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IMPACT OF BUYISA UBUNTU FOOD BANK ON LIVELIHOODS OF KAGISO RESIDENTS DURING COVID-19

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A Research Report presented in partial fulfilment for the degree of Master of Management (in the field of Public Sector Monitoring and Evaluation) to the Faculty of Commerce, Law, and Management, University of the Witwatersrand.

2023

DECLARATION

I, **Lindeni Sekhokoane**, declare that this research report entitled ‘Impact of Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank on livelihoods of Kagiso residents during COVID-19’ is my own unaided work. I have acknowledged, attributed, and referenced all ideas sourced elsewhere. I am hereby submitting it in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Management (Public sector monitoring and evaluation) at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. I have not submitted this report before for any other degree or examination to any other institution.

Lindeni Sekhokoane

Signed at Johannesburg on

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ABSTRACT

Food banks are set up as an option when governments are unable to safeguard the food security of their citizens. They intend to ease the numerous threats related to food insecurity. However, the ability of food banks to advance general food security outcomes is limited, even though they have a significant part to play in providing rapid solutions to extreme food dearth. They are meant to be a temporary way out for households that are destitute but a key to attaining food security.

The aim of the study is to explore the impact of Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank on beneficiaries during COVID-19, as well as to understand the coping strategies of these beneficiaries in the midst of the pandemic. Also, the purpose is to determine the extent to which the skills development program has empowered beneficiaries. In order to achieve this, the study sought to determine a) The difference that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank has made to beneficiaries' lives during the COVID-19 pandemic, b) the extent to which the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank skills development programme has empowered beneficiaries, c) the coping strategies that were used by the beneficiaries in the absence of the food bank services.

The study found that the food bank use in Kagiso Township is due to dire economic difficulties out of the immediate domain of control of beneficiaries, such as poverty and unemployment. The coping strategies utilised by beneficiaries in the absence of food bank services are unsustainable. In an attempt to address the issue of unemployment among the beneficiaries, structural theories of poverty suggest that macroeconomic policy, which stimulates economic growth, both locally and internationally, should also be seen as the key solution for sustainable job opportunities.

The findings of the study further revealed that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank made a financial difference in the lives of the beneficiaries through volunteerism and employment. Again, the skills offered at the skills development programme made a difference in the lives of some of the beneficiaries. However, the study found that the choice of skills in this programme is limited, and some skills are not of interest to beneficiaries. It is therefore recommended that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank provides an avenue for beneficiaries to voice their expectations. It is also recommended that

higher institutions of learning and businesses join forces to provide a variety of skills for people who are food insecure.

Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank faced some distribution challenges, as a result, beneficiaries received food once in three months instead of three consecutive months. This negatively affects the impact of the Buyisa Food Bank on the lives of beneficiaries. To address the food distribution challenges, it is recommended that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank sticks to the standard operating procedure manual, which states that once the beneficiary is approved, the food needs to be distributed to them for three consecutive months.

Keywords: beneficiaries; coping strategies; COVID-19; food bank; food parcels, food security, skills development programme.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

COVD-19:	Corona Virus
DAFF:	Department of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries
DSD:	Department of Social Development
EU:	European Union
FAO:	Food and Agriculture Organization
FBC:	Food Banks Canada
FEAD:	Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived
FEBA:	European Food Banks Federation
IFSS:	Integrated Food Security Strategy
NDP:	National Development Plan
NPO:	Non-profit organization
SDG:	Sustainable development goals
SOP:	Standard operating procedure
UK:	United Kingdom
UN:	United Nations
USA:	United States of America
WHO:	World Health Organization

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CHAPTER ONE

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The existence of food banks endeavours to address food shortages that various communities may experience. According to Walker (2014), the use of food banks by households in a particular community indicates the prevalence of food insecurity in that community. Food banks regularly assist individuals and households to acquire food as poverty and unemployment are rising in South Africa (SA), Kagiso Township, where this study was conducted, is no exception (McPherson, 2006). The COVID-19 pandemic affected the livelihoods of communities, and many were physically, socially and financially distressed (Swinnen & McDermott, 2020). However, services such as food banks provided relief and formed part of the solution during the pandemic (Whale, 1993). This study explores the impact of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank on the livelihoods of Kagiso residents during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The chapter highlights the purpose of the study and the background and context of Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank in Kagiso Township. It also defines the food bank, the problem statement, and the purpose and outlines the research questions, research methodology, the significance of the study and the research structure.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to explore the impact of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank on the livelihoods of Kagiso residents and to understand the beneficiaries' coping strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study also seeks to determine the extent that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank skills development programme has empowered users.

1.3 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

In 2015, world leaders met and adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). During that period, a pandemic like COVID-19 was not anticipated. As such, the pandemic interfered with the ability of countries to reach the first SDG of ending all forms of poverty by 2030 (United Nations (UN), 2015).

COVID-19, commonly known as the Corona Virus, is a highly contagious respiratory illness that first appeared in Wuhan around December 2019 (Jimola & Ofodu, 2021). The (ibid) further state that several contaminated patients in the Huanan Fish Market exacerbated the virus. Following the outbreak, the virus spread worldwide, killing millions of people. The World Health Organization (WHO) deemed COVID-19 a pandemic after more than 118,000 cases in 114 countries and 4,291 fatalities (Liu, Beeler & Chakrabarty, 2020). To curb the spread of the virus, several nations went into isolation and implemented lockdown regulations (Liu *et al.,* 2020). In just a few months, the COVID-19 pandemic and various lockdown regulations ruthlessly disrupted lives, endangered the welfare of billions of people and exacerbated the threat to worldwide food security (Swinnen & McDermott, 2020).

Food banks have been measures of relief to ease adversities resulting from calamities (Whale, 1993). They suggest the existence or strong signs of poverty and food insecurity, even in affluent countries like the United States of America (USA), New Zealand and the United Kingdom (UK). According to McPherson (2006), food banks are a core non-governmental sector response to household food insecurity. This study explores how the livelihoods of beneficiaries in Kagiso, the township at the West Rand of the Gauteng Province of SA, were impacted during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study also seeks to determine how effective and beneficial the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank was during the pandemic. For this study, the researcher concentrated on the beneficiaries from Kagiso Township, the largest in West Rand. The area understudy comprises impoverished and marginalised households experiencing food shortages (Stats SA, 2011).

1.4 BUYISA UBUNTU FOOD BANK AND KAGISO TOWNSHIP

Buyisa Ubuntu is an initiative of the Gauteng provincial government piloted in the West Rand region in 2009. During that time, services were rendered to the whole of Gauteng Province. However, in 2012, other regions of Gauteng, i.e., Tshwane, Ekurhuleni, Johannesburg and Sedibeng, established their own food banks, following the same model (South African Government News Agency, 2012). Buyisa Ubuntu is a Carroll Shaw Memorial Centre Non-Profit Organization funded by the Department of Social Development (DSD) (Buyisa Ubuntu, 2018). The Gauteng government established this programme as a response to the SDGs (UN, 2015) and the Bill of Rights enshrined

in our Constitution that every person has a right to food (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996).

The main objective of the programme is to provide short-term (three months) food relief to distressed households and assist with sustainable solutions such as referrals of eligible family members for training and skills development. In that way, families will have the means to fend for themselves instead of depending on the food bank for survival (Buyisa Ubuntu, 2018). The DSD provides food parcels to the food bank to be distributed to the identified households. This is done through service providers that the DSD has appointed to purchase and deliver food to the five (5) food banks in the province. Beneficiaries are referred by hospitals, social workers, non-profit organisations (NPOs), schools, DSD and other stakeholders (Buyisa Ubuntu, 2018). Each food parcel has a monetary value of Eight Hundred and Seventy-Five Rand (R875). The agreement between Buyisa Ubuntu and DSD is to distribute three thousand five hundred (3,500) food parcels per quarter in the West Rand Region. The average number of beneficiaries is 14,662 per annum (Buyisa Ubuntu, 2018).

Kagiso is located in Krugersdorp in the Gauteng Province. It is situated in the west of Johannesburg. ‘Kagiso’ translates as peace in Setswana, one of the eleven official languages in South Africa. The township forms part of the Mogale City Local Municipality. It is part of the West Rand District and accounts for nearly a third of the overall population in Mogale City (Masuku et al., 2016). This community lives in an area of 14,17km^2 and has a population of 115,802 with 35,098 households and is 99.5% African, 0,4 coloured and 0, 2% white. The most spoken language is Setswana (Stats SA, 2011). Almost 72% of the population is of working age (15-64), and the unemployment rate in Mogale City is 39.6% (Stats SA, 2011). This indicates that the majority of the youth in this region cannot find work. The 2015 Gini coefficient for Mogale City was 0, 62 (COGTA, 2020), suggesting a high inequality level in income distribution (Mogale City Draft IDP, 2019/2020). This further suggests that this is a low-income community, implying that some households may have difficulty accessing sufficient food, as is the reality with other townships in SA (Stats SA, 2011). This area is invariably poorly represented by aggregate data at the national level, which makes this study desperately important.



Figure 1.1: ***Map of Kagiso Township*** *(Source: Maps data @2021 AfriGIS (Pty) Ltd)*

Food banks become relevant due to the existence of food insecurity among communities. According to Walker (2014), people experience food insecurity because they do not have access to adequate amounts of nutritious and balanced meals. This consequently leads to physical feebleness, low productivity levels, stunted growth in children and learning difficulties. In 2005, the National Food Consumption survey established that nutrition in 18% of children between one (1) and nine (9) years in SA was unacceptably low (Labadarios *et al.*, 2000). If this situation persists, poor health and, ultimately, death may result (Nohr, 2012).

Conversely, food-secure people are individuals who acquire at all times ample quantities of nutritious food of their choice to be in good physical shape and live active lives (World Food Summit, 1996; Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), 2012). It is important that the food choice is culturally appropriate for people, and the food must at least be enjoyable (World Food Summit, 1996). However, culturally suitable and gratifying food may not necessarily be nutritious (Seres *et al.*, 2016). Thus, nutrition is very important in the food choice.

In SA, COVID-19 public health mitigation has had enormous repercussions for economic activity (Dinyo *et al.,* 2020), with largely harsh consequences for households with low levels of education and relying primarily on wages (UN, 2020). These adverse economic blows had a huge takeaway on the livelihoods of numerous households and

drove them into food insecurity (Wills et *al*., 2020). The reduction of household income due to the global economic crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic affected their livelihoods in a negative way (Barua, 2020). During this period, the government displayed its commitment to this call by introducing the “Food for All Programme”, whereby distressed households would be provided with food through the DSD and the Food Bank South Africa. Various registered charity organisations also redistributed donated food. This study focuses on the food banks established and funded by the government, especially in Gauteng Province. In particular, the Food Bank in the West Rand and how it helped to alleviate food insecurity among its beneficiaries during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.5 FOOD BANK

A ‘food bank’ can symbolise one of two kinds of service. That is enormous redistributors of salvaged food to smaller charity organisations that supply prepared and raw food to households who are food deprived; or a service that gives groceries straight to consumers (Kicinski, 2012:58). Riches (2018:29) defines a food bank as a “centralised warehouse or clearing house registered as a non-profit organisation to collect, store and distributing surplus food (donated/shared), free of charge, to front line agencies which provide supplementary food and meals to the hungry.” Parker, Mook, Kao & Murdock (2019:5), on the other hand, define it as “a nonprofit, organisation that collects safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate food and distributes it to individuals and families experiencing food insecurity”. Food banks are “charitable organisations that minimise hunger by distributing food to people with limited access or income” (Ballantyne, Baylor & Bowe, 2015:8). From the above definitions, it is clear that food banks are in existence because people experience food shortages as well as the concern about the increasing food waste (Vansintjan, 2014).

1.6 PROBLEM STATEMENT

COVID-19 exposed our communities' underlying gross inequalities and poverty (Warah, 2021). During the lockdown, the use of food banks increased more rapidly than ever before (Beck & Gwilym, 2021). This is confirmed by the Trussell Trust (2017), which claims that the number of people seeking assistance from their food banks escalated. The statistics demonstrate that, at the beginning of the pandemic,

81% more people utilised food banks, and some of the people who resorted to food banks were people who had never utilised them before (The Trussell Trust, 2020). Again, records from food banks in the UK illustrate that during the COVID-19 pandemic, there was an increase in the number of people who required assistance from food banks (Goodwin, 2020). According to these records, food parcel distribution in the UK increased by 171% between April 2019 and April 2020 (Goodwin, 2020). Benker (2020) contends that these numbers say a lot about the rise in food insecurity during the countrywide lockdowns, whereby food banks became major safety nets for the most vulnerable communities.

Food banks are intended to tackle the fundamental needs of people experiencing severe hunger and poverty (Believers Care Society, 2023). However, they provide limited and temporary relief due to the fact that their financial resources are almost always not enough to meet the needs of those who request assistance (Tarasuk *et al.*, 2014). For example, the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank provides three months of food relief whereby food parcels are delivered to households once a month over a period of three months. Likewise, the Trussell Trust Food banks in the UK offer three days' food supply once a month. The COVID-19 lockdown lasted for two (2) years, as such, it is of utmost importance to know how these households survived. The researcher intended to understand whether families continued to utilise the food banks, such that they became dependent or did they have other means to access food.

Recent research has concentrated on how COVID-19 has negatively affected the health and economy of the world. This is evident in beneficiaries' increased use of food banks (Food Forward SA, 2020). However, there is inadequate literature on the role of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank in ensuring food security among its beneficiaries amid the COVID-19 pandemic and how these beneficiaries coped during the pandemic. Earlier research concentrated on the characteristics of food bank beneficiaries and how food banks operate and respond to community needs (Whale, 1993; McGurk & Clark, 1993; Leslie, 1996; Milner, 2004; McPherson, 2006). However, there is insufficient literature on the impact of food banks on the livelihoods of the beneficiaries during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, this study explored the experiences of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank beneficiaries during COVID-19 and their coping mechanism concerning food security during the pandemic.

1.7 PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this research is to explore the impact of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank as a food security intervention measure during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the coping strategies of the beneficiaries throughout the lockdown.

1.8 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

A set of questions are usually utilised to guide research studies. These questions endeavour to resolve the research problem. According to Jesson *et al.* (2011), research questions are essential in the provision of the research structure, focus and direction. This was attested by Miles *et al.* (2014) that research questions represent the type of investigation the researcher aims to embark on.

1.8.1 Primary research question

The primary research question of the study is:
What is the impact of the Food Bank on the livelihoods of its beneficiaries?

1.8.2 Secondary research questions

The secondary research questions formulated to support the attainment of the primary research question are as follows:

- What is the role of Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank in ensuring sufficient food during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- What is the role of Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank in ensuring its beneficiaries are not dependent on the food bank?
- To what extent has the Buyisa Ubuntu skills development programme empowered its users?
- What coping strategies are used by beneficiaries in the absence of the Food Bank?

1.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study may contribute to the knowledge gap by empirically determining the impact of food banks on the livelihoods of beneficiaries during pandemics. COVID-19 caught the world unaware. Policymakers were not ready and struggled to respond to the challenges which emanated from the pandemic (Hartwich & Isakson, 2020). Although the COVID-19 pandemic is/was a global occurrence that has profoundly affected many

people's lives, livelihoods, and welfare, the degree and harshness of its effects vary among groups, sectors and nations.

Measures to reduce the impact of COVID-19 by the public health sector in various parts of the world had enormous ramifications for the world economy (Dinyo et al., 2020), with more severe aftermath for households with inadequate education and predominantly dependent on wage employment. These hostile economic setbacks were significant enough to dispossess countless livelihoods and consequently push households into food insecurity (Wills *et al.,* 2020). The economic decline was most detrimental to the disadvantaged, who were seriously affected by the loss of their earnings (Lucero-Prisno *et al.,* 2020). This includes most households in Kagiso (Swinnen & McDermott, 2020).

Food banks form part of the solution to some of the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. They exist to ensure that no one goes to bed on an empty stomach (McPherson, 2006). This is achieved by collecting and distributing safe food that would otherwise be wasted from each supply chain point, such as the farms, manufacturers and retailers (Riches, 2002). Food banks can advance the livelihood outcomes of beneficiaries when resources are inadequate (Whale, 1993). Furthermore, food banks aid in building communities by creating employment and purchasing goods and services from local businesses. In this way, they boost the economy in the areas where they offer services (Bucknum & Bentzel, 2019). Food donations also help low-income families free up money for other basic needs.

Even though food banks have a significant role in addressing food scarcity, they are limited in improving overall food security outcomes due to the inadequate provision of abundant foods, especially dairy, vegetables and fruit (Tarasuk *et al.*, 2014). As such, this study attempts to explore the impact that Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank brought on its beneficiaries during COVID-19 and to understand the coping strategies of beneficiaries amid the pandemic. Also, the study was an attempt to determine the extent to which the skills development programme of Buyisa Ubuntu has empowered beneficiaries.

1.10 THE STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

The research report consists of six (6) chapters, as illustrated in Figure 1.2 below.

Chapter 1: Introduction
Chapter 2: Literature Review
Chapter 3: Research Methodology
Chapter 4: Presentation of Results
Chapter 5: Analysis and Interpretation of Findings
Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

Figure 1.2: ***Sequence of the research report (Author generated)***

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 1 introduces the study and provides the research background and the context under which this study on the IMPACT of Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank is embarked upon. In this chapter, the significance of the study is outlined, and a brief definition of Food Bank is presented. Further, this chapter outlines the research conceptualisation: problem statement, purpose statement and research questions.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The literature review outlines the concept of Food Banks and the international picture. The chapter further reviews the impact and challenges of food banks and the theoretical framework that provide the research lens for the study.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This chapter focuses on the paradigm within which the research is located. It describes the methods of data collection, the research design and how the reliability and validity of this qualitative study were established. Also, the chapter outlines data analysis and interpretation employed in the study. Non-random purposive sampling was utilised for the selection of participants. Interviews and focus groups are the methods that were employed for collecting data.

Chapter 4: Presentation of Results

Chapter four presents the research results on the IMPACT of Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank on the livelihoods of Kagiso residents during COVID-19. The data collected from

the respondents using the research tools and documentary analysis are presented in this chapter with supporting quotes from participating respondents.

Chapter 5: Data Analysis and Interpretation of Findings

This chapter discusses and interprets the results by converting them into research findings. The findings that were obtained from the interviews with participants as well as the documentary analysis were widely discussed concerning the objective of the study as well as the literature reviewed. The literature was used to cross-validate the findings obtained from the interviews.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

Chapter 6 presents the summary of the research study and makes conclusions about the results and findings. This chapter further highlights the limitations of the study.

1.11 CONCLUSION

Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank has been distributing food to needy people since its establishment. This includes the people from Kagiso Township. The prevailing poverty in this area suggests that it is necessary to undertake an exploratory study to investigate the IMPACT of this Food Bank on the beneficiaries, especially during COVID-19, and to make recommendations on areas of improvement.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

A literature review describes aspects relevant to the selected field of research by profiling the work of other writers and the theoretical framework that informs the research. According to Jesson, Matheson and Lacey (2011:9), the literature review "is a review of something that has already been written". However, it is not just a descriptive summary of the historical context of the topic; instead, it further identifies different sources of information that can be used in the study and classifies them into primary and secondary sources (Bennett, 2007). A literature review uses selective material to build pertinent studies and knowledge through critical analysis, summarising and synthesising.

This chapter defines and discusses concepts and theories that guide the study. The chapter consists of the following sections: 1) definition of food banks; 2) Food banks as sites of food security; 3) The importance of food banks; 4) The international picture of food banks; 5) Impact of food banks; 6) Foodbank challenges; 7) Coping mechanisms for households during the pandemic; 8) Food Sovereignty; 9) Policy and Institutional Dimensions of Food security and 10) Theories of poverty.

2.2 DEFINITION OF FOOD BANK

The term 'food bank' can symbolise one of two kinds of service. The enormous redistributors of salvaged food to smaller charity organizations that supply prepared and raw food to food deprived households; or a service that gives groceries to the needy (Kicinski, 2012). Riches (2018:29) defines a food bank as a "centralised warehouse or clearing house registered as a non-profit organization to collect, store and distribute surplus food (donated/shared), free of charge, to front line agencies which provide supplementary food and meals to the hungry". Parker, Mook, Kao & Murdock (2019:5) define it as "a nonprofit organization that collects safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate food, and distribute it to individuals and families experiencing food insecurity". Ballantyne, Baylor & Bowe (2015:8) define a food bank as "charitable organizations that minimise hunger by distributing food to people with limited access or income".

From the above definitions, it is clear that food banks are in existence because people experience food shortages as well as concern about food waste (Vansintjan, 2014). Considering the aforementioned definitions of food banks, this study adopts the definition developed by Ballantyne *et al.* (2015:8) that "food banks are charitable organizations that minimise hunger by distributing food to people with limited access to or no income".

