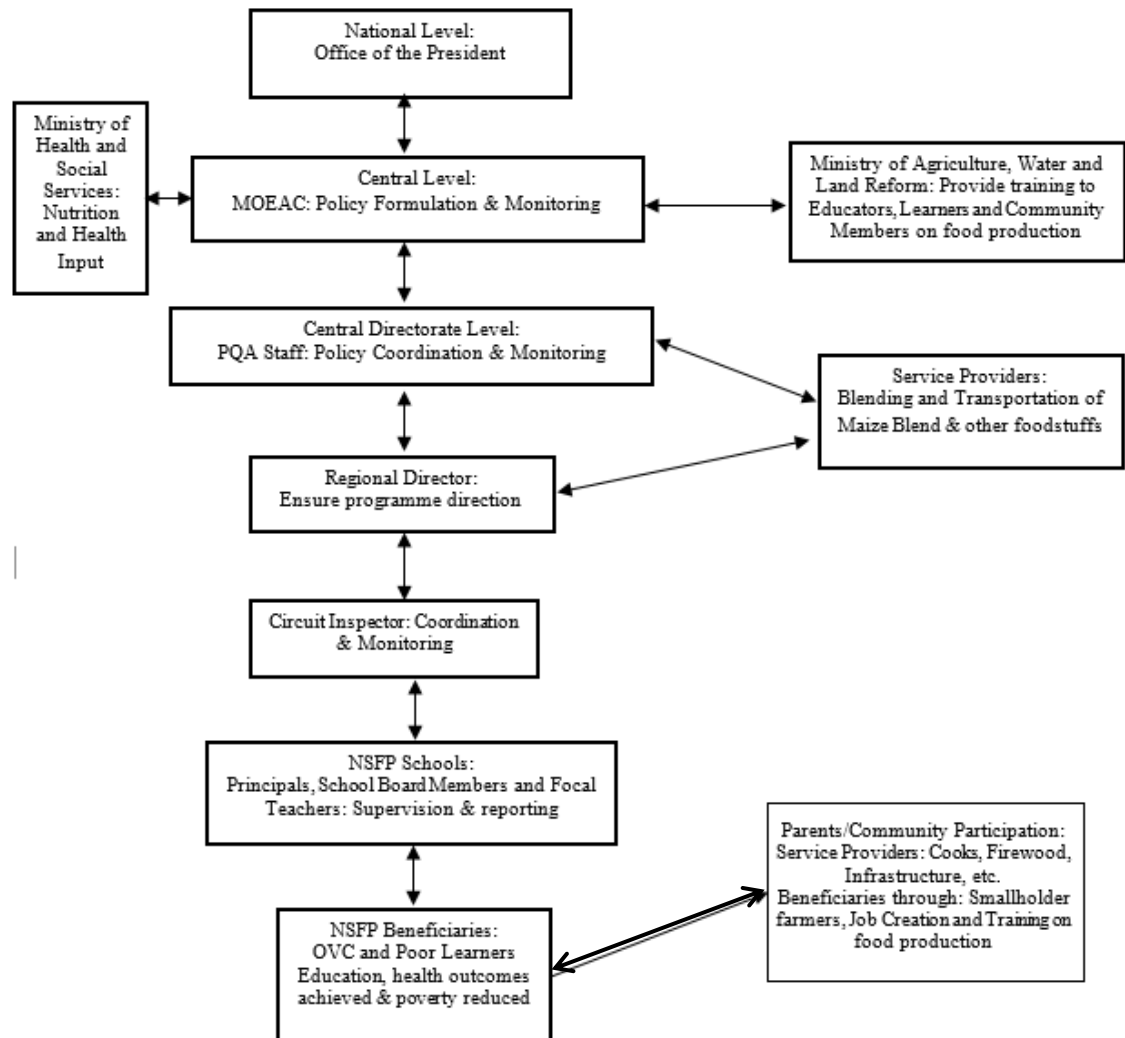


Figure 11: School Feeding Administration Structure “Khama’s Model” of NSFP Execution in Zambezi Region

At the central level, the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture must formulate policies, monitor and oversee the implementation of the feeding programme. Equally, the Ministry of Health and Social Services must provide nutritional and health inputs to the programme. Still at the central level, the Directorate of Programmes and Quality Assurance (PQA)

must coordinate policy implementation and monitoring of activities. The PQA Directorate must also facilitate service providers' tendering and procurement processes.

At the regional level, the Regional Director must give directives to guide the implementation and coordination of programme activities including services rendered by service providers. Furthermore, the Regional Inspectors must coordinate and monitor the implementation processes in schools. The school principals, school board members and focal teachers must supervise, monitor and provide the NSFP with reports for regional offices. In this way, the poor and OVC learners' health and educational needs would be met. The Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform must provide training to educators, learners and community members on food production. The latter Ministry can also train both educators and communities on food production, whereas educators equally need to train learners. The school communities can equally benefit from the NSFP. For instance, they can get jobs through the provision of services and foodstuffs to schools in the NSFP. They can provide locally produced foodstuffs and well established markets through the same programme.

6.6.2 Recommendations to the Ministry of Health and Social Services

Primary Health Care supervisors, through the Ministry of Health and Social Services in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, should conduct regular monitoring visits to assess and provide technical assistance on the NSFP. They should also ensure that good health practices are upheld and meals meet the basic nutritional needs of the learners. It is important that regular inspection be done on a quarterly basis

to assess issues related to health practices like hand washing, proper uniform for cooks, clean environments in kitchens, storerooms, toilets and water points as well as treating parasites and deworming.

6.6.3 Recommendations to the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform

- The Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform should work closely with the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture to provide technical assistance and to ensure that school gardens are established, while appropriate food production methods are taught to learners and teachers.
- The ministry should provide farmers with efficient and effective training in order to support the efforts of linking the NSFP to small-holder farmers and to ensure a regular supply of food for the programme.
- They should provide needed infrastructures such as water points and sanitation facilities in schools.

6.6.4 Recommendations to the two schools

- Teachers should intensify the monitoring of the learners' hygiene by ensuring that they wash their hands before receiving their food at school.
- The school management, school board members and teachers responsible for the NSFP should guide cooks on how to cook and how to handle food and the utensils they use.

- Training regarding food production should be initiated among teachers and learners.

6.7 Contributions of the study

The contribution of this study is focussed on the uniqueness of the study. The study on the NSFP in the Zambezi Region of Namibia is the first of its kind. The uniqueness of the study demonstrates that the type of food served through the NSFP, for instance, the provision of porridge to learners in two schools is condemned by some participants as inadequate in terms of its nutritional input in the learners' diets as it is perceived to be lacking variety in menu.

Second, there are aspects of the data which evince new concerns with regards to the NFSP that seem to not have been observed/addressed by the previous researchers. For, example, the finding that shows that the poor children and OVC are usually mocked by learners from better families when they eat porridge results in the benefiting learners being discouraged from partaking it. The data also illustrates how some teachers, coordinators, and community members in the current study were overwhelmed by their roles, a finding that is new when compared to the previous studies reviewed, which do not address this concern. The other original contribution is the finding that teachers fill the service the gap brought about by the absence of cooks and the challenge that HGFSP is not yet part of NSFP.

The recommendations of the study is another contribution to the study. In particular the researcher developed a School Feeding Administration Structural model which indicates how the NSFP could be executed in the two selected schools in the Zambezi Region of Namibia.

6.8 How the research questions were addressed during the study

The dissertation has addressed the research questions shown in chapter 1, sub-section 1.6. For example, Chapter 4, Sub-sections 4.3.1- 4.3.2 discuss the experiences of the implementers of the school feeding programme in the two selected schools in the Zambezi Region of Namibia. Chapter 4 Sub-sections 4.4.1- 4.5.3 capture the views of the implementers regarding the influence of NSFP on selected indicators such as education (enrolment, attendance, retention rate, and dropout rate, performance and progression of learners into higher grades) health of learners and socio-economic considerations (poverty reduction, and psychological factors of learners in two schools). Lastly, Chapter 4, Sub-section 4.5 and Sub-section 4.6 respectively illustrate the challenges that implementers face regarding the NSFP and how these challenges could be mitigated in the two schools.

6.9 Recommendations for further/future studies

The current study believes that the following areas need to be further explored by future researches:

- The researcher explored the implementers' experiences regarding the NSFP at two schools in Zambezi Region. A similar case study should be conducted on a larger scale, perhaps nationally.
- There are not enough studies done on the monitoring and evaluation of the NSFP. It is therefore recommended that further studies be directed to this area to help the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture and other stakeholders to have a complete overview of the progress of the programme.
- The coordination of the NSFP is weak at the moment. There is need to investigate the adequacy of existing coordinating mechanism at regional and national inter-ministerial level committees as they are essential in the implementation of the NSFP.

6.10 Summary

This chapter has presented the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations. The first section of this chapter presents a general summary of findings and conclusions. This section is subdivided into several parts. The first part discusses the experiences of the implementers of the NSFP in the participating schools followed by the summary and conclusion relating to the participants' views on the influence of the NSFP on education, health and socio-economic considerations. The discussion following that is of the

challenges that implementers face in the operationalisation of the NSFP and suggested ways to mitigate these challenges. The last three sections of the chapter focus on the recommendations, contributions of the study and direction for further studies. The recommendations of the study include those directed to the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, to the Ministry of Health and Social Services, to the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform as well as to the two selected schools regarding ways of ensuring the efficient, effective implementation and improvement of the NSFP. The chapter also highlights the contributions that are unique to the current study: the new findings observed from collected data, the development of a School Feeding Administration Structural model and how the research questions were addressed. The section focusing on recommendations for further studies suggests that similar studies as the current one should be conducted on a larger scale. Other future studies could focus on the monitoring and evaluation of the NSFP while others could explore the existing coordinating mechanisms of the regional and national inter-ministerial committees.

REFERENCES

- Afoakwa, E. O. (2012). *Home Grown SFP- The Ghanaian model as Icon for Africa: University of Ghana, Accra, pp. 1-5.* Retrieved from <http://www.gcnf.org/library/Ghana-School-Feeding-Programme-Overview-and-Progress.pdf> [Accessed 2017 Jun 11].
- Aigbedion, A., Chamorro, P. Duggan R., & Fujiwara. (2012). *Osun State Home Grown School Feeding Programme: Improving Sustainability through increased Local Farmer Participation.* CA: Berkeley.
- Alase, A. (2017). The Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA): A guide to a good qualitative research approach. *International Journal of Education & Literacy Studies*, 5 2, 10-11.
- Alcock, P. (2012). *Poverty and social exclusion.* Retrieved from <http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/alcock4e/about/c26.pdf> [Accessed 2017 Oct 14]
- Alhassan, A., and AlhassanF. (2014). *An assessment of the operational challenges of the Ghana school feeding programme. The International Journal of Business and Management*, 2 (8), 154-173.
- Alkire, S. (2002). *Valuing freedoms: Sen's Capability approach and Poverty Reduction.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Arsenault, J. E., Mora-Plazas, M., Forero, Y., Lopez-Arana, S. Martin, C, Baylin., A., & Villamor, E. (2009). Morbidity in children from Bogota, Colombia. *The Journal of Nutrition*, 139, 1744-1750.