2.3 FOOD BANKS AS SITES OF FOOD SECURITY

According to Campbell, Ross, and Webb (2013), it is appropriate to deliberate on food insecurity in the food bank discourse as the two seem to co-exist i.e., food banks exist to address food insecurity. Without surplus food and food insecure people, there would be no meaningful existence of food banks (Riches, 2002). Food insecurity happens when there is limited availability of sufficient and safe food, and the capability of households to obtain such is not certain (Radimer & Radimer, 2002). Food insecurity affects those economically underprivileged (Daponte *et al.,* 1998), and the number of those facing food scarcity is increasing (Ramsey *et al.*, 2012). Due to food insecurity, many people around the world rely on food aid programmes like food banks (Gunderson, 2021).

According to Global Food Banking Network (2019), food banks initially began in industrialised countries such as the USA as a response to the prevailing inequalities and food insecurities that could not be solved by the government. They have since expanded swiftly to middle and low-income countries like SA (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2015). Consequently, food banks have been set up as an option when governments are unable to safeguard food security for communities (Lambie-Mumford, 2013). Conway (2018) states that food banks intend to ease the numerous threats related to food insecurity. However, Chantelle *et al.* (2016) claim that the ability of food banks to advance general food security outcomes is limited, even though they have a significant part to play in providing rapid solutions to extreme food dearth. According to Mabli *et al*. (2013), they are meant to be a temporary way out for households that are destitute. While Handforth *et al.* (2013) state that they are not necessarily a key to attaining food security

The past twenty years (20) have been characterised by an increase in the number of those who need food aid, particularly in developed countries (Foodbank Australia,

2013). Deponte and Bade (2006) contend that this surge is associated with reforms in the social protection system, the world economic downturn and rising unemployment. Food banks ensure that households access food, hence the promotion of food security, especially during emergencies (Niles *et al*., 2021). They are an essential part of the reduction of food insecurity because they provide destitute households with an opportunity to minimise their defenselessness against food insecurity risks (Conway, 2018). Starkey *et al*. (1998) contend that some people have come to depend on food banks as their single source of food. Subsequently, food banks have become a valuable base of food aid (McKay, 2015).

The COVID-19 pandemic and associated social distancing measures to control the spread have negatively affected food systems and access to food the world over (Clapp & Moseley, 2020). As a result, food banks served as sites of food security during that time (Wolfson & Leung, 2020). The Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN) (2020) stated that they had a surge in emergency food parcels distributed in May 2020.

2.4 THE IMPORTANCE OF FOOD BANKS

Access to food is a human right (The Republic of South Africa, 1996). Yet, food insecurity denies people this right. Food banks play a key role in the restoration of this right through the distribution of donated and purchased groceries for households that are food insecure (Riches, 2002). Most food donated to the food banks comes from the food industry, such as farms, food producers (like bakeries) and retailers (Tarasuk & Eakin, 2003). In addition, some food banks purchase safe food for distribution (Riches, 2002). Whale (1993) maintains that food banks are structures that deal with the dreadful shortcomings of the welfare state and form an important part of the welfare environment. Even so, they cannot completely alleviate food insecurity in the communities as they are an emergency response to the problem.

Food insecurity has high risks coupled with intense long-term consequences of weakened health, productivity and the economy (Black *et al*., 2008). On the other hand, food banks contribute to food access for many (The Global Food Banking Network, 2020). Food banks, therefore, have an important role in feeding the needy, but they also aim to advance the psychological and physical health of beneficiaries. Such activities can decrease the occurrences of ill health in the future as well as avert

expensive, chronic complications (Thériault & Yadlowski, 2000). Below are more reasons why food banks are important:

Firstly, food banks redistribute donated and purchased safe food to those who are in need. In that way, they contribute to food security and form an essential part of the solution to food insecurity (Riches, 2002). Secondly, food banks play a role in sustaining local food systems by means of procuring large amounts of food to support food security and the economy (Bucknum & Bentzel, 2019). As food banks provide for food insecure households, these households may spend less on food and possibly have more financial means to spend on other household needs. As a result, people's lives improve and the economy is boosted. Thirdly, food banks facilitate a variety of skills development programmes that empower beneficiaries (Bucknum & Bentzel, 2019). According to Buyisa Ubuntu (2018), their aim is to enable food bank users to provide for themselves and not rely on the food bank.

Fourthly, food banks play a crucial role in the reduction of food waste and its effect on the environment (The Global Food Banking Network, 2019). By redistributing surplus usable food that would possibly be lost to landfills, which subsequently contribute to greenhouse gasses, thereby contributing to climate change (Morone & Cotton, 2016). According to the Food Agriculture Organization (FAO) (2011), approximately 30% of food produced in the world is wasted every year. Therefore, food banks' endeavours assist with the progress of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal number 12, which intends to cut global food waste by half by 2030 (United Nations, 2015). Fifthly, food banks contribute to employment creation. Although most food banks make use of volunteers, however, some have permanent employees. For instance, Buyisa Ubuntu has nineteen (19) full-time employees who do the packing and deliveries of groceries and administration (Buyisa Ubuntu, 2018), while the Trussell Trust has 120 employees (Irvin *et al*., 2022).

Lastly, food banks bring the community together in the sense that destitution may lead to social isolation. However, a smiling face and a conversation that is not condemnatory from a volunteer at a food bank can mean a lot to an individual facing a crisis (Trussell Trust, 2020). Again, occasionally, community leaders and other stakeholders join the activities and events at the food banks (Second Harvest, 2021).

2.5 FOOD BANKS – THE INTERNATIONAL PICTURE

It is important to study the food bank prototypes in developed economies as the organizations and surplus food recouping models are well established. Also to examine the effectiveness of the food bank models in these countries (The Global Food Banking Network, 2020). Again, during the pandemic, the majority of food bank activity transpired in those parts of the world (The Global Food Banking Network, 2020). In addition, the South African food bank practices are moulded by the American food bank model (Warshawsky, 2011).

2.5.1 Canada

Sustenance banks in Canada were established in 1989 as an emergency during the economic depression, whereby the demand for food banks was believed to be short-term (Power *et al*., 2021). Nevertheless, the need for food assistance continued to grow (Food Banks Canada (FBC), 2016). FBC is a national charitable organization committed to assisting Canadian citizens living with food insecurity. It supports food bank associations in ten (10) provinces in Canada and over 4,750 hunger relief organizations. Their mission is to create an environment where no one is distressed by hunger (Food Banks Canada, 2016). In its delivery, FBC focuses on three areas, to acquire food and funding that will be shared with its food bank associations, secondly, to deliver a national programme that assists associate food banks to distribute food efficiently and lastly, to influence government policy using research and advocacy (Power *et al*., 2021).

The public and supermarkets donate edible food to food banks. The food is then packed into food parcels by more than 28 000 volunteers, subsequently, it is given to people in crisis (Food Banks Canada, 2016). Food banks in Canada are intended for people who need assistance to put food on the table (Tarasuk *et al*., 2020). The criteria for those who want to benefit are not strict. However, people need to provide an identity document, proof of address and fill in an intake form. Personal information such as income and expenditure and the number of people in a household might be requested, however, applicants are not compelled to divulge such information if uncomfortable (Power *et al*., 2021).

Food banks in Canada provide food that can last two to three days once a month. This is based on the size of the household. Again, this varies some may give food that lasts up to ten days once per month (Power *et al*., 2021). The (ibid) further indicate that food parcel includes grains, protein, fruit and vegetable, and exclusive diet food, e.g., gluten-free, lactose-free, heart healthy and sugar-free, including baby food and diapers.

As much as food banks exist to offer essential services to households who are facing economic adversities, food is not the only amenity they provide. Many also serve as crucial community centres where people can be linked to services and support that they might not typically have access to (Food Banks Canada, 2016). The (ibid) further indicates that this is done through online and in-person informative and interactive opportunities to ensure that any investments and skills development offered in one corner are accessible in another. That way, everyone can benefit on an equal footing. Extra services include assisting households in financial difficulties by providing a national tax clinic programme and a job training programme (Food Banks Canada, 2016).

2.5.1.1 National Tax Clinic Program

This is one of the initiatives by Food Banks Canada, which demonstrates that food banks can provide more than food to beneficiaries. In the country, some financial security can be acquired through the tax-filing system. However, numerous people in a low-income bracket do not file their taxes due to costs and lack of information, thus, they miss out on various benefits that might be available. Through this programme, people are moved into a better economic position where their dependence on food banks is reduced (Power *et al*., 2021).

2.5.1.2 Learning and Job Training Programme

Many food banks in Canada are linking beneficiaries across the country to the support and means needed beyond food to realise long-term solutions for their future (Power *et al*., 2021). Education and on-the-job training are anticipated to play a pivotal role in breaking the poverty cycle. However, this is easier said than done in that learning often involves money, a commodity that most poor people do not have. Food banks help break the poverty cycle by providing services such as the availability of computers and

the internet for job seekers, skills development programmes and high school completion courses (Power *et al*., 2021).

2.5.2 United Kingdom

The Trussell Trust is an anti-poverty charity organization that operates a network of food banks across the UK to offer emergency foodstuff and support to distressed households (Irvine *et al*., 2022). The Trussell Trust food bank was founded in 1997 by Carol and Paddy Henderson based on a legacy left by Carol's mother, Betty Trussell. However, its first food bank was opened in 2000 (Tyler, 2021). The Trussell Trust has over 120 employees and over 1,400 food bank centres. There are also 1,172 independent food banks in the UK, making the total to be around 2,500 (Irvine *et al*., 2022).

Trussell Trust envisage the UK without food banks (Trussell Trust, 2017). This vision is based on the notion that it is unacceptable for any person to be incapable of paying for their food. Thus, it is working towards an impartial and considerate future where no one should need to use a food bank (Irvine *et al*., 2022). The services provided by the food banks in the UK vary by area, as most respond to the needs of their communities (Tyler, 2021). These include food donations, vouchers and other additional support needed by beneficiaries. Most provide a minimum of three days' emergency food supply that is nutritious to people referred in crisis, as well as offer assistance in resolving the dilemma they are facing (Irvin et al. 2022). Canned and fresh food that has not reached its expiry date is donated by the public to the food banks. Afterwards, volunteers arrange the donated items into emergency food parcels given to needy people (Irvin *et al*., 2022).

Distressed households and individuals are identified by care professionals, particularly healthcare workers, school staff and social workers. They are subsequently issued a food bank voucher, meaning they can receive a food parcel from their local food bank (Tyler, 2021). Usually, people receiving support from a food bank visit the food bank centre in person. Upon arrival, the food banks usually offer them refreshments, and a volunteer starts a conversation with them to assess the cause and extent of their crisis. The data collected by the food banks is often used to inform national campaigns for long-term change (Tyler, 2021).

Even though food banks arrange for a three-day emergency food parcel (Irvin *et al*., 2022), many are essential signposting services for destitute people. For example, volunteers can communicate information on accessing emergency finance, welfare support, and community groups and recommend other charities or non-government organizations and support services (Trussell Trust, 2020). The intention is to assist households in distress to resolve the financial crisis they might be facing.

There are three ways that the Trussell Trust believes food banks can end in the future, namely, changing communities, changing policy and changing minds. The Trussell Trust intends to change communities by working with food banks in its network to reduce the need for their services locally and also by helping people to access support that is directed at addressing the primary reason for their crisis (Trussell Trust, 2020). To change policy, the Trussell Trust will be working together with food banks and partners in offering strong evidence of the drivers of extreme poverty, likewise pushing for progressive solutions that will help confront these (Irvin *et al*., 2022). The (ibid) state that in changing minds, the Trussell Trust seeks to encourage the public to show kindness and empathy to the destitute by taking care of one another and creating a society without the need for food banks (Irvin *et al.,* 2022).

2.5.3 United States of America

Feeding America is the leading hunger-relief organization in the USA. It has partnered with food banks, food pantries and local food programmes to bring food to people who are exposed to hunger. The organization advocates for policies that create long-term solutions to hunger (Feeding America, 2022). The mission of Feeding America is to advocate for change by ensuring that there is impartial availability of nourishing food for all (Irvin *et al*., 2022). This is done in collaboration with food banks, policymakers, supporters and the communities of the beneficiaries. The organization supports 200 food banks and 60 000 food pantries and meal programmes (Feeding America, 2022).

Feeding America receives nourishing food from farmers, manufacturers and retailers. The food is subsequently distributed to distressed people, at the same time addressing the root causes of hunger (Feeding America, 2022). Mobile Food Pantries in Michigan attend to anyone who declares their sincere need for assistance with food. At Feeding America West Michigan, proof of income is not a prerequisite for one to benefit (Feeding America West Michigan, 2022). Second Harvest allows people to visit their

bank twice or more monthly if they desperately need food. They argue that some households may take longer to afford their food again (Second Harvest, 2021). Other food banks permit people to use them as often as they need until the bank is ready to get them out of their system. The amount of food beneficiaries receive varies (Second Harvest, 2021). In addition to feeding the nation, an increasing number of food banks are joining forces with social services and health care providers, insurance firms, universities and businesses to provide a variety of care for people who are food insecure (Himmelgreen & Heuer, 2021). The (ibid) further indicates that the services include transportation, assisting them with government registrations for food support programmes, health promotion and disease prevention.

2.5.4 Europe

The European Food Banks Federation (FEBA) is a non-profit organization that partners with 24 Full Members and 6 Associate Members in 30 countries across Europe (FEBA, 2022). It was established in 1986 and brings together a network of food banks devoted to inhibiting food waste and alleviating food insecurity. Since its inception, FEBA has represented its members at the European and international levels. It strengthens food banks in Europe by providing training, sharing best practices, forming partnerships, promoting the establishment and development of new food banks (FEBA, 2022). According to Gavinelli (2020), the main objective of FEBA is to support and promote the collection of excess food for human consumption. This is in line with the priorities of the EU food donation guiding principles. In order to achieve this objective, common and trustworthy information regarding the activities of the food banks is shared daily on the FEBA network (Gavinelli, 2020). Food banks in Europe recover surplus food that is fit for human consumption from local food businesses, farms and markets. The collected food is then sorted, stored and redistributed to the FEBA food banks network, including social restaurants, soup kitchens, shelters, etc. (FEBA, 2020).

In countries such as Estonia, Germany and the Netherlands, the food is allocated not only to other charitable organizations but also delivered directly to food insecure households (Gavinelli, 2020).

2.6 THE IMPACT OF FOOD BANKS

As alluded to in the previous sections, food banks have an important role in feeding the needy and advancing beneficiaries' psychological and physical health. This section discusses the impact that food banks have on the globe with a focus on the following countries and continents the UK, Europe, the US and Canada.

2.6.1 The United Kingdom (UK)

The Trussell Trust reported that between April and September 2020, food banks in its network provided 1,239,399 emergency food parcels (The Trussell Trust Coronavirus Impact Report, 2020). The (ibid) further states that 19,000 calls were taken by its helpline across the UK, which enabled more than 22,000 people to access food relief using this recently-established referral route (Irvin *et al*., 2022). The Trussell Trust referred over 250,000 clients to food banks in its network during the pandemic. These online referrals ensured that access to food relief could continue even when referral partners worked from home (Irvin *et al*., 2022).

During the first six months of the pandemic, food banks in the Trussell Trust network provided approximately 2,600 emergency food parcels for children daily (Trussell Trust, 2020). This means several children were spared from going to bed hungry, even for a few days. Throughout the pandemic, some food banks had to extend their hours of operation to ensure that more people could access food (Trussell Trust, 2020). Due to the influence of the Trussell Trust policy and its campaign activities, the government offered £63 million in additional funding for local authorities (Irvine *et al*., 2022).

2.6.2 Europe

FEBA (2022) states that 341 food banks in its network reallocated 907,280 tons of food from the European food supply chain to 45,810 non-profit emergency organizations**,** which offered food aid to 11.8 million underprivileged people across Europe in 2021. In addition, FEBA members further redistributed food from the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD)**,** the EU Fruits and Vegetables withdrawal scheme and individual and corporate food collections.

2.6.3 United States of America (USA)

In 2021, 53 million people resorted to food banks and community programmes to help to put food on the table (Himmelgreen & Heuer, 2021). Food banks were visited by

people who have never done so before. 4 in 10 people visiting food banks between March and June 2020 were using the food banks for the first time. Feeding America (2022) predicts that this number will probably increase before the COVID-19 pandemic diminishes and the economy recovers.

U.S. food banks distributed approximately 4.2 billion meals between March and November 2020 (Feeding America, 2022). Although the income of most food banks is used to supply food to the underprivileged, they frequently deliver an important amenity to populations that would otherwise be struggling to have food aid (Second Harvest, 2021). The activities of food banks benefit the recipients in that they will not be concerned about where their next meal will come from (Feeding America.org, 2022). Again, Food banks have displayed their dedication to positively impacting communities by offering healthy food to destitute households (Second Harvest, 2021). Eventually, facilitating the distribution of donated food alleviates poverty and significantly assists in the fight against hunger from one community to another. These institutions also attempt to offer nourishing and garden-fresh foods to beneficiaries (Feeding America, 2022).

2.6.4 Canada

During the pandemic, FBC assisted local food banks kept their doors open to hand out food parcels, 390 000 food hampers were distributed during that time (Food Banks Canada Hunger Count, 2022). FBC also negotiated for discounted dairy products with Dairy Farmers of Canada. As a result, nourishing dairy products, including milk, yoghurt and cheese, were offered (Food Banks Canada Hunger Count, 2022). Again, FBC collaborated with Canadian companies and manufacturers to provide nutritious food to local food banks in the country. The food products included pasta, rice, peanut butter, dried legumes, tuna, pasta sauce legumes and soup (Food Banks Canada Hunger Count, 2022).

2.7 FOOD BANK CHALLENGES

Despite all the achievements that food banks attained, they are not without challenges, for example, they are inundated with a mission of distributing millions of kilograms of fresh fruit, vegetables, meat, dairy and shelf-stable food to underprivileged households each month (Warshawsky, 2011). However, these households often face other

adversities, such as housing and financial instability (Martinchek, 2020). Various food banks offer additional programmes to address such instabilities. However, amenities such as these could come with new challenges, such as reaching people from remote and unreachable areas, difficulty collecting data and building lasting partnerships because of households that frequently change residences.

Martinchek (2020) argues that food banks engaging beneficiaries in skills development programmes can be a challenge if people change places of residence regularly; or are consumed with other challenges, like an ill family member or loss of employment. In such cases, they do not have enough time to focus on the requirements of the programme and participate fully. Thus, the effectiveness of the programme might be difficult to determine. Again, collecting post programme data from beneficiaries who are always on the move is difficult. Without data, it is difficult for food banks to report the impact to funders and stakeholders (Feeding America, 2022).

Tsang *et al*. (2011) maintain that food bank accessibility is a challenge to many beneficiaries in terms of where the food bank is situated, the hours food banks operate, as well as choices of transportation. Buyisa Ubuntu, for instance, delivers food to the beneficiaries' doors (Buyisa Ubuntu, 2018). However, this is done during business hours. In other words, the beneficiary must have the time and the knowledge of when the food is coming (Miewald & MacCann, 2014). Food banks might also stipulate some qualification criteria that must be met before receiving a food hamper (McGurk & Clark, 1993). This may inhibit accessibility to those who do not meet the criteria.

Again, during the pandemic, food banks were busier than ever (Mckay, 2015). Keeping workers, volunteers, beneficiaries and stakeholders safe came with the challenge. They, therefore, needed additional protective clothing, which was, at times, unaffordable. However, again, keeping a safe distance was not always possible (Maehr, 2020). From time to time, some team members at the food banks had to quarantine, which reduced the number of volunteers, while those seeking food assistance increased in number (Maehr, 2020). Currently, food banks are facing the challenge of price hikes. As they purchase some of the food they distribute, they pay more than they did the previous year (Maehr, 2020).

One of the main problems faced by food banks is beneficiary dependency, in that food banks have come to be a long-term source of food for many households in need. Some of these households are now integrating food parcels that they receive from the food banks and their monetary value into their standard household budgeting (Uttley, 1997). This food provision is not sustainable for poverty alleviation (Leslie, 1996).

Similarly, governments seem to be also dependent on the food hampers offered by food banks. For instance, in New Zealand, hunger has become a public policy concern (Riches, 1997). In addition, food banks are factored into state welfare policies, and these policies permit governments to carry on under-funding critical welfare services. Wynd (2005) argues that governments can disregard deficits in benefit and salary levels, knowing that food banks will intervene and 'close the gap'. Furthermore, the state has validated the necessity for food banks and charitable organizations to behave as sites of the last alternative for food insecure people (Riches, 2002). This has resulted in the state abandoning its duty to deal with poverty and hunger and prioritising citizens' food security (Daly, 1996; Thériault & Yadlowski, 2000; Riches, 2002). This subsequently contributes to the failure of society to resolve the concerns of poverty in a meaningful manner (Poppendieck, 1998).

According to McPherson (2006), one of the problems facing food banks is that they compete with one another to gain access to and win over food resources from prospective donors. In this instance, smaller food banks are usually deprived due to the lack of public profile that larger food banks have. Another challenge is the question of 'donor fatigue', which can affect the quantity and quality of donations received by food banks (McPherson, 2006). Again, food banks depend strongly on donated food. Frequently this food is close to its expiry date (Tarasuk & Eakin, 2003). This may affect the quality and nutritional value of the food given to needy households. Food banks also offer short-term assistance (Thériault & Yadlowski, 2000), which may not be sufficient for struggling households.

2.7.1 Coping Mechanisms for Households during the Pandemic

For appropriate food security policies and design programmes to be formulated and implemented, it is imperative to comprehend the coping mechanisms that households apply (Republic of Kenya, 2011). Coates *et al*. (2007) discuss six coping devices implemented by food insecure households: the sale or pawning of assets, eating low-

quality food, skipping meals, stopping some household members from going to school, borrowing food and borrowing money.

According to a study conducted on Bangladeshi subsistence farmers, two out of every three households confirmed that they relied on less desired and cheaper foods, such as cheap cuts of meat like intestines, feet and skin (Gupta *et al*., 2015). Seventeen percent of households, skipped meals, and in severe shortages, some households skip meals for the entire day (ibid). Several households borrowed money from friends and relatives to buy food, while others got food on credit from local shopkeepers (Gupta *et al*., 2015). This is evident in Nigeria, where nearly forty per cent of households stated they had acquired debts to pay for food (Oxfam International and Save the Children, 2008).

In Manila, Philippines, underprivileged households borrowed cash at high interest rates to feed their members because their income could not pay for food and other basic needs. As a result, they fall into the trap of money lenders (FAO, 2008). When food insecurity becomes extreme, households turn to more rigorous coping strategies such as selling or pawning properties (Gupta *et al*., 2015). Other coping mechanisms that food insecure households use, are eating food that has passed the expiry date, non-payment of bills and spending less money on medication (Mabli *et al*., 2010).

Adger (2000) suggests that home-grown produce, such as rural and urban food gardening, could contribute to food security among households without food banks. He adds that mutual aid and food sharing among households could also be helpful. Households do these to minimise the effects of food insecurity (Gunderson & Ziliak, 2014).

2.7.2 Food Sovereignty

In the food security discourse, it is imperative to understand and talk about food sovereignty. The latter emerged to address the shortcomings, ensuring that people are not just well fed but that the whole food system is revolutionised (Kesselman, 2017). Food security concentrates on the capitalisation of production and the market increase, with little consideration of who the food consumer is, how it is produced and who produces and distributes it. (Schift and Levkoe, 2014). The key structural causes of food insecurity are power imbalances within the food system (Moragues-Faus,

2016); thus, food sovereignty came into existence. Food sovereignty developed through coordinated discussion among international farmer organizations to challenge political and economic power in the food system (Pimbert, 2009). La via Campesina (1996:1) define food sovereignty as “the right of each nation to maintain and develop its capacity to produce its basic foods respecting cultural and productive diversity. We have the right to produce our own food in our own territory”. While Nyěléni (2007:2) defines it as “the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems”. It is evident that both definitions use food and agriculture to address cultural, ecological and economic concerns about insufficient access to food.

Patel (2018) and NICOA (2019) contend that food sovereignty is a movement on how to transform the food system’s inclination to inequality and the perception that food security seems to maintain the status quo. In other words, food sovereignty is a necessary condition for authentic food security (Via Campesina, 1996). In terms of this movement, the people need to take it upon themselves to address the hunger issues in their communities instead of assigning this significant responsibility to the government, which usually involves big food companies that prioritise profit over feeding the nations (La via Campesina, 2003). This may be true for the community of Kagiso Township if it wants to change the present food insecurity situation. They need to organise themselves and take charge of their hunger problems instead of handing the responsibility to the government.

2.7.3 Policy and Institutional Dimensions of Food Security

SA has legislation on the right to food. Section 27 (1) (b) of the South African Constitution states that “everyone has the right to have access to sufficient food and water”. This obligation is extended in section 27(2), whereby “the state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to achieve the progressive realisation of each of these rights”. Section 28(1) (c) of the Integrated Food Security Strategy (IFSS), approved by Cabinet in 2002, states that every child has a right to “basic nutrition, shelter, basic health care services and social services” (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996).

The right to food is a human right accepted under national and international law, which defends the right of human beings to access food and feed themselves, either by producing their own food or by buying it (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2005). The right to food is connected to one's right to life and dignity (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). The right to food requires that food be available, accessible and adequate for everyone without discrimination (South African Human Rights Commission, 2016). This is recognised by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and subsequent treaties, to which all participating countries are bound (South African Government News Agency, 2018). The National Policy on Food and National Security approved by the cabinet in 2013 had a goal of ensuring the availability, accessibility and affordability of safe and nutritious food at the national level (Centre for Environmental Rights, 2014). The policy builds on current measures and systems and sets up devices that ensure firmer alignment, better administration, and stricter supervision. Furthermore, the Policy strives to ensure that the reaction to food and nutrition insecurity is ambitious, rigorous and dynamic (Centre for Environmental Rights, 2014).

An effective food assistance network is one of the pillars of food security (World Bank, 2017). According to the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) (2013), these networks involve government and non-government organizations in ensuring that everyone has improved access to food through improved dietary safety nets. These may comprise an expanded and better-quality school nourishment programme, enrichment of foods, and the usage of food banks and soup pantries (DAFF, 2013).

Generally, South Africa, as a middle-income country, is food secure. However, some households and individuals experience high food insecurity and malnutrition (John-Langba, 2015). Furthermore, there is a disproportionate load of food insecurity in poor, black and coloured households, such as those in Kagiso Township, in contrast to white households (May & Timaeus 2015). The multifaceted challenge of hunger accentuates the significance of comprehending how policy shapes the threat of food insecurity. The Bill of Rights promises each citizen the right to obtain adequate food and water (The Constitution, 1996) and that Government needs to take practical statutory and other actions within its existing means to realise each of these rights in a progressive manner

(IFSS, 2000; Right to Food, 2010; Greer-Love, 2003). The National Development Plan (NDP) points out various steps that can enhance food security, including the extended usage of irrigation, security of land tenure, particularly for women and encouraging healthy eating (NDP, 2011).

The South African government needs to take cognisance of the recommendation of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) (2014), which claims that the member states ought to contemplate implementing the regulation on the right to acquire food. The government also ought to work towards the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, which aim to end hunger and all forms of malnutrition by 2030 and commits to universal access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food at all times (United Nations, 2015). The utilisation of food banks reveals that food shortages are prevalent in households and that those using food banks confirm terrestrial concerns of poverty, disparities and food scarcity (Spoor, 2021).

Governments on their own cannot meet the welfare needs of all people, as such, they rely on non-governmental organizations to ensure the well-being of vulnerable food-insecure persons (Wolch, 1990). In response, the South African government, through the DSD, introduced a zero-hunger programme in 2012 (Parliamentary monitoring group, 2013). This was done to ensure that all South Africans realise adequate, safe and healthy food at all times. To also ensure that the food meets their dietary needs and that the varieties provide for an energetic and healthy life. In its quest to ensure access to food, DSD uses the zero-hunger program to intervene through the provision of social safety nets in the form of cash transfers, which include social grants and food transfers (Zita, 2012). The (ibid) further state that these include feeding and food distribution programmes, i.e., soup kitchens, drop-in centres, community nutrition and development centres, one-stop development centres, food parcels and food banks. As an acknowledgement that dealing with food insecurity necessitates diverse conduits of food distribution, the DSD in Gauteng province strengthened partnerships with stakeholders such as food banks providing food to thousands of people on a regular basis (Zita, 2012). According to Riches (2002), food banks developed as noteworthy community reactions to food insecure people.

2.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.8.1 Theories of Poverty

This study was based on the theories of poverty, mainly structural and cultural understandings of poverty. Poverty is one of the main hindrances to food security, and COVID-19 hits poorer households, more than affluent ones. Drammeh *et al*. (2019) state that poverty is a fundamental determining factor of household food insecurity since the underprivileged do not have enough money to buy food. Smith and Haddad (2000) and Cheer *et al*. (2002) maintain that poverty inhibits households and individuals from realising food security. Nolan and Whelan (1996) claim that two ideologies are prominent and competing for explaining the sources and perpetuation of poverty. At some point in the political circles, each philosophy has been persuasive and fundamental in forming social policy and reactions to the issues of poverty, these ideologies are discussed in the sections below.

2.8.2 Structural Theories of Poverty

Structural theorists use the living conditions of the poor to explain poverty, i.e., the political and economic situations that are said to lead people to poverty (Cerio, 2019). These living conditions may include unemployment, underemployment, poor education and poor health (Mingione, 1993). Unemployment contributes to poverty in that households may not have sufficient earnings to meet their living expenses. Thus, some borrow money to support their basic needs, which may lead to indebtedness (Hinteregger, 2017). In Brazil, the high unemployment rate of parents has placed a huge strain and responsibility on the children. As a result, children drop out of school before they finish basic education to find work and support their families. The implication is that they take low-paying jobs because they do not have proper qualifications, and this situation perpetuates generational poverty (Hinteregger, 2017).

Again, structural theorists blame capitalism for the prevalence of poverty, they argue that capitalism enables poverty to thrive (Sameti, Esfahani & Haghighi, 2002. According to Marxist observations (*Sameti et al*., 2002), poverty is unavoidable under capitalism in that all of the proletariats, i.e., the working class, are viewed as poor by the bourgeoisie, who are the owners of the means of production, and pay them meagre wages in order to make more profit. The proletariat has been made to believe that their wages are fair and appropriate (Cerio, 2019). The economic situation of the working

class coerces them to sell their labour in exchange for a wage because they do not own the means of production such as land, plant and equipment (Gouverneur, 2005). Due to the low wage, the working class live beyond the poverty line (Sameti *et al.,* 2002).

Wilson (1987) contended that poverty in inner cities is related to the major economic changes brought by deindustrialisation. This decreased manufacturing employment opportunities, whereby many jobs were moved out to the suburbs (Kasarda, 1989). This situation left the poor residents of the inner cities isolated and without jobs. In Johannesburg, many businesses have migrated to the outer city areas (Katleli, 2018). The main theme of Wilson's work was class inequalities and social isolation. The pair has the potential to hinder the well-being and life chances of the residents. Wacquant and Wilson (1989) agree that the intense progression of unemployment and economic segregation are the fundamental causes of poverty and the misfortune of the underclass, which is related to the continuing spatial and industrial changes.

According to Wilson (1987), proponents of structural theories of poverty maintain that government has the most important part to play in poverty alleviation. This can be attained through all-inclusive public policy, which brings social and labour policies together (Wilson, 1987). Therefore, charity organizations, such as food banks, which facilitate and ensure an acceptable standard of living, need to be perceived as indispensable in offering a way out of poverty (UN, 2021). The theorists propose that macroeconomic policy, which stimulates economic growth, both locally and internationally, is key to creating better job opportunities (Wilson, 1987).

If poverty is the main reason for food shortages, then, in terms of structural theories of poverty, the alleviation of poverty may consequently reduce food scarcity. This may not be an easy and quick process, therefore, it requires the involvement of the government through comprehensive public policy and macroeconomic policy, as well as the participation of welfare organisations, including food banks (Spoor, 2021). However, conflicting challenges such as climate change and high food prices faced by the world could make poverty alleviation and food security not viable (UN, 1996).

2.8.3 Cultural Theories of Poverty

On the other hand, the cultural explanations of poverty lie in the traits of the poor, i.e., their values, attitudes and behavioural patterns (Cerio, 2019). According to cultural theorists, these traits inhibit the poor from upward social mobility (Nolan & Whelan, 1996). According to McNicol (1987), cultural theories of poverty "have always been a part of the discourse on poverty in advanced industrial societies". During the 1970s and 1980s, cultural viewpoints were key in the UK and the US. This was when numerous liberal scholars were reluctant to research the cultural or behavioural facets of poverty, as they did not want to depict the poor in an undesirable manner (Wilson, 1987).

According to Auletta (1983), the key proponents of the 'culture of poverty' theory were Oscar Lewis (1968) and Charles Murray (1984), who indicated that overcoming poverty was prohibited by deep-seated cultural characteristics and behavioural disorders. Murray (1984) emphasises that generous welfare schemes were somewhat detrimental to the underclass and, in reality, increased poverty. This notion is believed to have inspired the main welfare transformations in the US during Reagan's Administration (Wilson, 1987). Subsequently, similar neo-liberal ideologies caused the collapse of the welfare state in many countries. In the same breath, the neo-liberal has immensely encouraged the role of the private and charitable welfare sectors, such as food banks, as significant welfare providers. Therefore, neo-liberalism has channelled the development of volunteerism in incomparable measures (Wilson, 1987). Wolch (1990) regards the charitable welfare sector, such as food banks, as shadow governments because they execute welfare state tasks. The charitable welfare sector has grown more rapidly due to additional state funding. However, on the whole, the sector is underfunded and is perceived as incapable of taking on the role that the state has anticipated (Pinch, 1997).

The study of homelessness may be used as the main example of a cultural understanding of poverty. According to Lyon-Callo (2004), in the US and other parts of the world, homelessness is assumed to be the result of an individual failing to conform to society's standards. The (ibid) further argues that this assumption has affected previous and current responses to the issue of homelessness and is key to accepting homelessness as normal. Society has come to identify homeless people as

individuals who are deviant and have chosen to live in that manner. Hence, they are more tolerant of the huge social inequalities (Pleace, 1998; Lyon-Callo, 2004).

2.8.4 Theory adopted for this study

Structural theories of poverty are more relevant to this study and will be used to analyse the data collected. The structural theories of poverty apply to the people of Kagiso in that the township is characterised by socio-economic difficulties such as high unemployment (Mogale City Draft IDP, 2019/2020). According to Stats SA (2011), 39.6% of the people in the area are unemployed. As a result, many live below the poverty level and depend on free municipality services as a means of survival. This situation negatively affects their ability to afford food and other basic needs. Thus, some turn to the food bank to be assisted with food.

2.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter explained the concept of food banks and outlined the theoretical framework for the study grounded in theories of poverty, particularly the structural and cultural theories of poverty. The chapter painted the international picture of the food banks and other services provided by the food banks to beneficiaries, including the skills development programmes. Challenges experienced by food banks as well as their impact were highlighted. Coping mechanisms for households during the COVID-19 pandemic were also discussed. The chapter provided the context of the regulatory environment within which the food banks operate, such as policies and the institutional dimensions of food security.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the research approach that guides the study and provides the philosophical underpinnings within which the research is positioned. The research design, data collection methods and the research instrument used in the study are illustrated and justified. Additionally, the steps followed to analyse and interpret data are discussed in this chapter. The chapter further explains how the issues of reliability and validity are addressed.

3.2 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

In terms of Creswell (2014), the research approach involves three components: the philosophical assumptions, the research design, whether qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods and the research methods. The paradigm is an important lens through which the research can be justified. According to Wagner (2012), a paradigm is a worldview encompassing beliefs and values. It guides how to conduct the research and address problems. Additionally, philosophical assumptions inform the research paradigm in three ways: i.e., the ontological view of the nature of reality; the epistemological view of how knowledge is generated and justified; and the axiological value system, which is based on what is deemed to be true and the values considered in the research (Wagner, 2012).

Creswell (2009) and Wagner (2012) identify four world views or paradigms related to research methodology: the Positivist/Post-positivism paradigm; secondly, Constructivism/Interpretive paradigm. Third are the Transformative/ Emancipatory paradigm and the Postcolonial/Indigenous research paradigm. Table 3.1 below compares the four research paradigms and the philosophical underpinnings of each worldview.

Table 3.1: ***The comparison of four paradigms – world views***

Paradigm	Positivist/Post positivism	Constructivism/ Interpretative	Transformative/ Emancipatory	Postcolonial/ Indigenous
Reason for doing research	To discover laws that are generalizable and govern the universe	To understand and describe human nature	To destroy myths and empower people to change society radically	To challenge the deficit in thinking and reconstruct a body of knowledge that carries hope for the historically oppressed
Philosophical underpinnings	Informed mainly by realism and critical realism	Informed by hermeneutics and phenomenology	Informed by Critical Theory, postcolonial discourses, feminist, race specific and Marxist theories	Informed by indigenous knowledge systems, Critical Theory, postcolonial discourses, feminist, race specific and neo-Marxist theories
Ontological assumptions about reality	One reality, knowable within probability	Multiple socially constructed realities	Multiple realities shaped by social, political, cultural, race, ethnic, gender and disability values	Socially constructed multiple realities shaped by connections with environment, cosmos, living and non-living
Axiology: Place of values in the research process	Science is value free, and values have no space except when choosing a topic	Values are an integral part of social life, no group's values are wrong, only different	All science must begin with a value position, some positions are right, some are wrong	All research must be guided by relational accountability that promotes respectful representation, reciprocity and rights of the research
Epistemology: nature of knowledge	Objective	Subjective idiographic	Dialectical understanding aimed at critical praxis	Knowledge is relational and is all the indigenous knowledge systems built on relations
What counts as truth, reality	Based on precise observation and measurement that is verifiable	Truth is context-dependent	Truth is informed by a theory that unveils illusions	Truth is informed by the set of multiple relations that one has with the universe
Methodology	Qualitative, correlational; quasi-experimental; causal comparative, survey	Qualitative, phenomenology, ethnographic, symbolic interaction, naturalistic	Combination of quantitative and qualitative action research, participatory research	Participatory, liberating and transformative research approaches and methodologies that draw from indigenous knowledge systems
Techniques of gathering data	Mainly questionnaires, observations, tests and experiments	Interview, participant observation, pictures, photographs, diaries and documents	A combination of techniques in Positivist and Constructivist paradigms	Techniques based on philosophic sagacity, ethno philosophy, language frameworks, indigenous knowledge systems and talk stories and talk circles

Source: Chillisa (2011) in Wagner (2012)

The study is situated in a constructivist research paradigm focusing on understanding and describing human nature (Wagner, 2012). Constructivism tries to understand the world as others experience it. In “interpretive studies”, knowledge is constructed by describing people’s beliefs, intentions, values and self-understanding to make meaning within the social context and for distribution (Henning, 2004).

Ontologically position the nature of reality, constructivists/interpretivists believe in manifold realities that build up differently from the belief of the Positivists in a single reality (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The interpretive paradigm emphasises meaningful social action, socially constructed meaning and value relativism (Neuman, 2011). In a phenomenological orientation, research is conducted in a social setting where participants subjectively attach meaning (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). This contradicts the Transformative paradigm wherein the philosophical assumption is founded on Critical Theory (Neuman, 2011). The (ibid) further indicates that critical theory helps to critique and go beyond the surface through a critical process of enquiry to uncover the real structures in the material world and reveal hidden truths to empower people to build a better world for themselves.

In this study, the researcher attempted to understand the world through the experience of beneficiaries of the food bank in Kagiso Township (Wagner, 2012). The study sought to establish whether COVID-19 caused these beneficiaries to lose their jobs and other sources of income. If so, how their ability to access food is affected, and what did they do when they did not have food? The study also sought to ascertain the beneficiaries’ reality and subjective truth, which may be individual or shared truth (McCandless, 2007). The research design adopted in this study was a case study of Kagiso Township Buyisa Ubuntu food bank beneficiaries from 2020 to 2022. This is the period of initial stages of COVID-19. The qualitative research methodology was used. Hence the constructivist research philosophy was adopted. This made it possible for the study to gather detailed and comprehensive data.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research designs are the techniques for collecting, analysing, interpreting and reporting data in research investigations (Salmons, 2021). It is the general strategy for integrating proposed research concerns with relevant and feasible/actual research

(Salmons, 2021). In other words, the study design establishes the technique for gathering the necessary data, the methodologies to collect and evaluate the data, and how all of this will address the research objective (Grey, 2018). The (ibid) further states that there are three research study designs: exploratory, descriptive and explanatory.

3.3.1 Exploratory Research Design

In Exploratory Research Design, there is insufficient knowledge of a phenomenon or an issue (Salmons, 2021). It seeks not to offer definitive solutions to the research questions but to examine the issue in varied depths (Jacobs, 2016). As a result, its theme is to address novel challenges with little or no prior study (Jacobs, 2016). Even in the most severe cases, exploratory research is the foundation for a more decisive study, determining the first research design, sample methodology and data gathering method (Schindler, 2019).

3.3.2 Descriptive Research Design

A “descriptive” research design seeks information to characterise a phenomenon, situation, or population methodically (Schindler, 2019). The goal is to paint an image of a scenario, individual, or occurrence or to demonstrate how things are connected and occur naturally (Salmons, 2021). On the other hand, descriptive studies are unable to justify why an event transpired and are best suited for a very new or uncharted study field (Schindler, 2019). For abundant descriptive data, different study methodologies, such as explanatory or exploratory approaches, are recommended (Grey, 2018).