- Asiago, D., & Akello, C. A. (2014). Challenges facing head teachers' roles in the implementation of the SFP in public primary schools, in Nairobi Province, Kenya. *International Journal of Educational Research* 2 (6). Retrieved from <http://www.ijer.net> [Accessed 2017 Oct 14]
- Atta, G. P., & Manu, J. (2015). Ghana School Feeding Programme: A retrospective review. *International Journal of Innovative research and Development*. Vol 4, (8). Retrieved from <http://www.ijird.com> [Accessed 2017 Jun 14]
- Augustyn, D. (2014). Research Matters, Du Plooy-Cilliers, F., Davis, C. & Bezuidenhout: book review. *The Retail and Marketing Review*, 10 (2), 57. Davis, C & Bezuidenhout. (Eds) *Research Matters*.147-172.
- Babbie, E., & Mouton, J. (2005). *The practice of social research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bailey, K. D. (1982). *Methods of social research* (2nd ed.). New York: Macmillan.
- Baker, I. A., Elwood, P. C., Hughes, J., Jones, M., & Sweetnam, P. M. (1978). *School milk and growth in primary school children*. *The Lancet*, September, 575.
- Bell, J. (1999). *Doing your research project: A guide for first-time researchers in education and social science* (3rd ed.). Buckingham: Open University.
- Botswana Institute of Development Policy Analysis. (2013). *Botswana National Primary School Feeding Programme: A case study*. Republic of Botswana.
- Bradshaw, T. K. (2006). *Theories of poverty and anti- poverty programs in community development*: RPRC Working Paper No. 06-05.
- Brandon, R., & Smith, J. E. (2013). *The impact of school feeding programs in Senegal*. Retrieved from [https://www.brookings.edu/blog/education-plus-](https://www.brookings.edu/blog/education-plus/)

<development/2013/05/15/the-impact-of-school-feeding-programs-in-senegal/>

[Accessed 2017 Jul 20]

- Briggs, B. (2008). *School Feeding Programmes: Summary of best literature and best practices*. Village Hope Technical Report 6,. P. 1-3.
- Buhl, A. (2010). *Meeting nutritional needs through School Feeding. A snapshot of four African nations*. Global Child Nutrition Foundation: University of Washington. School of Public Health 2010, 1-79.
- Bundy, D., Burbans, C., Grosh, M., Geli, A., Jukes, M., & Drake, L. (2009). *Rethinking school feeding: Social safety nets and child development*. World Food Programme/World Bank, .pp.7-30
- Cantrell, D. C. (1993). *Alternative paradigms in environmental education research. The interpretive perspective*. In Mrazek. R. (Ed), *Alternative paradigms in environmental education research* (p. 81 – 108). Troy, Ohio: WAAEC.
- Carvalho, F. D., Dom, B. S., Fiadzigbey, M. M., Filer, S. K., Kpekena, C. L., Lombandi, D., & Tanabe, Y. (2011). *Ghana SFP: Re-tooling for a sustainable future*: Retrieved from <http://www.sign-schoolfeeding.org/dynamic/downloads> [Accessed 2017 Jul 21]
- Cheung, M., & Berlin, M. P. (2014). *The Impact of a Food for Education Program on Schooling in Cambodia: Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies, Vol.2* (1). DOI: 10.1002/app5 [Accessed 2017 Aug 10]
- Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. CA, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Cloete, L. (2016, May 13). School food left to rot, burnt in \\Karas. *The Namibian*, pp. 1-2.

- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2000). *Research methods in Education* (5th ed.).
- Constitution of the Republic of Namibia. (1990). Windhoek: Ministry of Justice.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative quantitative, and mixed methods approach*. Third edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Creswell, J. W. (2015). *Educational research. planning, conducting and evaluating: Quantitative and qualitative research*. (4th ed). Pearson Education, Inc.
- Daitai, E., Mukwevho, M. H., and Tshifhumulo, R. (2018). Assessing the potential contribution of feeding Schemes at rural schools in South Africa. *Journal of Gender, Information and Development in Africa (JGDA)*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31920/2050-4284/2018/s1n1a13> [Accessed 2020 Jul13]
- Darko, B. (2014). *School leadership views on the impact of the national SFP: A case study of Ghana*.
- Davies, K. (2014). *Improving links between smallholder farmers and SFPs*. Retrieved from <http://www.wfp.org/content/home-grown-school-feeding> [Accessed 2017 Sep 12].
- Davies, S. (2005). *School meals, market and quality*. Retrieved from <http://www.unison.org.uk/acrobat/B1985.pdf> [Accessed 2017, Feb. 02].
- De Vos, A. S., Strydom, H., Founche, C. E., & Delpont, C. S. L. (2009). *Research at grassroot for the social sciences and human service professions*. (3rd ed.). Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

- Dei, F.A. (2014). *An evaluation of the School Feeding Programme: A case study of Magog Primary School* (Master's thesis, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa).
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.) *Handbook for qualitative research* (2nd ed.). London: SAGE.
- Department of Education. (2011). Draft \policy on implementation of School Nutrition Programme. Available at: [http://www.kzneducation.gov.za/Portals/0/Circuiars/General/2012/NSNP%20Draft%20Policy20111122\(1\).pdf](http://www.kzneducation.gov.za/Portals/0/Circuiars/General/2012/NSNP%20Draft%20Policy20111122(1).pdf). [Accessed on 16 Apr 2018].
- Devereux, S. (2015). *Social protection for enhanced food security in sub – Saharan Africa*. Food Policy.
- Du Plooy- Cilliers., & Cronje. (2014). Quantitative data collection. In Du Plooy-Cilliers, Education Act, 16. (2001). Windhoek: Government Gazette of the Republic of Namibia.
- Ellis, J. (2012). *The Namibian SFP: A case study*: Windhoek: Government Gazette of the Republic of Namibia.
- Finnish National Board of Education (FNBE). (2008). *School meals in Finland, Investment in learning*: Retrieved from <http://www.oph.fi/download/47657-school-meals-in-finland.pdf> [Accessed 2017 Oct 15].
- Flick, U.2000. Mapping the Field. *The SAGE handbook of qualitative data analysis*. London: SAGE.
- Gall, M. D., Gall, J. P., & Borg, W. R. (2003). *Educational research: An introduction*. USA: Library of Congress Publication.

- Gay, L. R., Mills, G. E., & Airasian, P. W. (2009). *Educational research. competencies for analysis and applications* (9th ed.). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education.
- Gbrich C. (2007). *Qualitative data analysis: An introduction* (1st ed). London: Sage Publications,
- Global Panel on Agriculture and Food system for Nutrition. (2015). Eldis. Retrieved from <http://www.eldis.org/organisation/A69774> [Accessed 2017 Oct 17].
- Gunderson, G.W. USDA. (2013). *The National school lunch programme:; Background and development.* Retrieved from <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdenutritran/download/pdf/SEC26.pdf>. [Accessed 2017 Oct 17].
- Hamupembe, E. N. (2016). Investigating the administration of the School Feeding Programme: A case study of two primary schools in Windhoek, Namibia. (Master's Thesis, University of Namibia, Windhoek, Namibia).
- Harper, C., Mitchell, C., & Wood, L. (2008). *The provision of school food in 18 countries: School food in 18 countries.* Retrieved from <http://www.childrenfoodtrust.org>. [Accessed 2017 Oct 17].
- Hendrix, C. (2012). *Food insecurity and conflict dynamics: Causal linkage and complex feedbacks.* Retrieved from <http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs- high-level-forum/documents/FI-ConflictDynamics-Hendrix-Cullen.pdf> [Accessed 2017 Oct 17].
- Henning, E. Van Rensburg, W., & Smit, B. (2004). *Finding your way in qualitative research.* Pretoria: Van Schaik.

- Hochfeld, T., Graham, L., Patel, L., Moodley, J., and Ross, E. (2016). Does school breakfast make a difference? An evaluation of an in-school breakfast programme in South Africa. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2016.07.0050738-0593/> © 2016 Elsevier Ltd. [Accessed 2019 Oct 17].
- Hornby, A. S. (2000). *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of current English* (6th ed.): Oxford University Press.
- Ikela, S. (2014, March 18). *SFP needs monitoring, says the Permanent Secretary. The Namibian Sun*, pp.1-2.
- Ishak, V. (2004). *A study of post corporal punishment disciplinary strategies used by educators in an ex-HOD school, Med.* (Master's Thesis, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa).
- Joubert, R. (2011). *School governance in South Africa: Linking policy and praxis*. Pretoria: University of Pretoria.
- Jukes, M., Simmons, S., and Bundy, D. (2008). *Education and vulnerability: the role of schools in protecting young women and girls from HIV in Southern Africa*. Copyright © Lippincott Williams and Wilkins. Vol. 22 (4), 43-53. Retrieved from <http://www.hgsf-global.org/en/bank/downloads/doc-details/212-education-and-vulnerability-the-role-of-schools-in-protecting-young-women-and-girls-from-hiv-in-sou> [Accessed 2017 Oct 17].
- Kaur A, (2013). Maslow's Hierarchy Theory: Applications and criticisms. *Global Journal of Management and Business Studies* 3(10), 1061-1064.

- Khama, N. R. (2014). Views of School Board Members regarding their roles and challenges in the management of schools: A case study of two combined schools in The Caprivi Educational Region of Namibia. (Master's Thesis, University of Namibia, Windhoek, Namibia).
- Kumar, R. (2014). *Research Methodology: a step-by –step guide for beginners. (4th ed).*: London: SAGE Publications Inc.
- Kuzu, S.T. (2016). The impact of a semiotic analysis theory-based writing activity on students' writing skills. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 63, 37-54, <http://dx.doi.org/10.14689/ejer.2016.63>.
- Langinger, N. (2011). *SFP in Kenya: Transition to a Home grown Approach: Stanford Journal of International Relations*, Vol 13 (1), 33 Retrieved from <http://www.stanford.edu/group/sjir/13-1/kenya.pdf> [Accessed 2017 Oct 17].
- Lawrence, M., & Worsley, T. (2007). *Public Health Nutrition: from principles to practice*. New Zealand: Open University Press.
- Lawson, T. M. (2012). Impact of school feeding on educational, nutritional, and agricultural development goals: A systematic review of literature. (Master's Thesis, Michigan State University, USA).
- Lemmer, E. M. (2002). *Research in education*. Pretoria, South Africa: Muckleneuk.
- Levy, K. (2012). *Scaling up research results: School – based deworming in Kenya and beyond*. Retrieved from <http://www.blogs.Iscrtest.com/east/files/files/2012/06/Levy-Scaling-Up-Research-Results-Deworming.pdf> [Accessed 2017 Jun 11].

- Likando, G. N. (2008). Views and attitudes of adult literacy learners, Adult educators and policymakers regarding the adult literacy programme in the Caprivi Region (Doctoral dissertation, University of Namibia, Windhoek, Namibia).
- Machocho, W. W. (2011). Management of home-grown SFP and its implication on access and retention in primary schools: A case of Kathonzi District (Master's thesis, Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Kenya).
- Macmillan, J. H., & Schumacher, S. (2006). *Research in education: Evidence –based inquiry*. (6th ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.
- Mader, J. (2013). Pass the Carrots, pass on the Chips: America's obsession with school lunches. Retrieved from <http://hechingerreport.org/content/pass-the-carrots-pass-on-thechips-americas-obsession-with-school-lunches10748/> [[Accessed 2017 Jun 11].
- Maslow, A. H. (1970). *Motivation and personality* (2nd ed.). New York, USA: Harper and Row.
- Mason, (2002). *Qualitative researching* (2nd ed.) London, United Kingdom: SAGE.
- Mbukusa, N. R. (2009). Barriers to remote rural students' access to distance education support services offered by the centre for external studies. (Doctoral dissertation, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa).
- McEwan, P. J. (2012). The impact of Chile's SFP on educational outcomes. *Economics of Education Review*: vol.32 (2013), pp. 122- 139. Retrieved from <http://www.wellesley.edu/Economics/mcewan/PDF/meals.pdf>.
- MD Anderson Cancer Centre University of Texas. (2010). *Glossary of Cancer terms*. Retrieved from <http://www.google.na/url?q=http://www.mdanderson.org/patient-and-cancer-information/glossary-of-cancer-terms/n.html> May 30, 2010.