3.3.3 Explanatory Research Design

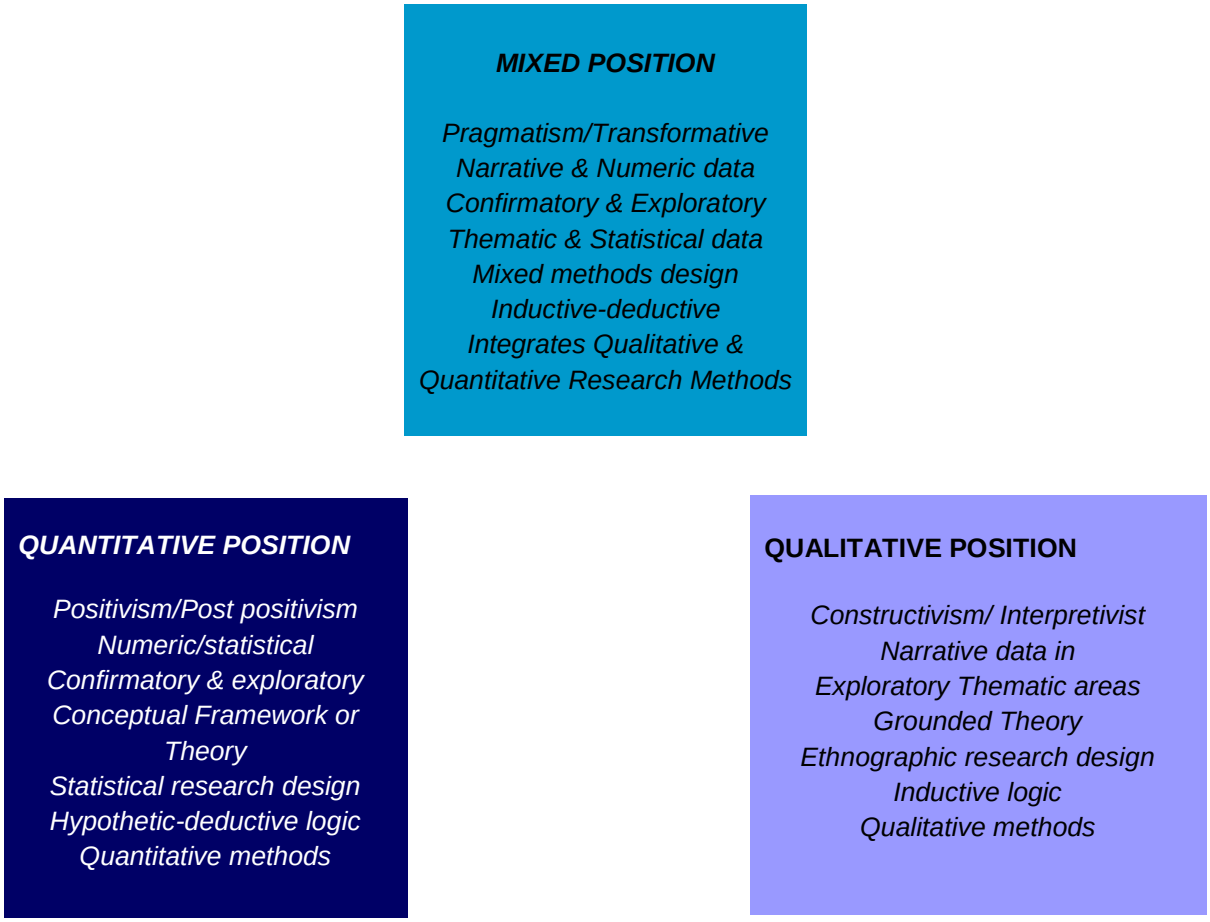
Explanatory research seeks to explain and account for descriptive data. Descriptive studies may address “inquiries” of the ‘what’ question, whereas explanatory studies strive to answer the ‘why’ and ‘how’ questions (Grey, 2018). It draws on exploratory and descriptive research to find the true causes of a phenomenon. Explanatory studies seek causes, explanations, and a blueprint to support or disprove an explanation or prediction (Schindler, 2019). It is carried out to uncover and describe specific correlations between various components of the phenomenon under consideration (Schindler, 2019).

Considering the preceding description of the three research types, the current study followed the exploratory research design. The study aims to investigate the effects of Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank on the lives of Kagiso residents during the COVID-19 epidemic and to comprehend the coping mechanisms of these beneficiaries. The exploratory research design was essential to help the researcher to delve deeply into the issue through the probing technique during data gathering. It was critical to understand better how the Buyisa Unity Food Bank affected the livelihoods of Kagiso residents. The design was extremely useful in narrowing down a difficult or vague subject that had not previously been explored. Finally, it was adaptable, less costly and offered opportunities for open discussions with the participants.

3.3.4 Research Methodology Approaches

From the beginning, it is imperative to determine how the research is designed and implemented and how the findings are analysed. Neuman (2006) describes scientific methods and approaches as the rules, ideas, strategies and techniques a scientific community uses for knowledge creation and evaluation. The quantitative and qualitative approaches are the most commonly used approaches, with both approaches referred to as mixed methods. However, this research study solely employed the qualitative approach. The qualitative research approach was appropriate for this study as it is positioned within the constructivist/interpretivist paradigm, an exploratory and typically narrative study that will analyse data in thematic areas to answer research questions (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2009).

Figure 3.1: ***Research Methodology Approaches***



Source: Modified by author adopted from Tashakkori & Teddlie (2009)

3.4 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

Quantitative research methods are philosophically oriented within the positivist/post-positivist paradigm, primarily focusing on numbers and statistical analysis (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The positivist paradigm employs scientific methods to test hypotheses utilising data. It holds the view that it is the only way to determine reality and the only foundation to generate knowledge (Wagner, 2012). The view of post-positivism moves away from positivism by emphasising probability and absolute certainty to contribute to knowledge generation instead of readily acknowledging the laws of nature (Wagner, 2012). The studies undertaken in positivist scientific research aim to identify and analyse the root causes influencing outcomes by reducing ideas to variables to develop hypotheses and research questions (Creswell, 2014). In quantitative research, the study is independent of the researcher in measuring reality through the objective analysis of data (Williams, 2007).

Quantitative methods use scientific techniques that inform the gathering, analysis, interpretation and presentation of statistical information as the best framework for investigating the social world (Wagner, 2012). According to Creswell (2014), scientific research commences with theory and data collection methods to either support or refute the theory, including possible additional experiments, tests and necessary revisions.

Phillip and Burbles (2000) in Creswell (2014:7) outline key assumptions in the positivist/post-positivist worldview as follows:

- Knowledge is not founded in absolute truth, and scientific studies either accept or reject the null hypothesis
- Quantitative research commences with testing theory to make claims in the process of refining or abandoning in favour of those strongly preferred.
- The data collected, and evidence emanating from the scientific research informs considerations about knowledge obtained through observations or responses received.
- Explaining the causal relationship between variables is expanded through establishing a hypothesis, and the research questions undertaken in a quantitative study are used to develop true and relevant statements.
- The core fundamental element of qualitative research is maintaining the highest level of objectivity that is free from bias in the methods employed, thus ensuring the validity and reliability of the study.

Williams (2007) identifies three broad classifications of quantitative research descriptive, experimental and causal comparative. Various research methods can be employed in descriptive design, experimental design and causal comparative research design. These include correlational methods, developmental designs, observational studies and survey research (Williams, 2007).

Descriptive research examines the current status quo by exploring the correlation between two or more phenomena or through observation (Williams, 2007). According to Wagner (2012), descriptive research assists the researcher in making sense of numerical data collected in the study to draw relevant conclusions about the problem being researched. Descriptive statistics include measures of central tendencies using the arithmetic mean, the mode and the median. Variability in quantitative research is

measured using the range, the variance and the standard deviation to determine how the spread or dispersal of scores vary (Wagner, 2021). The (ibid) further emphasises the importance of checking whether data has been captured correctly, i.e., looking for incorrect values, missing data and inconsistencies prior to undertaking the research analysis, as this will affect the validity of the results. In correlational studies, the difference between two characteristics of the study groups is examined and informed by a statistical calculation to determine whether two or more variables are related (Williams, 2007). Wagner (2012) refers to this as the correlation coefficient of the bivariate data that describes the relationship between two variables, the outcome of which can be either a positive or negative correlation.

Experimental research seeks to establish if a specific treatment influences an outcome (Creswell, 2014). At the same time, Williams (2007) identifies three types of experiments: pre-experimental true experimental and quasi-experimental. Pre-experimental involves an independent variable that is given, while true experimental provides a higher degree of validity as it is controlled, whereas quasi-experimental uses non-randomised assignments (Williams, 2007). The research involves an assessment of experimental results obtained from groups in which one was given specific treatment, and the other group was excluded from the treatment (Creswell, 2007). Wagner (2012) further advises that experimental research should be undertaken where there is a prevalent suspicion of a cause-and-effect relationship, the availability of a randomly selected group, the manipulation of the independent variable and the measurability of the dependent variable. Causal comparative research involves a process wherein the researcher studies the cause and effect of independent variables on dependent variables (Williams, 2007).

Creswell (2014) posits that survey research is a non-experimental study that can be undertaken in quantitative research wherein a sample of a population's trends, opinions and attitudes are examined, obtained through either the structured interviews or completion of questionnaires to draw inferences about the population. Wagner (2012) differentiates methods of observation among different types of observations that the researcher is involved in as a complete participant, where the researcher is a member of the group being observed, the participant is an observer in which the researcher participates with the knowledge of the members of the group studied, and

a complete observer is where the researcher observes. The participants are not aware that they are being observed. Williams (2007) emphasises that the researcher must exercise objectivity when observing human behaviour.

In quantitative research, there are several threats to internal and external validity, with specific reference to experimental and quasi-experimental research. Wagner (2012) highlights threats to internal validity that refer to the prevailing conditions of the environment of the participants during the experiment as history, the differential section of participants, maturation, testing and loss of participants and attrition. Factors affecting external validity that must be taken into consideration include population validity with regard to the degree of similarity among the sample, population and target population, the personal variables of different individual preferences and ecological validity of the situation, and the physical and emotional factors to be considered in the study (Wagner, 2012).

3.5 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

Qualitative studies are commonly located within the Constructivist/Transformative philosophical paradigm, which primarily focuses on narrative data and analyses (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Qualitative research involves various interpretive techniques and philosophical orientations that attempt to understand meanings that people construct through experiences they have in the social world (Merriam, 2009). Creswell (2014) further emphasises the understanding of meanings involved in the qualitative study as the researcher describes and interprets meanings that participants attach to the social challenges. The qualitative research approach strives to present a story as seen through the eyes of the participants' life experiences and actions undertaken through interviews, observation or focus groups (Wagner, 2012).

Different qualitative approaches include narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnology and case studies (Merriam, 2009). Narrative research involves the study of the lives of individuals wherein the story is recited by the researcher chronologically, in which the researcher also relates and attaches their own life experience (Creswell, 2014). Merriam (2009) describes narrative analysis as one of the types of research that have gained momentum in which the events are evaluated sequentially in order of occurrence to derive meaning from what eventually transpired.

Phenomenology studies people's conscious encounters with everyday life occurrences and social actions (Merriam, 2009:25). Phenomenology is a qualitative design that stems from philosophy in which the lived experiences of the participants are relayed as their descriptions of particular occurrences and not as an attempt to explain those experiences (Creswell, 2014). According to Wagner (2012), the phenomenological approach requires the researcher to be free from subjective inclinations and prejudices to defer or bracket any forms of judgement. Merriam (2009) asserts that this qualitative approach is suited for studying emotional and intense human experiences.

Creswell (2014) describes ethnography as a design informed by anthropology and sociology. Ethnographic research involves studying shared behaviour patterns of actors in a social setting conducted through focus group interviews and/or observations. Furthermore, in ethnography, the researcher studies and describes cultural behaviour as carried out by communities where cultures are investigated in a social setting through participant observations (Wagner, 2012). In this instance, the researcher also relates their experiences to make meaning on their part through the cultural lens used to understand the phenomenon (Merriam, 2009).

Grounded theory has sociological underpinnings and refers to a qualitative design in which the researcher derives a process or action grounded in the respondents' views (Creswell, 2014). This approach involves developing a theory from the data collected or building on a theory that is in existence, a process that involves an alternative movement between the collection of data and the analysis of the theory (Wagner, 2012). While Merriam (2009) describes grounded theory as an approach in which the researcher is the primary data collector through interviews, documentary sources and observations that assume an inductive stance to make meaning from the data collected. The (ibid) further indicates that this type of qualitative research is differentiated from other types as it focuses on building substantive theory that can be applied to everyday life experiences.

Creswell (2014) identifies a case study as another type of study embarked on in the qualitative research approach, wherein the study involves an in-depth analysis of a case that can either be an activity, one or more individuals, a process or an event over a period of time. In this instance, the researcher is the primary instrument for collecting

data and analysing findings (Merriam, 2009). The (ibid) indicates that human interaction provides the researcher with an opportunity to confirm data immediately with respondents to expand on his/her understanding and take cues from non-verbal communication. Due to the imperfection of the human instrument that is subject to bias, it is important to identify and monitor this intrinsic characteristic and the subsequent influence on data collection and interpretation (Merriam, 2009).

Qualitative research adopts an inductive approach due to a limited theoretical basis to sufficiently describe and explain a phenomenon and construct concepts from the data collected (Merriam, 2009). This contrasts with the quantitative research process, where hypotheses already exist and are tested, commonly referred to as deductive. Qualitative research builds from interviews that are derived from the setting of the participants, documentary analysis and observations towards theory where the data is collected into thematic areas (Merriam, 2009; Creswell, 2014). The Interviews conducted under the qualitative studies, which stem from different theoretical orientations, can be categorised into highly structured or standardised questions, semi-structured and informal interviews (Merriam, 2009).

The sampling in qualitative research is primarily non-random, purposive, and rarely large. Another data collection method in qualitative studies involves documentary analysis that aids the researcher in uncovering meaning, developing understanding and giving logic to the research problem (Merriam, 2009). According to Wagner (2012), the focus should be on the meaning of the document, how the document came about and the significance of the results of the document. Data can also be collected through observation of situations, individuals, groups and cultures within a social setting that can be richly described to inform the findings of the study (Wagner, 2012).

Qualitative research is primarily descriptive, wherein the researcher uses words and graphical presentations to convey what has been learnt in the study. The qualitative research approach comprises the description of participants' responses and the context within which the study is undertaken (Merriam, 2009). The most prevalent types of analysis that are used are a) the narrative analysis, which offers details on how the participants tell their stories; b) the thematic analysis, which identifies patterns and recurring themes in the data; c) the interpretive phenomenological analysis which encompasses the separation of biases by the researcher in the study and d) discourse

analysis which comprises the comprehension of human behaviour and culture in the data interpretation (Wagner, 2012). To ensure validity in qualitative studies, it is significant that the researcher ensures that prejudices, biases and value judgements do not cloud understanding in the study (Wager, 2012).

3.6 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

3.6.1 Population

In research, the 'population' refers to a whole set of units with similar interests from which the sample is derived (O'Sullivan, Rassel & Berner, 2010). The population for this research study consists of the manager, programme coordinator and development officer of Buyisa Ubuntu and one (1) representative from fifteen (15) different households of the food bank beneficiaries from Kagiso Township. The beneficiaries must have used the food bank more than once between 2020 and 2022.

3.6.2 Sample and Sampling Method

The components of the sample, which are the subjects of a research study, are kept in a sampling unit (Mertler, 2017). At the same time, a sampling technique describes the procedure employed to select the participants or the samples to participate in the study (Mertler, 2017). The two fundamental forms of sampling are probability sampling and non-probability sampling (Kumar, 2019:42). The participants in this research study were randomly selected using probability sampling (Kumar, 2018). In the same vein, Fink (2018) states that for the sample to be regarded as a probability, each person in the population must have an equal chance of being picked for the research (Fink, 2018). On the other hand, non-probability sampling is selecting a sample by a non-random process where no member of the target population has an equal chance of participating in the study (Tracy, 2020).

In light of the above, this study adopted the non-probability sampling method. However, there are different types of non-probability sampling techniques: convenience, snowball, quota and purposeful or judgmental (Gray, 2018). For this study, the purposive sampling technique was utilised to select the sample of the participants. Purposive sampling, sometimes referred to as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling, is a sampling approach where researchers use their judgement to pick people from the populace to participate in the research (Gray, 2018). The

objective of the study must be understood in advance by the researchers in order for them to appropriately pick and contact suitable candidates when using the purposeful sampling method. Non-random purposive sampling was employed in this study. It included the selection of key interviewees, the findings of whom were used to draw inferences about the population (Wagner, 2012). This method was chosen because the researcher needed to understand participants' viewpoints since they had knowledge of the topic understudy and had the data needed for the study. The table below provides a profile of respondents included in the research study.

Table 3.2: *Profile of respondents*

Respondent	**Number to be sampled**
Food Bank Manager	1
Food Bank Program Coordinator	1
Food Bank Development Officer	1
Food Bank Beneficiaries	16

3.7 THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

A semi-structured interview questionnaire was employed based on the themes of the study to address the primary and secondary research questions. The first theme deals with food bank use by beneficiaries. The second theme focuses on the skills development programme the food bank offers. Thirdly, the coping strategies of beneficiaries in the absence of a food bank.

3.8 DATA COLLECTION

The data was collected from various sources through documentary analysis and interviews.

3.8.1 Primary Data Collection

The primary data was collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews with the food bank manager, coordinator, skills development officer and beneficiaries. Permission was sought from the university and food bank, and consent was obtained to conduct the academic research. The request indicated that the ethical standards

would be upheld to avoid ethical hazards, including deception, engaging vulnerable interviewees, exploitation and exposing people's identities (Silverman, 2011).

3.8.2 Secondary Data Collection

The secondary data was collected from journals, books, research reports and media articles to inform the theoretical framework to formulate and design the research questions as the thematic areas emerge and become more visible (Grbich, 2013). The documentary analysis of the food bank's standard operation procedure, annual reports and strategic planning reports were used to supplement the primary data. The information gathered from these documents was used as essential steps and reference points to inform the research. Careful consideration of the authenticity and credibility of the documents in their original form was undertaken (Wagner, 2012).

3.9 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The researcher employed two methods of data collection documentary analysis and a questionnaire. The data collected through in-depth interviews using a questionnaire were analysed, and the phenomenological analysis of the study gives an account of what the research participants share in common. The data collected using the research questionnaire was reviewed to identify statements related by the respondents to make meaning and categorise data into thematic areas (Wagner, 2012). The data was analysed using the three major stages of data analysis for qualitative studies commencing with an open coding stage to group data into smaller descriptive segments. This is followed by an axial coding stage to group codes into similar categories, and finally, through the selective coding stage to integrate emergent theory from data (Wagner, 2012). The data analysis included identifying and summarising the findings and comparing, synthesising and interpreting the findings across thematic areas to provide recommendations (Wagner, 2012).

The data collected through documents were examined to include meanings from the text. Wagner (2012) proposes that when analysing documents, an analytical approach should be assumed, the information from the documents should be coded in response to the research questions, then classifying the documents into primary, secondary and tertiary classes. In this study, it was important to consider the quality of the documents

analysed using the authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning criteria (Wagner, 2012).

3.10 LIMITATIONS AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

To address and overcome the limitations of the study, ethical considerations at all stages of the research were considered. The study also considered the limitations of documentary analysis, such as biases, reinforcing the beliefs of authors and the use of technology to obtain documents on the internet by exercising critical reflexivity (Wagner, 2012). The following ethical considerations outlined in Wagner (2012) were applied consistently throughout the study.

- Participation in the study was voluntary.
- Informed consent was obtained from the participants.
- The anonymity and confidentiality of all the respondents were ensured.
- The deception was avoided, and no harm to the participants was done.
- The participants were given the right to withdraw from the study at any moment.
- The data was collected with respect to the participants.
- The data was handled and treated with honesty.

3.11 MEASURE OF TRUSTWORTHINESS

Trustworthiness is an important concept in qualitative research. It determines whether the findings are consistent with the genuine perceptions of the participants (Salmons, 2021:93). As mentioned below, trustworthiness, transferability, dependability, credibility and confirmability were ensured in this study.

Credibility demonstrates that the research participant believes the conclusions will be reliable and correct (Danelo, 2017). The participants were chosen using convenience sampling. Before recording interviewees, the researcher sought their permission. This made it simpler for the study to compare the participants' feedback to the notes from the jotted interview. As a result, the participants were given a chance to confirm that the information was accurate and in their own words.

Transferability assesses the degree to which the conclusions may be extended or applied to other circumstances or contexts (Danelo, 2017). Although it is possible to demonstrate transferability in some circumstances due to the qualitative technique, it

might be difficult. Comparing the findings of this study with those of other studies conducted in a similar setting or context allowed for the achievement of transferability.

Dependability requires the researcher to be accountable for the changing context of the study (Silverman, 2019). Reliability was considered in this study by ensuring the material conveyed in chapter three (methodology) was handled correctly. For good outcomes, it is crucial to adhere to the data collection, analysis and interpretation guidelines.

Confirmability examines the degree to which additional sources may support or confirm results (Silverman, 2019). When the study was completed, a data audit was conducted to examine the procedures used to gather and analyse the data and determine the likelihood of bias or distortion.

3.12 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

The research study is primarily interpretive. Thus, it was important to ensure that the validity arguments presented in the study are strong, well grounded, sound and justifiable, as a lack of these could undermine the research. According to Wagner (2012), the reliance on validity assessment of the research methods ensures the quality and standards contributing to the overall research process and reliability of the research findings.

3.13 CONCLUSION

This chapter has outlined the justification for the choice of the research methodology employed in this study by positioning the philosophical approaches that provided the lens of the research and the use of qualitative methods to collect data through in-depth interviews and documentary analysis. Constructivism is a research paradigm in which this study is situated.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research results on the impact of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank on the livelihoods of Kagiso residents during the COVID-19 pandemic. The data collected from the respondents using research tools and documentary analysis are presented with supporting quotes from participating respondents.