- Mertens, D. M., (2015). *Research and evaluation in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods*. (4th ed.). London: SAGE Publications. Inc.
- Mhurhu, C. N., Turley, M., Gorton, D., Jiang, Y., Michie, J., Maddison, R., & Hattie, J. (2010). Effects of a free school breakfast programme on school attendance, achievement, psychosocial function and nutrition: A stepped wedge cluster randomised trial. *Australian New Zealand Clinical Trials Registry (ANZCTR) – ACTRN12609000854235, Vol.10 (PMC3009648), 1-4* Retrieved from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3009648/> [Accessed 2017 Jun 11].
- Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture. (1993). *Towards education for all: A developmental brief for education, culture and training*. Windhoek: Gamsberg Macmillan.
- Ministry of Education. (1997). *National drought policy and strategy*. Windhoek: Gamsberg Macmillan.
- Ministry of Education. (2002). *Education for all national plan of action 2002-2015* Windhoek: Gamsberg Macmillan.
- Ministry of Education. (2003). *National policy on HIV /AIDS for the education sector*. Windhoek: Gamsberg Macmillan.
- Ministry of Education. (2005). *The strategic plan for the education and training sector improvement programme: 2005-2020*. Accessed from http://www.planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Namibia/Namibia_ETSIP_2005-2020.pdf. [Accessed 2018 Jun 11].

- Ministry of Education. (2006). *Education sector policy for orphans and vulnerable children*. Accessed from <http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/files/NPAforOVC-Vol1.pdf>.
- Ministry of Education. (n.d.). *Namibian SFP manual*. Windhoek, Namibia. pp. 1-51.
- Ministry of Health and Social Services. (2008). *National policy for school health*. Family Health Division: Windhoek.
- Mondal, N. K., & Paul, P. K. (2012). Impact of Mid-Day Meal Program on academic performance of students: Evidence from few upper primary schools of Burdwan District in West Bengal, India. *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, 2 (3), 339-403: ISSN: 2249-2496. Retrieved from <http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Verkkouutiset/2012/04/schoolmeals.html?lang=en> [Accessed 2017 Jun 11].
- Moore, N. (2000). *How to do research. The complete guides to designing and managing research projects* (3rd ed.). London: Facet Publishing.
- Mungenda, M. M. (1999). *Research method: Quantitative/qualitative approaches*., Nairobi: Act Press.
- Muntenyo, J. (2010). Achieving universal primary Education and reducing hunger through the School Feeding Programme. Retrieved from <http://www.brookings.edu/research/opinions/2010/09/20-education-mdg-muntenyo>.
- Munyiri, L. M. (2010). The impact of SFP on performance of pre-school children in Kikuyu District,- Central Province. (Master's thesis) Retrieved from <http://ect.uoribi.ac.ke/sites/default/files/cees/education/ect/Thesis-24thaugust.pdf> [Accessed 2017 Jun 11].

- National Planning Commission. (2004). *Namibia Vision 2030 Policy Framework for Ling-Term National Development main Document*. Windhoek: NPC, Central Bureau of Statistics.
- National Planning Commission. (2006). *2003/2004 Namibia Household Income and expenditure Survey: Main Report*. Windhoek: NPC, Central Bureau of Statistics.
- National Planning Commission. (2015). *Namibia Poverty Mapping*. Windhoek: NPC, Central Bureau of Statistics.
- NEPAD. (2007). (New Partnership for Africa's Development). *HGSF high-level consultation Ghana, Final report of proceedings*. Ghana: WFP Country Office.
- Nhlapo, N., Lues, R.J.F., Kativu, E., Groenewald, and W. H. (2015). Assessing the quality of food served under South African school feeding scheme: A nutritional analysis. *S Afr J Sci*. 2015; 111 (1/2),. Art.#2014-0044, 9 pages.<http://dx.doi.org/10.17159/sajs.2015/20140044> [Accessed 2017 Jun 11].
- Niitembu, M. (2006). Stakeholders' perceptions of parents' involvement in the governance of a Namibian rural school: Ohangwena. (Master's thesis, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa).
- Omwami, E. M., Neumann, C., & Bwibo, N. O. (2011). Effects of a school feeding intervention on school attendance rates among elementary school children in rural Kenya. *Nutrition Journal* (27), 188 – 193.
- Otieno, D. (2014). *Influence of school feeding programme on academic performance of pre – school children in Kayole Zone, Nairobi country*. Bachelor Degree in early childhood Education, (BEd dissertation), University of Nairobi.
- Pasco, G. (2014). Sampling. In Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis, C & Bezuidenhout. (Eds) *Research Matters*, 130-146.

- Patton, M. G. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.) London: SAGE.
- Polit, D. F., Beck, C.T., & Hungler, B. P. (2001). *Essentials of nursing research: Methods, appraisal and utilisation* (5th ed.). Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott.
- Pope C, Ziebland S, Mays N. (2006) 0. Analysing qualitative data. In: Pope C, Mays N (eds). *Qualitative Research in Health Care* (3rd ed). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006; 63–81.
- Pye-Smith, C. (2014). The Brazilian school feeding model. UN: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.
- Rank, J. (2009). *Poverty at large: A dark sport in humanity*. Retrieved from <http://povertyhci.weebly.com/causes-of-poverty.html> [Accessed 2017 Jun 11].
- Ravitch, S. M., & Riggan, M. (2011). *Reason and rigor: How conceptual frameworks guide research*. Retrieved from <https://www.amazon.com/Reason-Rigor-Conceptual-Frameworks-Research/dp/1483340406> [Accessed 2017 Jun 11].
- Reinikainen, P. (2009). *Finnish students success in Pisa survey*: Finnish Institute for Educational Research: University of Jyväskylä, Finland. <http://www.ptde.org/file.php/1/Archiwum/XV-KDE/pojedyncze/reinikainen.pdf> [Accessed 2017 Jun 11].
- Republic of Namibia. (2012). *National Development Plan 4, 2012/13- 2016/17*: Windhoek.
- Republic of Namibia. (2016). *Republic of Namibia Blueprint on wealth redistribution and poverty eradication*: Windhoek.

- Republic of Namibia. (2018). Implementations of Sustainable Development Goals in Namibia. Available URL: https://www.npc.gov.na/download/NPC_Reports/Voluntary-National-Review-2018.pdf [Accessed 2020 Jun 06].
- Richter, L., Griesel, D., & Rose, C. (2000). The psychological impact of a school feeding project. *Addressing Childhood Diversity*, 74-93. Richter, L., Griesel, D., & Rose, C. (2000). *The Psychological impact of a school feeding project*. Cape Town, South Africa.
- Ridge, T., & Wright, S. (2008). *Understanding Inequality, Poverty and Wealthy: Policies and Prospects. Understanding Welfare: Social Issues, Policy and Practice*. Bristol: The Policy Press.
- Robeyns, I. (2003). Is Nancy Fraser's critique of theories of distributive justice justified?. *Constellations*, 538-554.
- Robeyns, I. (2003b). Sen's Capability Approach and Gender Inequality: Selecting Relevant Capabilities., *Feminist Economics*, 9(2/3), 61-92.
- Robeyns, I. (2005). *The capability approach and welfare policies. Paper presented at the conference on gender auditing and gender budgeting Bologna, January 2005*. [Accessed 17 Jul 2020].
- Sacred Heart University. (2006). Organizing academic research papers:- Research guides. Retrieved from <https://library.sacredheart.edu/c.php?g=29803&p=185919> [Accessed 2017 Jun 11].
- Sen A. (1987). The Standard of Living. In G. Hawthorn (ed) *The Standard of Living*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sen, A. (1992). *Inequality re-examined*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

- Sen, A. (1993). Capability and Well-Being. In M. Nussbaum and A. Sen (eds) *The Quality of Life*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Shildrick, T., & Rucell, J. (2015). *Sociological perspectives on poverty*: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- Sibanda, D. G. (2012). An analysis of the implementation of the school supplementary feeding programme (Master's thesis, University of Namibia, Windhoek, Namibia).
- Silverman, D. (2011). *Interpreting qualitative data: A guide to the principles of qualitative research*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Sinko, P. (2012). *Main factors behind the good Pisa reading results in Finland: Finnish National Board of Education of Education*. IFLA, Helsinki.
<http://www.ifla.org/files/assets/school-libraries-resource-centers/conferences/2012/finnish-pisa-results-2012.pdf> [Accessed 2017 Jun 11].
- Sulemana, M., Ngah, I., & Majid, M. R. (2013). The challenges and prospects of the SFP in Northern Ghana. *Development in Practice*. 23, 422-432.
- Swartz, M. (2009). An evaluation of the SFP as a delivery mechanism to improve academic performance of needy learners in Bonteheuwel. (Med Thesis) Cape Peninsula University of Technology.
- Tomlinson, M. (2007). *School feeding in east and southern Africa: Improving food sovereignty or photo opportunity?*. Health Systems Research Unit, Medical Research Council.
- Tracy, S. T. (2009). *Qualitative quality: Eight "Big Tent" criteria for excellence in qualitative research*. SAGE, And DOIL: 10.117/1077800410383121. Retrieved from <http://qix.sagepub.com/content/16/10/837>[Accessed 2017 Mar 15].

- Uduku, O. (2011). School building design for feeding programmes and community outreach: Insights from Ghana and South Africa. *International Journal of Educational Development*. Retrieved from www.elsevier.com/locate/ijedudev [Accessed 2017 Jun 11].
- UNGA. (2000). Resolution adopted by the General Assembly: A/RES/55/2. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.pdf> [Accessed 2017 Jun 11].
- UNICEF. (2005). *UNICEF- Supported school lunches feeding programme in Nigeria*. Retrieved from UNICEF website: <http://www.unicef.org/media-28398.html>[Accessed 2017 Mar 15].
- United Nations Convention Rights of the Child. (No. 28 of 1089). Retrieved from <https://www.unicef.nl/files/English%20child%20friendly%20convention.pdf>.
- Upindi, N. M. (2012). Views of teachers and parents regarding factors that contribute to learners' indiscipline in secondary schools: A case of selected schools in the Khomas Education Region: Windhoek, Namibia (Master's thesis, University of Namibia, Namibia).
- Visser, K. (2005). A study to assess the school feeding coverage in Namibia's regions and cost its targeted expansion based on defining efficiency measures. Oshipala Trust.
- Wells, T. R. (2013) Reasoning about Development: Essays on Amartya Sen's Capability Approach: Dissertation, Erasmus University Rotterdam.
- White, M. D & Marsh, E. (2006). Content Analysis: A Flexible Methodology. *Library trends*, 55, (1), pp. 22–45.

Winch, R. (2009). *International approaches to School Feeding: Country experiences from Mali, Chile, and India*. Retrieved from Rachel Winch: Mickey Le-land International Hunger. Fellow Global Child Nutrition Foundation website: <http://www.foodaid.org/news/wpcontent/uploads/2011/01/Rachel-Winch-International> [Accessed 2017 Jun 11].

World Bank, (2013). *Education human development network*. Retrieved from World Bank Group website: <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS?EXTEDUCATION/0,,contentMDK:20756094-menuPK:613702-pagePK:148956-piPK216618-theSitePK:282386-isCURL:Y,00.htm> [Accessed 2018 Mar 15].

World Bank. (2012). *Scaling up school feeding: Keeping children in school while improving their learning and health*. Retrieved from <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/278200-1334777272566/Results2012-SB-HDN-Update-SchoolFeeding.pdf> [Accessed 2017 Jun 11].

World Food Programme, (2016). *School meals: Giving students the best start in Cambodia*. WFP.