The data was collected through semi-structured interviews with the beneficiaries of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank. The objective of the research was to determine the impact of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank on the livelihoods of Kagiso residents during the COVID-19 pandemic and to understand the coping strategies of the beneficiaries amid the pandemic as well as to determine the extent to which the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank skills development programme empowers beneficiaries. The aim of the study is to examine the following questions:

- What is the role of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank in ensuring sufficient food during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- What is the role of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank in ensuring that the beneficiaries are independent of the food bank?
- To what extent has the skills development programme empowered its users?
- What coping strategies are used by beneficiaries in the absence of the Food Bank?

The following section provides the profile of the respondents who participated in the semi-structured interviews.

4.2 PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Data was collected through interviews with the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank beneficiaries, the Coordinator, Development Officer and Manager, from Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank. The researcher obtained permission from the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank to interview the employees and written consent from participants.

Respondent	Gender	Age	Marital status	Educational qualification	Household number of people	Occupation	Main source of income
Respondent 1	Female	25-34	Single	FET	3	Unemployed	CS grant
Respondent 2	Male	25-34	Single	FET	4	Unemployed	Grant (father)
Respondent 3	Female	25-34	Live with partner	FET	9	Unemployed	Baking, social relief
Respondent 4	Female	25-34	Single	Grade 12	4	Unemployed	CS, disability grant
Respondent 5	Female	25-34	Single	FET	4	Unemployed	Grant(granny)
Respondent 6	Male	25-34	Single	Grade 12	2	Unemployed	CS grant, piece jobs
Respondent 7	Female	25-34	Live with partner	FET	13	FB Volunteer	Stipend, CS, old age grant
Respondent 8	Female	18-24	Single	FET	4	FB Volunteer	Stipend, CS grant
Respondent 9	Male	25-34	Single	Grade 12	2	Student	CS grant
Respondent 10	Female	35-44	Married	Grade 12	7	Student	CS grant, salary
Respondent 11	Female	45-54	Married	Grade 11	6	Unemployed	Social relief
Respondent 12	Female	65+	Widowed	Grade 8	15	Pensioner	Retirement
Respondent 13	Female	65+	Widowed	Undisclosed	10	Pensioner	Pension grant
Respondent 14	Female	25-34	Live with partner	FET	4	FB Volunteer	Stipend
Respondent 15	Male	35-44	Live with partner	Grade 11	4	Unemployed	Partner employed
Respondent 16	Male	18-24	Single	Grade 12	2	FB Volunteer	Stipend
Respondent 17	Female	35-44	Married	University Diploma	7	Coordinator (FB)	Salary
Respondent 18	Female	35-44	Divorced	University certificate	4	Development Officer (FB)	Salary
Respondent 19	Male	55-64	Married	College certificate	5	Manager (FB)	Salary

Table 4.1: ***Profile of the respondents*** (compiled by the author, 2023)

Variable Name: Age (16 beneficiaries)

AGE BRACKET	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
18-24	2
25-34	9
35-44	2
45-54	1
65+	2

Table 4.2: ***Participant Age Representation*** (compiled by the author, 2023)

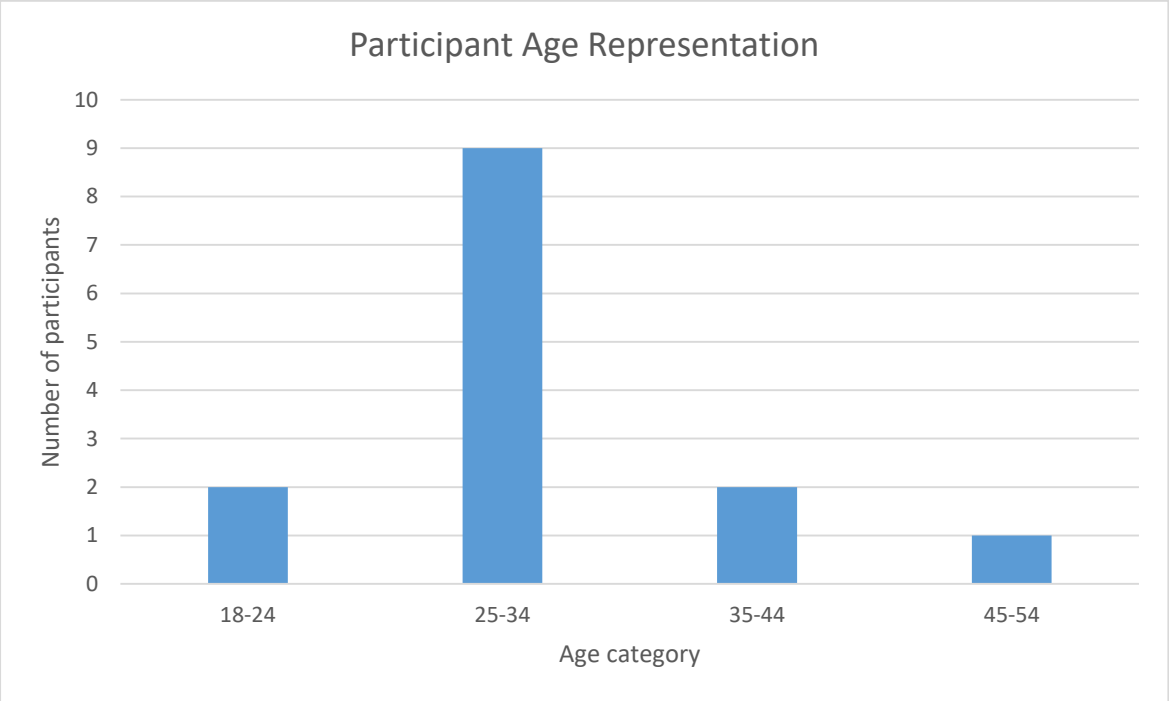


Figure 4.1: *Participant Age Representation* (compiled by the author, 2023)

From the above table and graph, it is clear that most participants (56%) were between the ages of 25-34.

Variable Name: Gender (16 beneficiaries)

GENDER	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Male	**5**
Female	**11**

Table 4.3: *Participant Gender Representation* (compiled by the author, 2023)

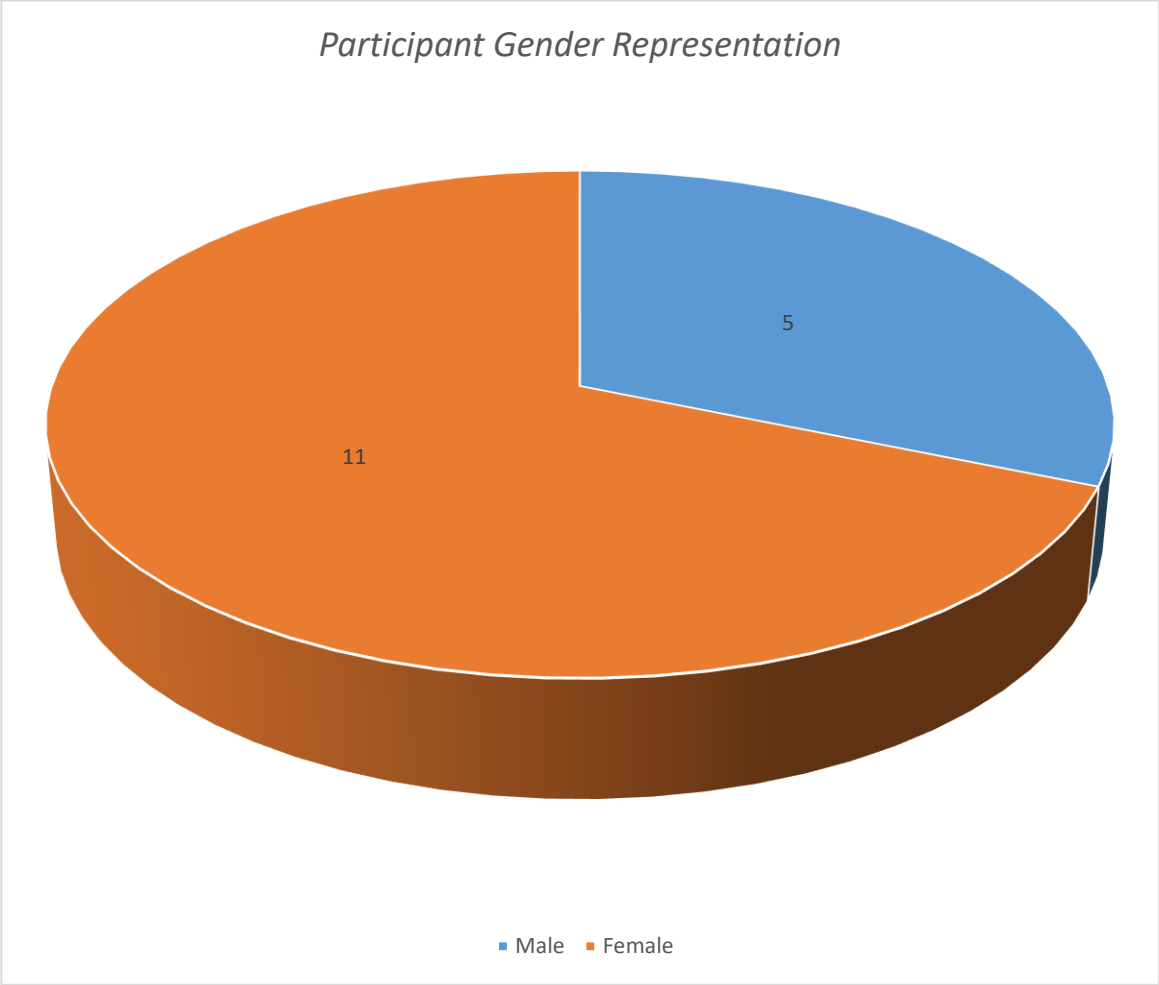


Figure 4.2: ***Participant Gender Representation*** (compiled by the author, 2023)

Of the sixteen (16) beneficiaries who participated in the study, eleven (11) were females and five (5) were males.

Variable Name: Marital Status (16 beneficiaries)

MARITAL STATUS	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Single	8
Married	2
Widowed	2
Live with partner	4

Table 4.4: *Participant Marital Status Representation* (compiled by author, 2023)

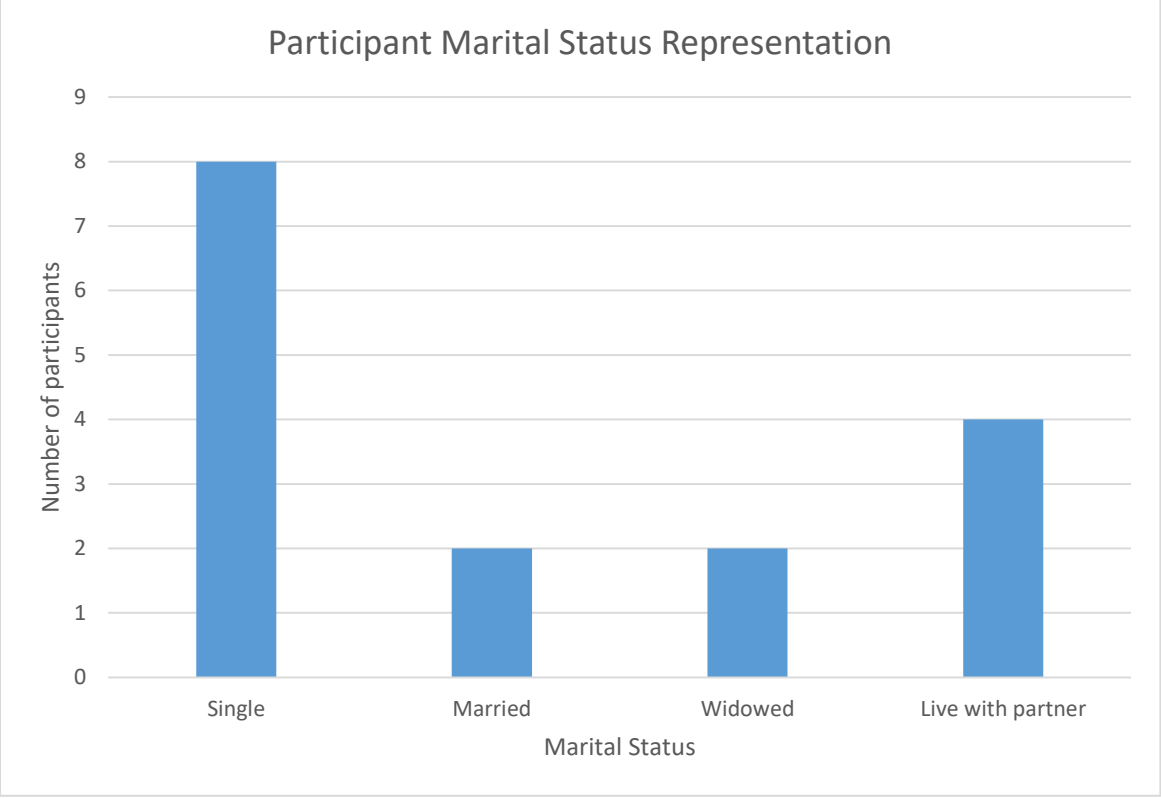


Figure 4.3: ***Participant Marital Status Representation*** (compiled by the author, 2023)

From the above table and graph, it is clear that 50% of the participants were single.

Variable Name: Educational qualifications (16 beneficiaries)

HIGHEST OBTAINED QUALIFICATION	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
FET (Further education and training	7
Grade 12	5
Grade 11	2
Grade 8	1
Undisclosed	1

Table 4.5: *Participant Highest Obtained Qualification* (compiled by author, 2023)

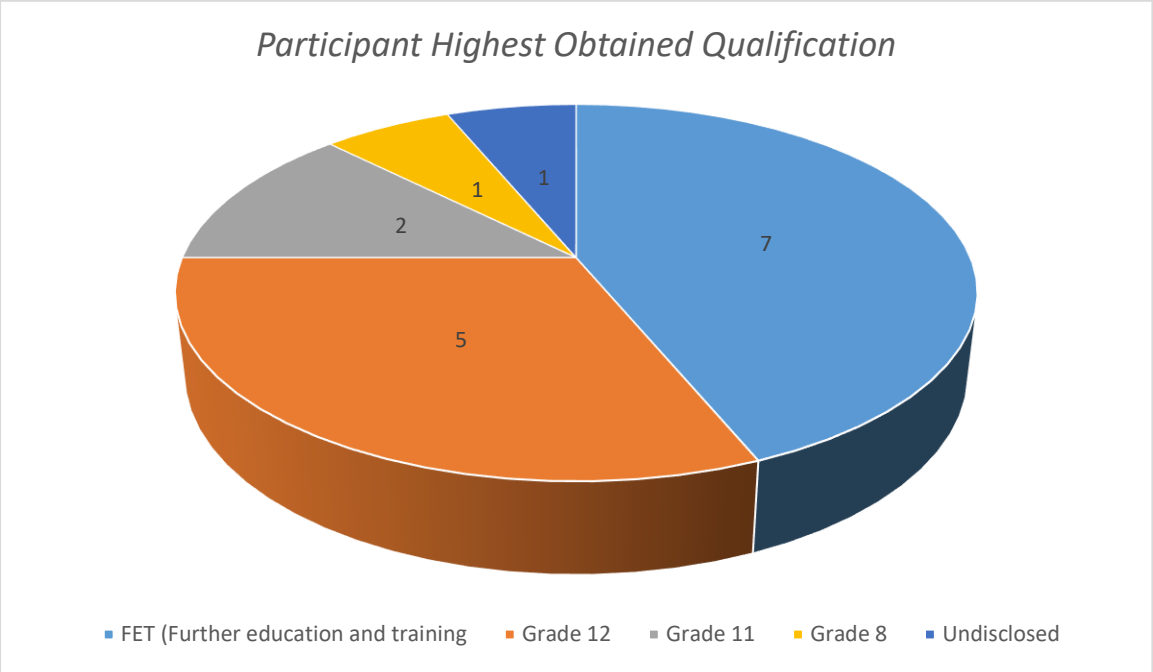


Figure 4.4: ***Participant Highest Obtained Qualification*** *(compiled by* author, 2023)

From the above table and graph, it is clear that over 43% of the participants have a FET qualification, and over 31% have a grade 12. This means that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank beneficiaries from Kagiso Township have a high rate of literacy.

Variable Name: Occupation (16 beneficiaries)

OCCUPATIONAL STATUS	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Unemployed	8
Food Bank volunteers	4
Students	2
Pensioners	2

Table 4.6: *Participant Occupational Status* (compiled by author, 2023)

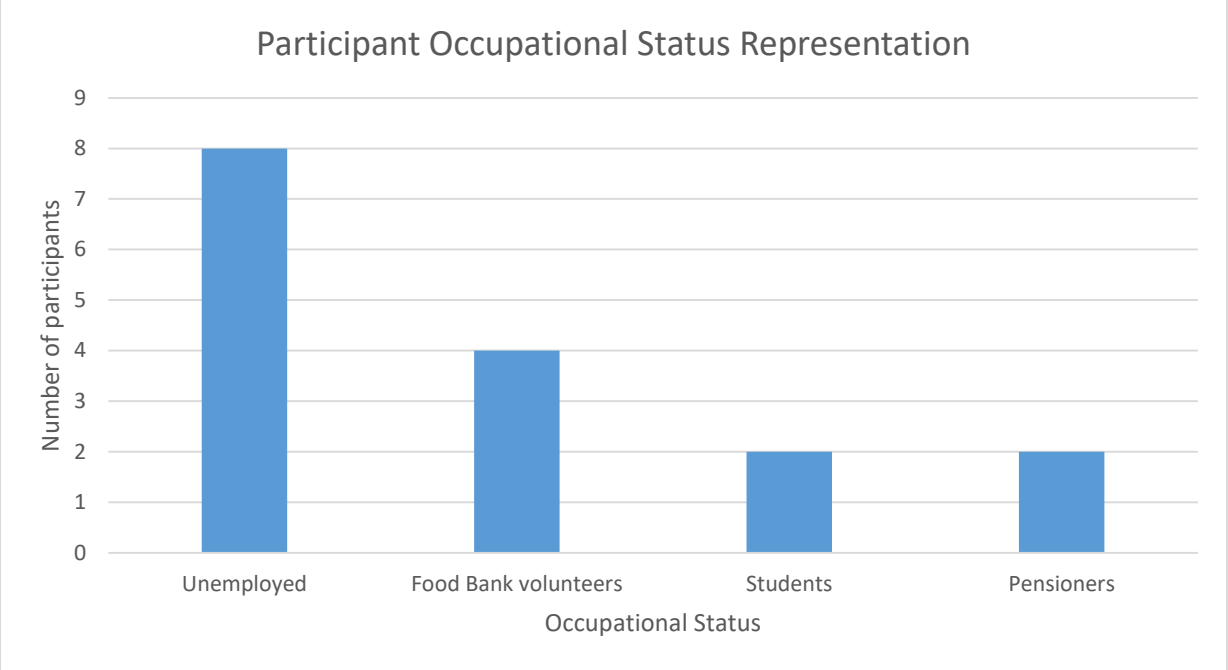


Figure 4.5: ***Participant Occupational Status Representation*** (compiled by the author, 2023)

It is clear from the above table and graph that 50% of the participants are unemployed and 25% are volunteers. Most of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank beneficiaries from Kagiso Township are unemployed.

Variable Name: Number of people per household

NUMBER OF PEOPLE PER HOUSEHOLD	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
2-4 people	10
6-9 people	3
10 -15 people	3

Table 4.7: *Number of people per household breakdown* (compiled by author, 2023)

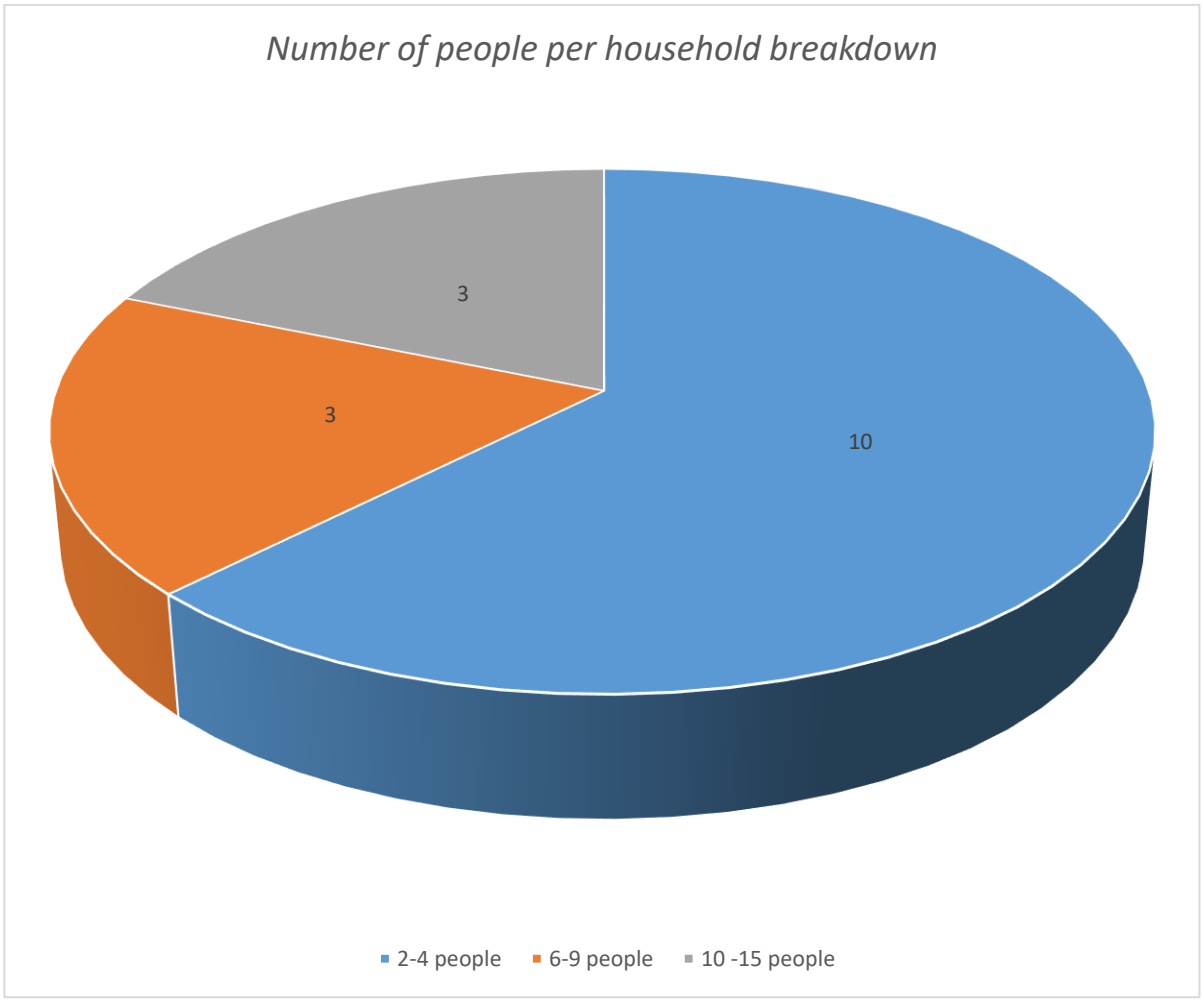


Figure 4.6: *Number of people per household breakdown* (compiled by the author, 2023)

It is clear from the above table and graph that over 62% of the participants have 2-4 number of people in their households.

Variable Name: Main source of income

MAIN SOURCE OF INCOME	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Social relief of distressed (SRD)	2
Child support grant (CSG)	2
Stipend	2
Partner salary	1
Retirement	1
Pension grant	3
CSG, pension grant, stipend	1
CSG, stipend	1
CSG, partner salary	1
CSG, disability grant	1
CSG, piece jobs	1

Table 4.8: *Participant Main Source of Income* (compiled by author, 2023)

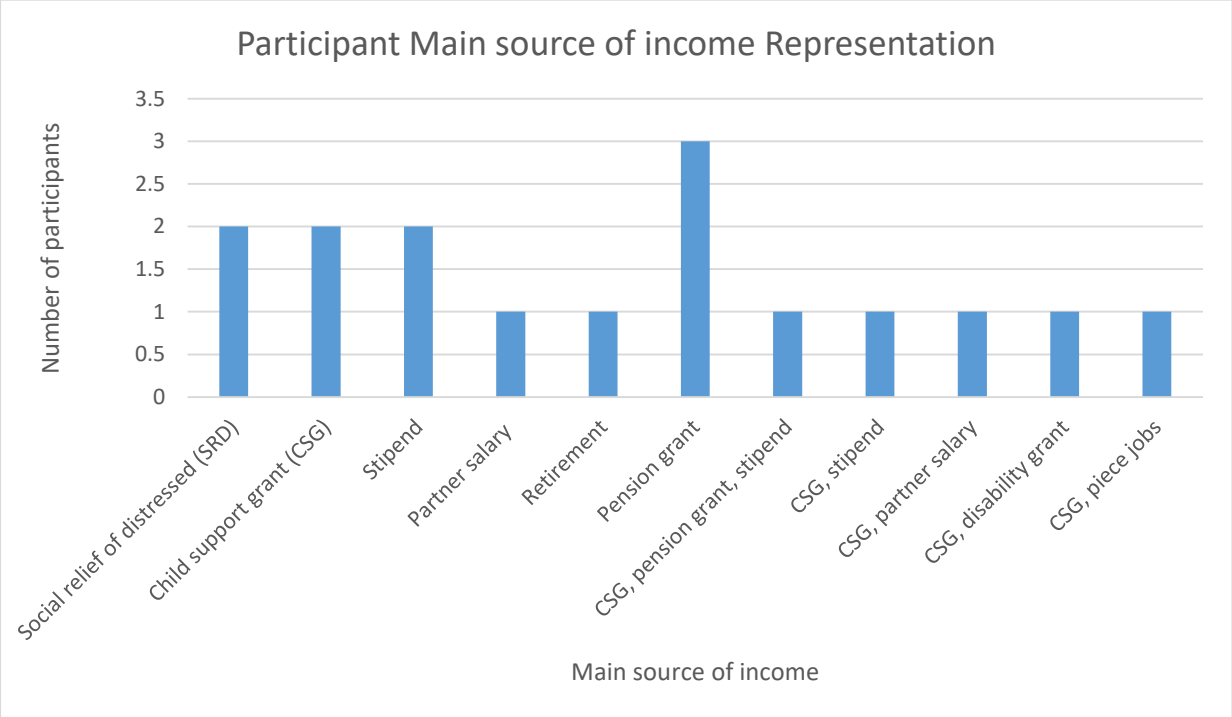


Figure 4.7: *Participant Main Source of Income* (compiled by the author, 2023)

From the above table and graph, it is clear that the main source of income for over 37% of participants is child support grant. This may imply that the main source of income for the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank beneficiaries from Kagiso Township is the child support grant.

Variable Name: households with children (16 beneficiaries)

HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Households with children	15
Households without children	1

Table 4.9: *Households with Children* (compiled the by author, 2023)

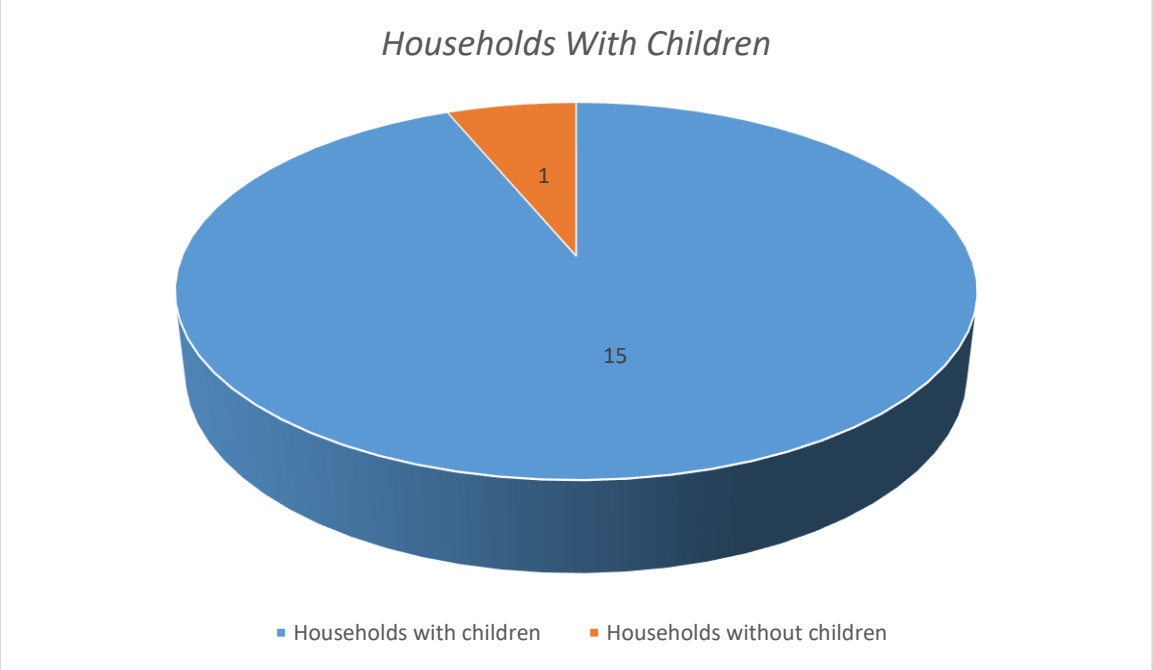


Figure 4.8: ***Households with Children*** (compiled by the author, 2023)

It is clear from the above table and graph that over 93% of the participants have children.

4.3 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The data highlights the difference that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank has made in the lives of its beneficiaries during the COVID-19 pandemic emanating from the thematic analysis of the respondents' experiences, substantiated by direct quotes from the interviews. The themes were identified in line with the research objectives as follows:

1. The difference that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank has made in the lives of the beneficiaries during the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. The skills offered by the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank for the beneficiaries.
3. The coping strategies of the beneficiaries in the absence of the food bank.

BUYISA UBUNTU BENEFICIARIES

4.3.1 THE DIFFERENCE THAT THE BUYISA UBUNTU FOOD BANK HAS MADE IN THE LIVES OF THE BENEFICIARIES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

4.3.1.1 Why are you using the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank?

Beneficiaries have different reasons why they are using the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank. Some use the food bank due to unemployment. *"We did not know where our next meal would come from",* said one of the respondents. Another reason for using the food bank is that the social grant from the government, be it child support or pension, is not enough to buy food to feed the household for the month. As one respondent said, *"My pension grant is not enough to feed my big family of thirteen".* Some respondents stated that they use the food bank as a source of food because the money they are supposed to buy food is used to buy medication for family members who have chronic illnesses. One of the respondents indicated that she uses the food bank to access information on job opportunities and skills development. Another said she uses the food bank because her son is volunteering there. As they volunteer, they also receive food parcels.

4.3.1.2 How Often Do You Use Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank?

Most respondents indicated that they receive food parcels once every three months. One respondent stated that she had been a beneficiary since 2014 after her parents died in a car accident. As a member of a youth-headed family, she receives food parcels almost every month as long as food is available at the food bank. Some respondents have received food parcels for three (3) consecutive months and then ceased to receive them. While some articulated that when there is a disaster in the nearby area, the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank redirects the food to address that particular emergency. The beneficiaries would then receive food when parcels have been left over from the disaster programme. Another respondent said that as a Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank volunteer, he feels he uses the food bank daily.

4.3.1.3 What Is Your Experience of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank?

The study established that the beneficiaries loved the dignified manner in which the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank delivered the food parcels. They indicated that the delivery car was not branded, protecting them from embarrassment. The beneficiaries also

stated that the food bank was always willing to assist them and that the staff and volunteers were approachable. On the other hand, some respondents' experience of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank is that when the food parcel is delivered, and the beneficiary is not at home, the beneficiary forfeits the food for that month.

4.3.1.4 What Difference did the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank make in your Lives during the Covid-19 pandemic?

Most respondents stated that during level 5 of the lockdown, when they could not leave their houses, the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank delivered food to their doorsteps. One respondent said, *"Food Bank ensured we do not starve".* Another respondent indicated that the food parcels delivered during the pandemic were bigger and lasted longer. At the same time, another articulated that the food parcels they received from the food bank brought relief during the lockdown. However, another claimed that the food they received did not last long because their children ate a lot since they were always indoors. Some respondents stated that the bigger the household, the bigger the food parcel they would receive.

For some respondents, Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank gave them an opportunity to volunteer during the COVID-19 pandemic. As they volunteered, they received a stipend, which made a lot of difference in their lives. One of these volunteers felt she was also making a difference in other people's lives as she was packing the food parcels. The study also noted that the food bank brought relative peace in some households in that these households stressed about what they would eat and ended up fighting over that. As soon as they received food, they had peace. Several respondents pointed out that they lost their jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic and were behind with their rent. They could pay for their rent upon receiving the food parcels from the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank. That is a difference that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank made in their lives during the COVID-19 pandemic.

4.3.1.5 Are you using other Buyisa Ubuntu services apart from receiving food? If yes, why?

Respondents unanimously agreed that they were using other Buyisa Ubuntu services besides receiving food. Some indicated they participated in scholarship programmes where the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank referred them to acquire skills. They noted that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank provided tools for them to access food and make space

for needy people to be absorbed into the system. However, some beneficiaries indicated that most learnership programmes accommodate people from the age of 18 up to the age of 24. *"Therefore, we are not accommodated",* said one of the beneficiaries. The beneficiaries noted that some of their children who have completed Grade 12 refused to attend the skills development programme to which the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank referred them. These parents think their children are too proud or embarrassed to go. The respondents also revealed that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank assisted them with typing and printing their curriculum vitae and accessing the Wi-Fi.

4.3.1.6 Has using the food bank/Buyisa Ubuntu changed your life? If yes, in what ways?

The study established that some beneficiaries started as change agents for their families by participating in the skills development programme. As a result, they now have a steady income supporting their families*. "I can pay school fees for my child",* indicated one of the respondents. In some households, more than one sibling participates in the skills development programme, whereby they all receive stipends, bringing more financial relief. Some beneficiaries can now prepare healthy meals for their households, which has improved their health. One of the respondents claimed that she now has a business profile because of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank. Some households are now able to pay their debts since they started receiving food parcels. This is how the use of the Food Bank has changed their lives.

4.3.1.7 What do you want to be included in the food parcel?

The respondents unanimously stated that they would like to see more vegetables included in the food parcels. The respondents mentioned toiletries and sanitary towels several times as items they wished could be included. Other items mentioned are coffee, meat, cake flour, breakfast porridge and powdered soap. Some respondents requested that the food bank please increase the cooking oil and sugar sizes because these items get depleted quickly and are expensive when they have to be replenished. However, there were some concerns about the vegetables, which sometimes come rotten, and the mealie-meal called 'Yarona', which is not edible and takes longer to cook. Others indicated that they react to tinned food and prefer vegetables to tinned food. However, some of the respondents believe that the Food Bank is improving*," they even brought light bulbs",* said one of the respondents.

4.3.2 THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE BUYISA UBUNTU SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME EMPOWERED ITS USERS?

4.3.2.1 What skills are offered by the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank to beneficiaries?

The skills offered depend on the development centres the food bank refers them to. The study established that Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank refers beneficiaries to the Kagiso West Rand Development Centre. This centre provides forklift training, warehouse management, plumbing, data capturing, electrical engineering and end-user computer training. The food bank also refers beneficiaries to the Bambisandla School of Excellence in Merafong, West Rand. This school offers hospitality courses such as bartending, fashion designing, housekeeping, hosting, waiting, chef artisan, and assistant chefs. The artisan chef course is done over three years, and upon completion, the students receive an accredited qualification.

4.3.2.2 Are these skills of interest to you?

Some of the respondents said that they were not interested in the skills that are offered. They articulated that the skills offered are limited. However, one of the respondents replied that the data capturing skill has helped him to find work at Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank. Thus, these skills are of interest to him. Some stated that they want to have a say in the choice of skills that are offered. The study established that some beneficiaries have specific skills already, such as university degrees or diplomas. In this instance, what is offered at the centre might be a downgrade for them. Therefore, those skills might not be of interest to them. Some are computer literate, and the basic computer literacy training offered at the centre might be useless to them. "*Ironically, most of those who are less interested in the skills development programme did not have matric. They are only interested in the training programmes that provide stipends and come with excuses not to attend if stipends are not provided*", articulated one of the respondents.

4.3.2.3 Who decides on the skills (choice) program?

Different answers were provided as to who decides on the skills in the development programme. Some said that it was the Buyisa Ubuntu Skills Development Officer, some indicated that they do not know, while others said that the companies who are hiring at that particular time are the ones who decide on the type of training that is to be offered. There appeared to be confusion about who decides on the choice of skills.

According to the Skills Development Officer, the skills development centres decide on the skills in conjunction with the funders of the training programmes. They conduct their own needs analysis and decide based on the results.

4.3.2.4 What difference did these skills make in your lives?

One respondent replied, *"I learnt computer skills through this programme, and now I am employed at the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank".* Another respondent commented that the interpersonal skills she has learnt are helping her as she now works with the community. Some respondents indicated that they gained experience volunteering at the food bank. One respondent received data capturing skills, later volunteered at the food bank, and earned some money. Another respondent was employed somewhere temporarily after completing her computer skill training.

4.3.2.5 What skills do you need/want to change your life?

One of the respondents wants office administration because she thinks it has more job opportunities. Some respondents want to study Social Work, while others want to learn Social Auxiliary. Another respondent is already registered to study Social Auxiliary. At the same time, another wants to start her own business. There is one who wants to study car mechanics. Nursing was another skill that was mentioned as a desired expertise by one of the respondents. Several respondents want to finish grade 12 to further their education. Another respondent wants a university computer qualification, while others are interested in learner-ships. There is one who said that she would take anything that is offered by the Food Bank skills development programme.

4.3.3 BENEFICIARIES' COPING STRATEGIES IN THE ABSENCE OF THE FOOD BANK

4.3.3.1 What do you do when you do not have food?

"It is a struggle, a huge one", said one of the respondents. Some respondents use their pension and child support grants to buy food. One respondent said that they stick to buying basics when they do not have money. While other beneficiaries go to their neighbours or relatives to ask for food. One respondent said, *"I go and hustle from my boyfriend, neighbour or relatives"*. Another respondent stated that she usually asks for food from her church which has a social ministry where they assist people with food. Another respondent articulated that she goes to the Ward Councillor when she does

not have food. She expects the Ward Councillor as a community leader to assist her. Several respondents indicated that the school feeding programme is also helpful because children have two meals at school. Thus, they are not very hungry when they come back home.

4.3.3.2 What do you do when you do not have money to buy food?

Some beneficiaries borrow money from neighbours and loan sharks and pay with their social grants. The interests that the loan sharks add are very high, up to 50%. As one respondent said, *"I borrow money, which adds more problems".* Some respondents do menial jobs to get money and buy food. One respondent said that she goes to her boyfriend when she does not have money to buy food. Another said that she goes to her church members or small community organizations in the area. However, one respondent claimed she does not go to her neighbours for help because they have stigmatised her as a poverty stricken person.

4.3.3.3 How has Buyisa Ubuntu changed how you see your self-reliance as a household?

The beneficiaries indicated that they buy grocery stamps with the extra cash they have when the food bank provides the food parcels. Some respondents stated that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank taught them to save money for rainy days. This assists them when the food parcels are not delivered. One of the respondents claimed that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank made her realise that she needs to be self-sufficient. As a result, she has improved her grade 12 results; and she wants to further her studies to be more employable and subsequently be able to feed herself. Another respondent said that the skills she has received from the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank have empowered her to be self-supporting, and she further stated that she does not want to be a beneficiary for the rest of her life. While another respondent indicated that now that she volunteers at the food bank, she can study Social Auxiliary, funded by the DSD, and subsequently come out of poverty.

4.3.3.4. Do you think that Buyisa Ubuntu can assist you in being independent of the food bank service in the future? If yes, how?

Some respondents agreed that the food bank could help them to be independent by prioritising the qualifying beneficiaries whenever there are vacancies within the food bank. They also indicated that if the food bank can help their children finish school,

they will be independent. They also believed that the food bank could assist them to be independent by working with government departments with job opportunities by referring qualified beneficiaries. Beneficiaries also stated that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank can assist them to be independent if it works hand in hand with the Department of Labour, *"they can save the situation",* declared one of the respondents. Another respondent disagreed and articulated that she does not think that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank can help them be independent because her son, a volunteer at the food bank, does not get his pay regularly. Again, they indicated that the low paying jobs, such as plumbing, will not assist them to be independent of the food bank. On the other hand, one of the respondents declared that since the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank employed her, she is no longer a beneficiary. The Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank has therefore helped her to be independent.

4.3.4 IS THERE ANYTHING EXPECTED FROM YOU AS BENEFICIARIES?

Most respondents stated that they are expected to participate in food bank activities when requested. They articulated that these activities are meant to make their lives better. One respondent said, "We *must be willing to change our lives*". The beneficiaries are also expected to exit the food parcel programme so that new eligible people may enter the system.

4.3.5 WHAT IMPROVEMENTS CAN THE FOOD BANK MAKE TO SERVE YOU BETTER?

Most respondents articulated clearly that they need the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank to provide food parcels every month and not every three months. They also indicated that they want the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank to inform them of advertised government jobs. They also want the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank to provide better-paying jobs instead of volunteering. Some respondents said that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank should add more skills to assist them in getting better jobs in the future, *"courses like nursing, social work, not plumbing which keeps you as a beneficiary",* said one of the respondents.

The study established that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank needs to improve its customer service and accountability. The food bank needs to develop a monitoring tool, such as a questionnaire to be filled out by the respondents after they receive their food parcels. The study established that the food bank needs more delivery cars so as to minimise bulk deliveries. Bulk delivery is when many beneficiaries are called to

receive food parcels from a central place simultaneously. Some beneficiaries do not come because they fear being stigmatised. Their dignity and confidentiality are compromised during bulk distributions. Presently, the food bank has only two cars to deliver across the three (3) municipalities in the West Rand region. Thus, they end up doing bulk delivery. Again, the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank needs to have fundraising events to assist more people.

INTERVIEW OF THE BUYISA UBUNTU FOOD BANK MANAGEMENT

4.3.6 WHAT ARE THE CRITERIA FOR BENEFICIARIES?

One individual responded that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank serves households earning R3, 500 or less per month. This excludes the social grants that these households may receive. Another criterion is that they should be unemployed.

4.3.7 WHAT DO YOU THINK THE BENEFICIARIES EXPECT FROM THE FOOD BANK?

"A continuous supply of food," said one of the respondents. Due to the high unemployment rate and high food prices, the beneficiaries expect to continue receiving food from the food bank. They also expect employment. The study established that the beneficiaries expect food through a humane service.

4.3.8 WHO DECIDES ON THE COMPOSITION OF THE FOOD PARCEL?

One of the respondents said that the food parcel composition is decided by the Sustainable Livelihood Directorate within the DSD. Another stated that the DSD, in consultation with the Department of Health (DoH), decides on the contents of the food parcel. There seemed to be confusion about who decides on the composition of the food parcel.

4.3.9 HOW MANY VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF MEMBERS DOES THE BUYISA UBUNTU FOOD BANK HAVE?

According to the respondents, the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank has nineteen (19) staff members. Volunteers are asked to come and assist when the volume of work is high.

4.3.10 HOW DOES THE FOOD BANK EMPOWER THE BENEFICIARIES TO SUSTAIN THEMSELVES?

The Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank always engages the change agents from beneficiaries. They do not only refer them to opportunities outside of the food bank but also to those

that are within. Approximately 90% of the employees at the Food Bank are former volunteers. Probably, one of the biggest empowerments that the food bank has achieved.

4.3.11 HOW DID THE FOOD BANK ENSURE THAT THERE WAS SUFFICIENT FOOD FOR BENEFICIARIES DURING THE PANDEMIC?

The study revealed that during the pandemic, there was a Call Centre from the Gauteng Office of the Premier where people who needed food would call the hotline, and then food would be delivered to their doorsteps by the food bank. The DSD increased the number of food parcels to be distributed to accommodate as many people as possible. This was a special programme to ensure sufficient food for the existing beneficiaries and more people during the pandemic.

4.3.12 WHAT IMPACT HAS THE FOOD BANK MADE ON THE BENEFICIARIES DURING THE PANDEMIC?

One of the respondents stated that the food bank filled the gap of food shortages in various households. It was also indicated that the private companies donated generously to the food bank. As a result, the sizes of the food parcels were bigger. During the pandemic, people who applied for food were assisted as long as they needed it. The food bank ensured that as many people were not starving during the pandemic.

4.3.13 IN YOUR PERCEPTION, WAS THERE AN INCREASE OR DECREASE IN DEMAND DURING THE PANDEMIC?

The study discovered that the volumes of the food parcels that were distributed during the pandemic increased tremendously due to the higher number of people who requested to be assisted with food. *“Bear in mind that some people were temporarily unemployed during the pandemic*”, said one of the respondents.

4.3.14 WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES FACED BY THE BUYISA UBUNTU FOOD BANK?

One respondent replied by saying “currently, the food bank is providing a scarce resource, i.e., food, and there is an element of greed from the people who can afford to buy food and want to be beneficiaries”. The study also found that there are security issues where people want to loot the food trucks, especially during bulk distribution.

Usually, more people need food than it is available. Limited resources such as delivery cars also pose a challenge.

4.3.15 ARE THERE ANY OTHER ISSUES YOU WOULD LIKE TO TALK ABOUT?

It was revealed that the Food Bank needs to provide readymade food, especially during disaster incidents where people do not have the means to cook. A mobile kitchen might be suitable to address such a need. Several participants indicated that some beneficiaries need more money to buy the fuel/electricity to cook the food items that need a lot of energy sources.

4.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided the presentation of the findings emanating from the research. The comments were gathered through semi-structured interviews with the respondents from the food bank beneficiaries and management. The discussion centred on the impact of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank on the livelihoods of Kagiso residents during the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring that there is sufficient food during the lockdowns, the extent to which the skills development programme has empowered its users and the coping strategies used by beneficiaries in the absence of the Food Bank. The interaction with the respondents further touched on the improvements the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank can make to serve the beneficiaries better.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyses and interprets the findings of the study. It also establishes linkages between the findings and literature. The analysis is derived from the responses received from participants during the interviews, the literature reviewed, and the review of the documents obtained from the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank. As Wotela (2017) suggests, empirical research results should be discussed and interpreted using interpretative frameworks and supporting literature. The chapter echoes the research problem and the theoretical framework lens through which the data was analysed and interpreted.

5.2 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The main aim of the study was to empirically establish the impact that Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank brought on beneficiaries during the COVID-19 pandemic and to understand the coping strategies these beneficiaries used during the pandemic. The study further attempts to determine the extent to which the skills development programme empowers users.

5.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study employed the theories of poverty, particularly structural and cultural understandings of poverty, as frameworks to examine the impact of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank on the livelihoods of Kagiso residents during the COVID-19 pandemic. This section presents the interpretation and discussion of the research results to understand the difference, if any, that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank made in the lives of the beneficiaries during the COVID-19 pandemic. And to what extent has the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank skills development programme empowered its users, and how did the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank beneficiaries cope in the absence of services. The theoretical contexts, structural and cultural theories of poverty are briefly highlighted in some sections to bring perspective to the interpretation and analysis of the findings (Wilson, 1987). Food sovereignty as well as policy will also be considered in this chapter.

The Structural theory of poverty makes use of the living conditions of the poor such as, unemployment, to explain poverty (Cerio, 2019). In terms of Hinteregger (2017), unemployment contributes to poverty in that households may not have sufficient earnings to meet their basic living expenses, including buying sufficient nutritious food. In the case of Kagiso Township, almost 72% of the population is of working age (15-64), and the unemployment rate in Mogale City is 39.6% (Stats SA, 2011). This indicates that the majority of the youth in this region cannot find work. The 2015 Gini coefficient for Mogale City was 0, 62 (COGTA, 2020), suggesting a high inequality level in income distribution (Mogale City Draft IDP, 2019/2020). This further suggests that this is a low-income community, implying that some households may have difficulty accessing sufficient food, as is the reality with other townships in SA (Stats SA, 2011). This situation makes it necessary for the Food Bank to come in as a temporary way out for households that are destitute (Mabli *et al*. 2013).

Food sovereignty is also relevant in this case in that it advocates for nations and societies to take charge of their own food systems as well as their own markets, means of production, food cultures and environments (Wittman et al 2010, 2). This serves as a critical alternative to the prevailing neoliberal prototype for agriculture and trade.

Food sovereignty is viewed as a programme for the composition of a new, sustainable world food order that displays social justice and also reconnects food, nature and the community. The neoliberal model for agriculture and trade has health consequences, including the escalating levels of toxic chemicals found in foods that are grown using technology, as well as the nutritional inadequacies of diets comprised of processed foods (Bernstein, 2013).

This programme calls for a drastic democratisation of the food system in favour of the poor. (Holt-Giměnez and Shattuck, 2010). This involves relocalizing markets and governance by regulating transnational agribusiness and international trade in order to protect domestic food production and small farmers.

In South Africa, the high rate of unemployment and the rapid food price hikes are shaping the realities of the underprivileged urban residents, such as those of Kagiso Township. Urban food movements, such as Kos en Fynbos (KEF), in Western Cape, have been critically observing these developments and have begun to raise their

voices against social inequality. In this way, they offer a fertile ground to put food sovereignty into practice (Siebert, 2019).

In the Global South, the activism of urban food producers and consumers remain underrepresented in the food sovereignty discourse. In South Africa in general, food sovereignty has not been adopted in state policy, and it has not taken root in social movements and communities as fiercely as it has in other countries (Ngcoya and Kumarakulasingam, 2017). It still needs stronger enforcement by grassroots voices.

For policy considerations, the data captured by the food banks from the beneficiaries may be used to inform policy-makers as it is done in the UK.

On changing lives, food banks are essential signposting services for destitute people. For example, volunteers can communicate information on accessing emergency finance, welfare support, and community groups and recommend other charities or on-government organizations and support services.

Regarding the changing minds, citizens need to learn to take care of one another in order to reduce the rising need for food bank services i.e. Ubuntu needs to be embraced.

5.4 INTERPRETATION OF DATA AND FINDINGS

The chapter is structured along the following themes:

1. The difference that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank has made in the lives of the beneficiaries during the COVID-19 pandemic;
2. The skills that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank offered to beneficiaries; and
3. The beneficiaries' coping strategies in the absence of Food Bank.

5.4.1 The difference the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank has made in the lives of the beneficiaries during the covid-19 pandemic

5.4.1.1 Why are you using the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank?

The results revealed that the main reasons the beneficiaries are using the services of the food bank are unemployment and poverty. Again, the steep increase in food and fuel prices, rising energy tariffs and high interest rates push people into using the food bank. This is in line with the Structural Theories of poverty, which suggest that the

living conditions of the poor, including unemployment, may affect their ability to consistently provide food for themselves (Wilson, 1987).

5.4.1.2 How often do you use the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank?

The study found that the majority of the beneficiaries receive food parcels from the food bank once every three months. However, the most vulnerable, such as the youth-headed and the grandmother-headed households, receive food parcels almost every month. This particular service is compatible with Section 27 (1) (b) of the South African Constitution, which states that “Everyone has the right to have access to sufficient food and water” (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). In addition, the goal is to ensure the availability, accessibility and affordability of safe and nutritious food for all (Centre for Environmental Rights, 2014). Beneficiaries were supposed to receive food for three consecutive months and then exit the programme. However, due to the high number of people who need assistance, they receive food only once in three months. This scarcity of funds limits the impact of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank on beneficiaries.

5.4.1.3 What is your experience with the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank?

Statements that were articulated by the respondents such as, “I love how they deliver the food parcel; it is so dignified”; “It is like Uber groceries”; “their delivery car is not branded, which protects us from feeling embarrassed”; “they are like our friends”; “they are willing to help, and they care”; and “they have been good to me that is all I can say”, infer that Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank treats beneficiaries with respect and dignity. This is in accord with the Bill of Rights, which states, "Everyone has inherent dignity and the right to be respected and protected” (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996).

However, some respondents indicated that when the food parcel is delivered, and the beneficiary is not at home, they forfeit the food for that month. Sometimes beneficiaries do not know when the food will be delivered. Thus, they are not available when the food is delivered. Not receiving food for the month when they anticipated the relief, distresses beneficiaries.

5.4.1.4 What difference did the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank make in your lives during the COVID-19 pandemic?

The study established that Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank ensured that beneficiaries were not stranded and without food during the pandemic, especially during level 5 of the lockdown when stringent regulations restricted free movement. The respondents acknowledged that they received bigger food parcels from the food bank during that period, which sustained them longer. However, for some households, food ran out quickly because the children were always indoors and ended up eating more, which made the situation even more difficult. Ensuring that beneficiaries had food during the pandemic is in line with the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, whereby the right to food is connected to one's right to life and dignity (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). Again, the right to food requires that food be available, accessible and adequate to everyone without discrimination (South African Human Rights Commission, 2016).

The Food Bank brought relative peace in some households in that these households were not stressed about what they would eat. Some of the beneficiaries were given an opportunity to volunteer at the food bank during the COVID-19 pandemic and received a stipend, which made a significant difference in their lives. The beneficiaries were able to support themselves and their families to a certain extent. For some, as they received food, they could buy the medication they desperately needed. This implies that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank was there and made a difference in the lives of the households who used the service.

5.4.1.5 Are you using other Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank services apart from receiving food? If yes, why?

The study found that most beneficiaries use the food bank for other services as well. These include skills development programmes. This is in line with the findings of Bucknum & Bentzel (2019) that food banks can facilitate various skills development programmes to empower beneficiaries. This is also compatible with the Food Bank Standard Operating Procedure Manual developed by the DSD (2018), which states that development interventions are the cornerstone of providing food parcels to households. In Canada, food banks help break the poverty cycle by providing services such as computers and the internet for job seekers, high school completion courses and other skills development programmes (Power *et al*., 2021). It is evident then that

the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank not only provides food for beneficiaries but goes beyond food to reduce unemployment and poverty among the beneficiaries.

Conversely, not all beneficiaries want to participate in the skills development programme. Some refused to participate in the skills development programme, and this behaviour prevents them from improving their lives, even by small margins. According to cultural theorists, these traits inhibit them from upward social mobility (Nolan & Whelan, 1996). However, several beneficiaries wanted to participate in the learnership programmes but were excluded by age restrictions, as such, they suggested that the age limit for the learnership programme needs to be reviewed. The programme accommodated young people from the ages of 18 to 24. Those above 24 cannot participate in the programme even when interested.

5.4. 1. 6. Has the use of the Food Bank/ Buyisa Ubuntu changed your life in any way? If yes, in what ways?

The Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank hired beneficiaries as volunteers who, at some point, become permanent employees. For instance, Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank had nineteen (19) permanent employees, most of whom were volunteers before and as indicated, the Trussell Trust has 120 employees (Irvin *et al*., 2022).

The employment opportunities changed the lives of beneficiaries in that they now have a steady income and are in a position to support their families. This aligns with the mission of Feeding America, which advocates for change in America by ensuring that there is impartial availability of nourishing food for all (Irvin *et al*., 2022). The basic skills that some of the beneficiaries gained from the skills development programme came in handy, and they managed to get employed elsewhere. This confirms that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank has brought a change in beneficiaries' lives.

5.4.1.7 What do you want to be included in the food parcel?

The study found that beneficiaries prefer more vegetables in the food parcel. They would also appreciate toiletries, sanitary towels and meat as additions to the food parcel. Beneficiaries also indicated that cooking oil and sugar run out quicker and are very expensive to replenish, as such, they would appreciate bigger quantities. Some beneficiaries react to canned food, thus, they prefer to be given vegetables instead. This indicates that these food parcels are generic. Everyone receives similar food

items. As much as the beneficiaries desperately need the food parcels, they do not always serve the purpose. As one respondent said, *"Tinned food means nothing to my family because we are allergic to it".* The DSD decides on the contents of the food parcel, and this is done without consulting the beneficiaries. In Canada, the food parcel includes grains, protein, fruit and vegetable and exclusive diet food, e.g., gluten-free, lactose-free, heart healthy and sugar-free. Baby food and diapers are also provided (Power *et al*., 2021). The (ibid) further indicates that beneficiaries choose the items they need and prefer. In this way, the service better addresses the needs of beneficiaries.

5.4.2 The extent to which the Buyisa Ubuntu skills development programme empowered its users?

5.4.2.1 What skills are offered by the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank for the beneficiaries?

The study found that through the skills development programme, Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank provides plumbing, fork lifting, computer literacy, office administration and data capturing, warehouse management and electrical engineering training courses. Beneficiaries were also referred to the Bambisandla School of Excellence in Merafong, West Rand. The school offers hospitality courses such as bartending, fashion designing, housekeeping, hosting, waiting, chef, artisan chef and assistant chefs. The artisan chef course is done over three years, and upon completion, the students receive an accredited qualification. This is in line with the third role of the Food Bank, which states that it facilitates various skills development programmes to empower beneficiaries (Bucknum & Bentzel, 2019).

5.4.2.2 Are these skills of interest to you?

Some beneficiaries were not interested in the skills offered at the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank. They believed that the choice of skills was limited. Suppose the skills are limited, and the available ones are not of interest to them. In that case, the beneficiaries chose not to participate in the skills development programme. However, some were interested in the skills development programme and acquired and utilised the acquired skills at food banks and elsewhere.

5.4.2.3 Who decides on the skills (choice) programme?

The study revealed that the skills development centres, together with the funders decide on the skills to be offered. The Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank only refers the

beneficiaries to these centres. This could explain why some skills are not interesting to the beneficiaries. The beneficiaries indicated they would like to have a say in the skills offered.

5.4.2.4 What difference did these skills make in your lives?

The study showed that the skills development programme of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank made a difference in the lives of some of the beneficiaries. Some of them are using those skills that they have acquired at the food bank, such as data capturing, computer skills and office administration. Some were able to find employment elsewhere and utilised the skills. For some, the leadership skills they acquired through this skills development programme came in handy as they used them in their community work. This implies that these skills are valuable. Martinchek (2020) argues that the engagement of beneficiaries in skills development programmes can be challenging as people change places of residence frequently; or are consumed with other challenges, like an ill family member or loss of employment. In such cases, they do not have enough time to focus on the programme's requirements and cannot participate fully. Thus, the effectiveness of the programme might be difficult to determine. This implies that it is not always easy to determine the impact these skills development programmes make in the lives of the beneficiaries due to various challenges, including lack of interest and commitment.

5.4.2.5 What skills do you need/want to change your life?

The study highlighted that beneficiaries want and need various skills to change their lives. The skills they outlined include office administration, social work, auxiliary social work, nursing and car mechanic. Some wished to complete their grade 12 so that they could further their studies. This implies that beneficiaries have dreams to better themselves. They want to have careers so that they can change their lives. They do not want to be food bank beneficiaries for the rest of their lives.

5.4.3 The coping strategies of the beneficiaries in the absence of the food bank

5.4.3.1 What do you do when you do not have food?

Some beneficiaries who receive social grants use these grants to buy basic foodstuff not provided by the foodbank or when there is a need. Some beneficiaries resort to asking neighbours, boyfriends or relatives for food. Others go to their church mates and leaders in the community to be assisted with food. The school feeding scheme is

of great help in that the children do not come back from school starving. This aligns with Gunderson and Ziliak (2014) that such programmes could be helpful in minimising the effects of food insecurity. This infers that the beneficiaries will always find a way to cope in the absence of the food bank. However, some coping strategies are unsustainable and embarrassing, such as asking for food from relatives, boyfriends and church members.

5.4.3.2 What do you do when you do not have money to buy food?

Some of these beneficiaries borrow money from their neighbours, loan sharks and pay with the social grant they receive from the government. The interest that the loan sharks add is high, sometimes up to 50%. In Manila, Philippines, underprivileged households borrowed cash at high interest rates to feed their members because their income cannot pay for food and other basic needs. As a result, they fall into the trap of money lenders (FAO, 2008). These strategies may keep them dependent on the food bank in that they perpetuate the poverty cycle. Structural theorists blame capitalism for the prevalence of poverty. They argue that capitalism enables poverty to thrive because the capitalists pay the working class low minimum wages (Sameti, Esfahani & Haghighi, 2002). Some respondents do menial jobs to get money to buy food.

5.4.3.3 How has the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank changed how you see your self-reliance as a household?

Many beneficiaries have started to buy grocery food stamps with the extra cash they received when they volunteered. These food stamps come in handy in the absence of the food bank. The study also revealed that the food bank taught the beneficiaries to save some money, no matter how small the amount could be. This is helpful for the beneficiaries when the food is not delivered. In this manner, beneficiaries become self-reliant. For some beneficiaries, the skills they have received from the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank have helped them to realise that they can provide for themselves, and they do not want to be beneficiaries for the rest of their lives. Others, due to volunteering, got opportunities to study Social Auxiliary funded by the DSD and will subsequently get employed and come out of poverty. Social Auxiliary Workers assist or support the social workers.

5.4.3.4 Do you think the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank can assist you to be independent of the food bank service in the future? If yes, how?

Several beneficiaries believed that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank could assist them to be independent by prioritising them when there are vacancies. Others believed that if the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank could assist their children to finish their basic education. For some beneficiaries to be independent of the food bank, they want to be linked with government jobs as and when advertised. On the whole, this insinuates that some beneficiaries thought it is the responsibility of Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank to ensure that they become independent of the Food Bank.

One of the main problems faced by food banks is beneficiary dependency, in that they have come to be seen as a long-term source of food for many households in need, to the extent that some households are now integrating food parcels into their finances or financial planning (Uttley, 1997). Not being aware that the food provision is not sustainable for poverty alleviation (Leslie, 1996). However, poverty is one of the reasons why some beneficiaries tend to depend on food banks. According to Drammeh *et al*. (2019), poverty is a fundamental determining factor of household food insecurity since the underprivileged do not have enough money to buy food. Thus, it is imperative to assist distressed households in resolving the financial crisis they might be facing and end the need for food bank use in the future (Trussell Trust, 2020).

5.4.3.5. Is there anything expected from you as beneficiaries?

The beneficiaries know and understand that they are expected to participate in food bank activities when they are requested to do so. They also know that these activities are meant to improve their lives. Programmes like skills development will fail if the beneficiaries do not participate.

5.4.3.6 What improvements can the Food Bank make to serve you better?

The study unveiled that the beneficiaries want the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank to provide food parcels for them every month and not once in three months. This suggests the dependency on the part of the beneficiaries. In line with this finding, Starkey *et al*. (1998) contend that some people have come to depend on food banks as their single source of food. Subsequently, food banks become a valuable base for food aid (McKay, 2015). However, food banks are meant to be a temporary way out for destitute households and not a permanent solution (Mabli *et al*., 2013).

The beneficiaries also want the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank to provide better paying jobs instead of volunteer jobs, which indicates a misunderstanding of the objective of the food bank. This objective is in line with Ballantyne *et al.* (2015:8) that "food banks are charitable organizations that minimise hunger by distributing food to people with limited access to or income". This misunderstanding by beneficiaries could emanate from the fact that one of the criteria for becoming a beneficiary at the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank is unemployment; thus, they expect the food bank to employ them as it also provides skills development programmes. Wolch (1990) regards the charitable welfare sector, such as food banks, as portraying shadow government because they execute welfare tasks, yet they are not officially part of the state.

5.4.4 The Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank Management

5.4.4.1 What are the criteria for the beneficiaries?

The study found that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank provides services to households who earn R3, 600 or less per month. This criterion might exclude employed people who earn just over R3, 600 and are struggling to feed themselves. This excludes the social grants that these households may receive from the government. Another criterion is that they should be unemployed (DSD, 2018). This is in line with McGurk and Clark (1993), who points out that food banks might also stipulate some qualification criteria whereby certain conditions must be met before receiving a food hamper. Conversely, this may inhibit accessibility to those who do not meet the criteria. However, the criteria for those who benefit are not strict in Canada. People need to provide an identity document, proof of address and fill in an intake form (Power *et al*., 2021). The Canadian approach is more accommodative and thus serves a broader spectrum of households. Perhaps the criteria in SA are stricter because of the financial constraints and the high demand for food assistance, as opposed to Canada, a first-world country with less poverty and lower unemployment rates.

5.4.4.2 How does the food bank empower beneficiaries to sustain themselves?

The study revealed that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank engages change agents from the beneficiary households. Change agents are members of the households who can participate in the skills development programme to bring financial relief to the households. The food bank refers them to Development Centres in the West Rand

Region, and this boosts their eligibility for job opportunities within and outside the food bank.

5.4.4.3 How did the food bank ensure sufficient food for beneficiaries during the pandemic?

The study discovered that a Call Centre from the Gauteng Office of the Premier was established where people who needed food would call the hotline, and then food would be delivered to their doorsteps by the food bank. Again, the DSD increased the target of the number of food parcels to accommodate as many people as possible. This was a unique programme to ensure sufficient food for the existing beneficiaries and more during the pandemic. This indicates that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank is contributing to the attainment of the second SDG, namely, creating a world free from hunger by 2030 (UN, 2015).

5.4.4.4 What impact do you think the food bank has made on the beneficiaries during the pandemic?

The study established that the food bank filled the gap of food shortages in various households during the pandemic. Food was delivered to people's doorsteps when they could not go to the shops to buy groceries due to the lockdown regulations. Again, private companies also donated generously. As a result, the sizes of the food parcels were bigger. Again, during the pandemic, people who applied for food were assisted as long as there was a need. It did not matter how many times they applied. Thus, people did not go hungry, and the food bank contributed to food security (Riches, 2002).

5.4.4.5 In your perception, was there an increase or decrease in demand during the pandemic?

The study established that the volumes of the food parcels distributed during the pandemic increased tremendously due to the higher number of people who requested assistance. One of the reasons was that some people were temporarily laid off from work during the pandemic. This is confirmed by the Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN) (2020) that food banks had a surge in the number of emergency food parcels distributed in May 2020.

5.4.4.6 What improvements can the food bank make to improve the service to the beneficiaries?

The study found that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank needs to improve customer service and accountability. Participants suggested that they need to develop a monitoring tool, such as a questionnaire to be filled out by the beneficiaries after they receive their food parcels. They further suggested that the personnel wear uniforms with the food bank telephone numbers so the beneficiaries can call the office if they have complaints. The food bank also needs more delivery cars to ensure the smooth running of bulk deliveries. Bulk delivery happens when beneficiaries are called to a central place to collect food parcels. However, some beneficiaries do not go because they are afraid of being stigmatised. They are afraid that their dignity and confidentiality will be compromised during bulk distributions (DSD, 2018).

5.4.4.7 What are the challenges faced by the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank?

The study found that the food bank provides a scarce resource. As a result, the number of people who need assistance with food is higher than the quantities available. To make things worse, some people who are not eligible and do not meet the criteria are also struggling to meet their food needs, and this sometimes results in people looting the contents of food trucks. As such, drivers' safety becomes a challenge. There is also a shortage of resources for delivery cars which results in the delivery of food parcels to beneficiaries taking longer.

5.4.4.8 Are there any other issues you would like to talk about?

The study discovered that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank needs to also provide ready to eat food, especially during disaster incidents where people do not have the means to cook. A mobile kitchen is required to address such a need. Again, some beneficiaries do not have money to buy the necessary fuel/electricity to cook the food items that need a lot of energy sources. This is in line with some food banks in Europe, whereby food is occasionally prepared as meals and delivered to charitable organizations for consumption (FEBA, 2020).

5.5. COMPARISON OF BUYISA UBUNTU FOOD BANK WITH THE INTERNATIONAL FOOD BANKS

Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank	International Food Banks
Food is purchased through the supply chain Management of the Department of Social development and then stored and repackaged by the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank	Edible food is donated by the public, farms and supermarkets to the Food Banks
Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank provides services to households who earn R3 600 or less per month. This excludes the social grants that these households may receive. Another criterion is that they should be unemployed	The criteria for those who want to benefit is not strict. At Feeding America West Michigan, proof of income is not a prerequisite for one to benefit
The main objective of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank is to provide a short- term (three months) food relief to households in distress, however, those who are the most vulnerable, such as, the youth headed and the granny headed households, receive food parcels almost every month, as long as food is available at the Food Bank.	Food Banks in Canada provide food that can last two to three days, once in a month. This is based on the size of the household. Second Harvest, a Food Bank in America, allows people to visit their Food Bank up to twice or more per month if they need food desperately.
The food parcel includes Maize meal, sugar, cooking oil, rice, cake/bread flour, peanut butter, tea bags, canned fish and beans, soya beans, multipurpose bar soap, dishwashing liquid and vegetables.	The food parcel includes grains, protein, fruit and vegetable, exclusive diet food e.g. gluten-free, lactose-free, heart healthy and sugar-free food. Baby food and diapers are provided as well, and they are on the most-needed list
Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank delivers uncooked food parcels to the beneficiaries	In Europe, food is occasionally prepared as meals which are delivered to charitable organizations for consumption by beneficiaries (FEBA, 2020).

Except for food, Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank also provides assistance with sustainable solutions such as referrals of eligible family members for training and skills development. In that way, families will have a means to fend for themselves instead of depending on the Food Bank for survival (Buyisa Ubuntu, 2018).	Many food banks in Canada are linking beneficiaries across the country to the support and means that they need beyond food, as a way to realize long-term solutions for their future. In America, universities and businesses join forces to provide a variety of care for people who are food insecure (Himmelgreen and Heuer, 2021).

Table 5.1: ***A Comparison of Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank with the International Food Banks***

The difference between the mediated and the direct intervention is that in the mediated intervention, the main food bank acquires food and funding that will be shared with its food bank associations. It is easier for funders to deal with a single entity than various groups. Again, these interventions may deliver a national programme that assists associate food banks to distribute food efficiently and lastly, they influence government policy by means of research and advocacy (Power *et al*., 2021). On the other hand, the direct food bank intervention, employs interviews that allow the food bank officials to meet face to face with the beneficiaries to determine their felt needs. This can also be favourable to those beneficiaries who feel lonely and isolated.

5.6 LESSONS LEARNT FROM THE INTERNATIONAL FOOD BANKS

Firstly, the study established that the government is taking some responsibility for feeding the poor by funding the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank and other food banks through the DSD. However, food banks internationally depend on donations from the public, farms and supermarkets. In SA, there is minimum participation from the private sector.

Secondly, the strict criteria for qualifying as a beneficiary in the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank excludes many people from accessing the services. However, international food banks allow anyone who needs assistance to benefit from the services, they do not have exclusion criteria.

Thirdly, the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank provides relief from a month to three months. As a result, the beneficiaries cannot rely on the Food Bank for their food supply. On

the other hand, international Food Banks provide food that can last only for two to three days. However, households can visit the Food Bank more than once a month. This means that food is always available for those in need.

Fourthly, the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank contents of the food parcels are standard, i.e., every household receives similar food items. This disadvantages households who may be allergic to certain food products. On the other hand, international food banks allow beneficiaries to select the food of their choice.

Lastly, just like the international food banks, the Buyisa Ubuntu has skills development programmes for beneficiaries. However, international food banks involve businesses and universities over to also provide care for the food insecure.

Lessons for food banks in the South African context are: - a) Food banks need to add the allergy indication in the intake form when registering the beneficiaries. In this case, those allergic to certain foods may be given alternatives. This will increase the quality and choice of food provision.

b) They need to ensure that the dignity and confidentiality of the beneficiaries are not compromised, as well as to avoid the looting of the delivery trucks, they need to have more delivery cars and minimise bulk deliveries.

c) It is important for beneficiaries to have a say in the type of skills that are offered in the development programme. Thus, food banks need to provide an avenue for beneficiaries to voice their expectations. It is also essential that universities and businesses join forces to provide the much-needed guidance and skills to food insecure people.

d) It is necessary for the food bank to uphold the standard operating procedure manual, which states that once the beneficiary is approved, the food needs to be distributed to them for three (3) consecutive months, and then they exit the programme.

5.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the analysis and the interpretation of the research results from the interviews and the literature and documents analysed. The analysis was thematically arranged in line with the objectives of the study. The themes are the difference that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank made in the lives of the beneficiaries during the COVID-19 pandemic, the skills that Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank offered to the beneficiaries and the coping strategies of beneficiaries in the absence of food bank. The chapter also made a comparison of the services offered by Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank with international food banks.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Six provides the concluding remarks and recommendations for possible areas of further research. As indicated in the preceding chapters, the study sought to explore the experiences of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank beneficiaries during the COVID-19 pandemic and how they managed to cope in relation to food security throughout the pandemic. The study also sought to determine the extent to which the skills development programme of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank has empowered the intended beneficiaries.

6.2 SUMMARY

This research study set out to explore the impact that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank brought on its beneficiaries during COVID-19 and to understand the coping strategies of these beneficiaries during the pandemic. It also sought to determine the extent to which the skills development programme empowered users. In order to achieve this, the study empirically examined: a) the difference that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank has made in the lives of the beneficiaries during the COVID-19 pandemic; b) the extent to which the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank skills development programme has empowered users; and c) the coping strategies that used by beneficiaries in the absence of the food bank services.

The main research question was: *what is the impact of the Food Bank on the livelihoods of its beneficiaries*? The study answered this question by interrogating the following questions: I. why are you using the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank? ii. *How often do you use the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank*? iii*. What is your experience of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank*? iv*. What difference has the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank made in your lives during the COVID-19 pandemic*? v. *Are you using other Buyisa Ubuntu services apart from receiving food*? vi*. Has using* the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank changed your life in any way? If yes, in what ways?

The study adopted the “Theories of Poverty” by Nolan and Whelan (1996) and the “Structural and Cultural understandings of poverty” by Wilson (1987) and Oscar Lewis

(1968). An exploratory research methodology within the interpretive research paradigm was employed (Salmons, 2021). The qualitative research methods were undertaken through interviews and documentary analysis. Data was collected through semi-structured focus group discussions and interviews to obtain in-depth insight into the impact of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank on the livelihood of Kagiso Township residents during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The documents analysed in the study included the Food Bank Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Manual and the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank Annual Report. Informed consent was obtained from all participants. The Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank organisation granted the researcher written permission to conduct the study. Non-random purposive sampling was employed in this study.

6.2.1 The difference that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank has made in the lives of the beneficiaries during the COVID-19 pandemic

The study found that beneficiaries were using the services of the food bank mainly because of unemployment and poverty. The rising costs of food and fuel, energy tariffs and high interest rates were some of the beneficiaries utilising the services of the food bank. Most of the beneficiaries received food parcels once every three months. However, the most vulnerable, such as the youth-headed and the grandmother-headed households, received food parcels almost every month. The beneficiaries indicated a pleasant experience during their interaction with Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank. Nevertheless, some beneficiaries did not know when the food would be delivered, and thus they forfeited the food for that month. It can be concluded that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank ensured that the beneficiaries were not stranded without food during the pandemic, especially during level 5 of the lockdown when strict regulations restricted people's free movement.

The Food Bank brought relative peace in some households as households were not stressed about where the next meals were going to come from. The households had some peace as soon as they received food. Some of the beneficiaries were given an opportunity to volunteer at the food bank during the COVID-19 pandemic and received a stipend which made a lot of difference in their lives. Some volunteers were subsequently hired permanently by the food bank, and this has changed their lives in that they now have a steady income and are in a position to support their families.

Some respondents can now prepare healthy household meals, contributing to a healthy lifestyle. For some, as they received food, they could manage to buy the medication they desperately needed. However, these food parcels were generic, i.e., everyone received similar food items, meaning they did not cater to the different beneficiaries' dietary restrictions.

6.2.1.1 The extent to which the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank skills development programme has empowered its users

The study revealed that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank engaged the change agents from the households. They referred them to the Development Centres within the West Rand Region for training and job opportunities. The Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank provided the following skills through its skills development programme: plumbing, fork lifting, computer literacy, office administration and data capturing warehouse management, and electrical engineering. Beneficiaries were also referred to the Bambisandla School of Excellence in Merafong, West Rand. This school offers hospitality courses such as bar-tending, fashion designing, housekeeping, hosting, chef, artisan chef and assistant chefs. The artisan chef course is undertaken over three years, and upon completion, the students receive an accredited qualification.

The study also revealed that the skills offered through the development programme made a difference in some of the beneficiaries' lives, in that some are using the skills acquired, such as data capturing, computer skills and office administration at the food bank. Some were able to find temporary employment elsewhere and utilised these skills. For some, the leadership skills acquired through this skills development programme came in handy as they worked with the community agency

The study further showed that beneficiaries wanted opportunities to change their lives. The skills programmes they suggested included office administration, social work, social auxiliary, nursing and car mechanic. Some wished to complete their grade 12 to further their tertiary education. They wanted to have careers to change their lives.

6.2.1.2. The coping strategies the beneficiaries use in the absence of the Food Bank

The beneficiaries who received social grants used these to buy basic foods when they did not receive food from the food bank. Some went to their neighbours, boyfriends and relatives for food. Others went to fellow members of their church as well as

community leaders in the community. The school-feeding scheme was of great help in that the children did not come back from school hungry. Some beneficiaries borrowed money from their neighbours and the loan sharks. Of course, some of these strategies might keep them dependent on the food bank in that they perpetuate the poverty cycle.

As a measure of self-reliance, some beneficiaries had started buying grocery food stamps with the extra cash they made when volunteering at the food bank. The study also revealed that the food bank taught the beneficiaries the importance of saving money, no matter how small the amount could be. This was helpful for beneficiaries when the food was not delivered. For some beneficiaries, the skills they received from the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank helped them realise they could provide for themselves and their families. Others managed to study Social Auxiliary courses funded by the DSD and will hopefully get employment as Assistant Social Workers.

The beneficiaries knew that they were expected to participate in the food bank activities when they were requested. They also knew that these activities would help improve their lives. The study revealed that the beneficiaries expected the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank to provide food parcels for them every month as opposed to once every three months. The beneficiaries also wanted the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank to provide sustainable job opportunities as opposed to volunteering.

6.3 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusion was reached: Food Bank dependency in Kagiso Township is experienced in the context of dire economic difficulties due to matters that are seen to be out of the immediate domain of control of the beneficiaries. The Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank beneficiaries reported a high prevalence of unemployment and a reliance on government social grants, although they have a high rate of literacy. Chapter four of this study demonstrated that 43% of the participants had a FET qualification, and over 31% had passed grade 12.

The Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank ensured that beneficiaries were not stranded with food during the pandemic, especially during level 5 of the lockdown. Most beneficiaries expected the food bank services to continue and that they receive food every month. The appreciation of Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank services was evident, although issues

surrounding the quantity and quality of food provisions remain a challenge (see Chapter 5 of this study). It was established that the bulk delivery of food parcels compromised the dignity and confidentiality of the beneficiaries. As such, some beneficiaries do not collect their food during bulk deliveries. These beneficiaries are afraid of being stigmatised.

Also, the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank made a difference in the lives of the beneficiaries through volunteerism and employment opportunities at the food bank. This changed the lives of these beneficiaries for the better. The study also revealed that opportunities offered by skills development programmes made a difference in the lives of beneficiaries in that some of them are using those skills that they have acquired at the food bank and other places of employment.

Some beneficiaries used their social grants to cope in the absence of the food bank. They also borrowed money from their friends, relatives, neighbours and loan sharks to buy food. The school feeding scheme was of great help because the children did not return from school famished.

Moreover, as a measure of self-reliance, some of these beneficiaries buy grocery food stamps with the extra cash they made as volunteers at the food bank. These food stamps come in handy in the absence of food from the food bank. Some beneficiaries believe that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank could assist by prioritising them when there are vacancies at the food bank and linking them up with government departments for advertised vacancies.

It must be highlighted that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank is not well-funded, limiting its capacity to evaluate or modernise its services. This results in limited critical research that would analyse the impact of the Food Bank programmes in addressing food insecurity in Kagiso. The limited funding also affects adequate food distribution due to the shortage of delivery cars. Granting the current limitations, beneficiaries expected Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank to improve food security in their community and improve the living conditions of beneficiaries.

Globally, the unresolved issues of food systems include, increasing food demand while competing for resources such as land, water and energy.

In South Africa, the unresolved issues are:- a) persistence of food and nutrition insecurity despite the availability of sufficient food and public health interventions, b) degradation of an already vulnerable natural environment aggravated by the early adoption of conventional agriculture techniques and more recently by climate change, c) Continuous extreme wealth and income inequality by former racial policies, d) Growing unevenness in power, efficiencies, and information between stakeholders across food value chains and spheres of governance (Bernardo, 2022).

As long as the beneficiaries of food banks are not taking part in producing some of their food, the status quo will remain, because the neoliberal model for agriculture concentrates on the capitalisation of production and the market increase, with little consideration of who the food consumer is, how it is produced and who produces and distributes it.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

This section concludes this study by recommending some important measures based on the findings of the study, which, if implemented, may assist in strengthening the impact that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank. As a means to address the issue of unemployment among the beneficiaries, the Structural theories of poverty suggest that macroeconomic policies that help reduce unemployment, such as the supply-side economic policies, should also be seen as one of the key solutions for better job opportunities (Wilson, 1987). The supply-side economic policies advocating for the reduction of unemployment include employment creation funding provided by the government to private companies with incentives to hire unemployed young people and empower them with skills. This includes on-the-job training opportunities that will provide them with the much-needed working experience (Jubane, 2022). Learnership programmes are one example. Spending on the education and training of young people by the government is crucial in this fast-changing economy. It provides people with the right skills to take on new jobs being created (Jubane, 2022).

Regarding dietary restrictions, the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank needs to add the allergy indication in the intake form when registering the beneficiaries. In this case, those allergic to certain foods may be given alternatives. This will increase the quality and choice of food provision.

To ensure that the dignity and confidentiality of the beneficiaries are not compromised, as well as to avoid the looting of the delivery trucks, the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank needs to have more delivery cars and minimise bulk deliveries.

The beneficiaries indicated that they would like to have a say in the type of skills offered in the development programme. Thus, the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank needs to provide an avenue for beneficiaries to voice their expectations. It is also recommended that universities and businesses join forces to provide the much-needed guidance and skills to food insecure people.

To address the food distribution challenge, it is recommended that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank sticks to the standard operating procedure manual, which states that once the beneficiary is approved, the food needs to be distributed to them for three (3) consecutive months. During those three months of food distribution, the Food Bank needs to ensure that the beneficiaries are part of the skills development programme.

It is also recommended that during disasters the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank provide prepared meals to the affected families instead of food parcels because households might not have the means to cook amid a disaster. Investing in a mobile kitchen could be of importance for the situation.

It is recommended that the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank invest in research on the impact of its programmes. This will improve its performance and impact. The study further revealed areas that future research could be pursued to widen knowledge on the impact of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank on beneficiaries, such as a need to determine the impact of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank during disasters.

For better impact, it is recommended that the role of the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank and other food banks in the Gauteng province should be expanded to incorporate advocacy for public policy change and play a more visible role in activism efforts aimed at poverty reduction. These food banks should be viewed as change agents toward food security systems improvement. The skills development programme needs to be enhanced to provide adequate skills for this fast-changing economy and reduce unemployment, subsequently reducing the reliance on food banks.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE

IDENTIFYING PARTICULARS

Assumed name: _____

Age: 18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65+

Educational Qualification:

Marital Status:

Number of children (if any):

Number of people in your household:

Household Type: single parent, and spouse (with children)

Main Source of Income:

Occupation:

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW FOR BUYISA UBUNTU MANAGER/COORDINATOR

Food Bank Questionnaire

1. What is the criteria for beneficiaries?
2. What do you think beneficiaries expect from the Food Bank?
3. Who decides on the composition of the food parcel?
4. How many volunteers and staff members does Buyisa Ubuntu have?
5. How does the Food Bank empower the beneficiaries to sustain themselves?
6. How did the Food Bank ensure that there is sufficient food for beneficiaries during the pandemic?
7