World Food Programme. (2007). *Ghana Home-Grown School Feeding field case study: Home-Grown School Feeding Project*. Retrieved from <http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/newsroom/wfp219433.pdf>. [Accessed 2017 Mar 11].

World Food Programme. (2010). *Fighting Hunger Worldwide*. Available from: <https://www.wfp.org/node/3497/2608/279525>. [Accessed 2017 Jun 11].

World Food Programme. (2012). *The Namibian SFP transition case study*. Windhoek, Namibia.

World Food Programme. (2013). *State of School Feeding World-wide*: World Food Programme. Italy.

World Food Programme. (2014) *Technical Assistance to the Namibian School Feeding Programme*. Annual Progress Report, 1 May 2013- May 2014.


World Food Programme. (2015). *Global Panel on Agriculture and food systems for Nutrition*. WFP.

World Food Programme. (2015). *Health meals in schools: Policy innovations linking Agriculture, food systems and nutrition*. WPF.

World Health Organisation (WHO). (2011). Retrieved from <http://who.int/nutgrowthdb/en/index.html> [Accessed 2017 Jun 11].

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Ethical Clearance Certificate



UNAM

UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Ethical Clearance Reference Number: FOE/264/2017 Date: 10 October, 2017

This Ethical Clearance Certificate is issued by the University of Namibia Research Ethics Committee (UREC) in accordance with the University of Namibia's Research Ethics Policy and Guidelines. Ethical approval is given in respect of undertakings contained in the Research Project outlined below. This Certificate is issued on the recommendations of the ethical evaluation done by the Faculty/Centre/Campus Research & Publications Committee sitting with the Postgraduate Studies Committee.

Title of Project: Experiences Of The Implementers Of The School Feeding Programme In Selected Schools In The Zambezi Region, Namibia

Researcher: Njahi Rejoice Khama

Student Number: 201063808

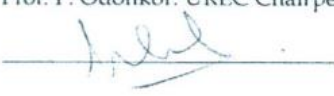
Faculty: Faculty of Education

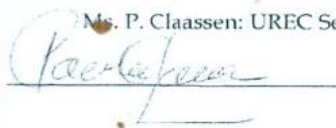
Supervisors: Dr Africa Zulu (Main) (Co) Dr David Nkengbeza

Take note of the following:

- (a) Any significant changes in the conditions or undertakings outlined in the approved Proposal must be communicated to the UREC. An application to make amendments may be necessary.
- (b) Any breaches of ethical undertakings or practices that have an impact on ethical conduct of the research must be reported to the UREC.
- (c) The Principal Researcher must report issues of ethical compliance to the UREC (through the Chairperson of the Faculty/Centre/Campus Research & Publications Committee) at the end of the Project or as may be requested by UREC.
- (d) The UREC retains the right to:
 - (i) Withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance if any unethical practices (as outlined in the Research Ethics Policy) have been detected or suspected.
 - (ii) Request for an ethical compliance report at any point during the course of the research.

UREC wishes you the best in your research.

Prof. P. Odonkor: UREC Chairperson


Ms. P. Claassen: UREC Secretary


APENDIX B: Request for permission to conduct Research



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

DIRECTORATE OF ADULT EDUCATION

Private Bag 12033
Ausspannplatz
Windhoek

Tel: 00 264 61 293 3111
Fax: 00 264 61 293 3913

The Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture
Private Bag 13186
Windhoek

12 October 2017

Dear Madam

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SELECTED SCHOOLS IN THE ZAMBEZI REGION

I am a permanent employee in the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture under the Directorate of Adult Education, Sub-division for Materials Development. I hereby request for permission to access the research sites and to conduct an academic research in selected schools in the Zambezi Region.

The study is part of a dissertation done in partial fulfilment of the requirement of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Educational Foundations and Management at the University of Namibia. This study seeks to examine the experiences of implementers of the school feeding programme. The study is of significant importance as the findings will inform the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture on the effectiveness of the implementation of school feeding programme in that region. It will also expose challenges faced by the implementers of the programme. The results of the study will as well contribute to the existing body of knowledge and practice related to school feeding programme and might help shading light on how the programme might be improved.

I would like to conduct an academic research study at some selected schools between October and November 2017. The targeted groups will include principals, teachers, school board members, service providers and coordinators of School feeding programme at central and regional levels. Interviews will be administered at conveniently suitable times that will not disrupt official duties. Data collected will be used for research purpose only and will be dealt with anonymously.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours Faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'N. R. Khama', followed by a dotted line.

Mrs. N. R. Khama
Senior Education Officer

APPENDIX C: Permission Letter to conduct Research



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

Tel: +264 61 -2933200
Fax: +264 61- 2933922
Enquiries: C. Muchila/ G. Munene
Email: Cavin.Muchila@moe.gov.na/gm12munene@yahoo.co.uk

Luther Street, Govt. Office Park
Private Bag 13186
Windhoek
Namibia

File no: 11/1/1

Mrs. N. R. Khama
P/Bag 12033
Ausspannplatz
Windhoek
Tel: 061-2933111

Dear Mrs. N. R. Khama

SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN ZAMBEZI REGION

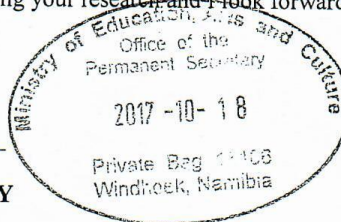
Kindly be informed that permission to conduct an academic research for your PhD in "*Experience of the Implementers of the School Feeding Programme in Selected Schools in the Zambezi Region*", is herewith granted. You are further requested to present the letter of approval to the Regional Director to ensure that research ethics are adhered to and disruption of curriculum delivery is avoided.

Furthermore, we humbly request you to share your research findings with the ministry. You may contact Mr C. Muchila/ Mr. G. Munene at the Directorate: Programmes and Quality Assurance (PQA) for provision of summary of your research findings.

I wish you the best in conducting your research and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely yours

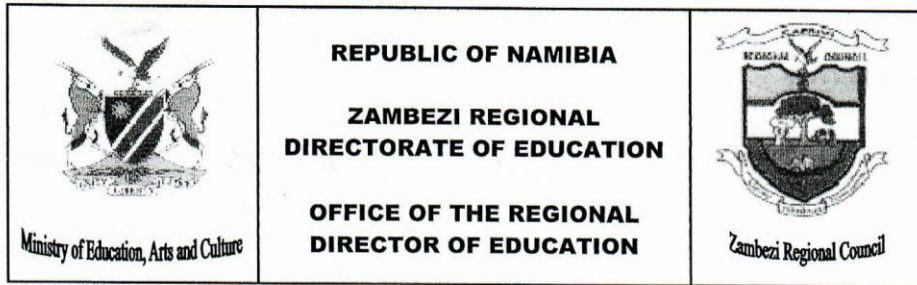
SANEL L. STEENKAMP
PERMANENT SECRETARY



18-10-2017
Date

All official correspondences must be addressed to the Permanent Secretary

APENDIX D: Permission to access research sites



Tel No.: (066) 261902/931
Fax No.: (066) 253187

Private Bag 5006
Katima Mulilo

Enquiries: Violet Nchindo
Reference No:

22 November 2017

Mrs N. R. KHAMA
P/Bag 12033
Ausspannplatz
Whk

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN ZAMBEZI REGION

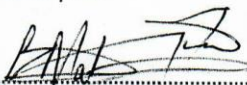
Your letter to the Regional Director of Education, Arts and Culture dated 18th October 2017 is hereby received and acknowledged.

Permission is hereby granted to you to conduct research for your PhD in "Experience of the Implementers of the School Feeding Programme" in selected schools as per your programme in Zambezi Region.

However, be advised not to interrupt the teaching and learning at those schools you intend visiting.

By a copy of this letter, Inspectors are notified accordingly.

Thank you.


.....
Mr Austin M Samupwa
Regional Director of Education, Arts and Culture



APPENDIX E: Interview Schedule for Principals, Teachers, School Board

members,

Coordinators and Service providers

Introduction

Thank you for your willingness to take part in this interview. The aim of this research is to examine the experiences of implementers of the school feeding program in selected schools in the Zambezi Region.

Interview questions

1. What are your experiences on NSFP? (This question will be opened for coordinators and narrowed down to specific schools for other implementers e.g. teachers and principals)

3. How does NSFP influence:
 - i. enrolment,
 - ii. attendance,
 - iii. retention rate and dropout rate,
 - iv. performance,
 - v. health of the learners,
 - vi. poverty reduction, and
 - vii. Progression of learners in the selected schools?

4. What are the successes that you have experienced as an implementer of the school feeding programme?

5. What challenges do implementers face regarding SFP?

6. How can the above challenges be mitigated?

APENDIX F: OBSERVATION CHART:

The researcher used an observation chart during school visits to selected schools at meal time. The purpose is to establish and get answers to questions such as what, who, how, why and when regarding food availability and administering of food to the learners, equipment used, the infrastructure in place, the type of fuel used, their source of water, people who prepare and serve the food, time when meals are given and the behaviour of learners such as hand washing, plates and spoons used.

Observation item	Adequacy/Condition	comments
Food availability		
Type of meal offered		
How food is administered		
Equipment used		
Infrastructure in place e.g. kitchen and storeroom		
Water sources		
Fuel used e.g. gas fire wood, charcoal		
Gardens		
Cleanliness of the surrounding		
Quality of food		
Human resource		
Time for serving food		
Learners' behaviour and attitudes during the process of administering food to them		

General comments.....

APPENDIX G: Informed Consent Form

Study name: Experiences of implementers of the school feeding program in selected schools in the Zambezi Region, Namibia

Researchers: Njahi. Rejoice Khama

Doctoral Candidate,

Graduate Program in the Faculty of Education

Email address: rejoice962@gmail.com

Office phone: 061-2933194

Purpose of the research:

The purpose of this research is to find out implementers experiences regarding school feeding programme, challenges face, how those challenges can be handled and the effects of the school feeding SFP on enrolment, attendance, retention rate, dropout rate, performance, health, poverty reduction, and progression of learners in the selected schools.

What you will be asked to do in the research:

In this study, the researcher will ask you questions whereby all data shared will be handled with confidentiality. The duration of the interview will be roughly 45 minutes. Furthermore you will be required to respond truthfully to all questions as the right of being anonymous is reserved.

Risks and discomforts:

The researcher will use an audio recorder to record all interviews with participants to enable her to promptly collect information rich data. Be assured that these audio recordings will be handled with confidentiality and will eventually be destroyed within a period of three years. I do not see any risk associated with your involvement in this research.

Benefits of the research and benefits to you:

The information you provide to this study will help improve the implementation of the school feeding programme in your region. Furthermore the study will have the potential to exhibit how much the program has improved learners' enrolment, attendance, and alleviation of short-term hunger.

Voluntary participation:

Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to participate will not influence the relationship you may have with the researcher.

Withdrawal from the study:

You can stop participating in the study at any time, for any reason, if you so decide. Your decision to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions, will not affect your relationship with the researcher.

Confidentiality:

The data collected via audio recordings will be handled with confidentiality, and the data will be collected anonymously and therefore your answers will not be associated to any informants. The data collected will only be accessed by the researcher's supervisor and will be destroyed after the study. Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law.

Questions about the research

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Post Graduate Studies, Faculty of Education, University of Namibia, and Windhoek. Website: <http://www.unam.edu.na/faculty-ofeducation>. Tel: 061-2064750, Email: cwilders@unam.na. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, you may contact the Professor C. Wilders through the email above.

Legal Rights and Signatures:

I, consent to participate in “Experiences of implementers of the school feeding program in selected schools in the Zambezi Region, Namibia” conducted by Njahi. Rejoice Khama. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature & Date

Participant name:

Signature & Date:

Principal Investigator name: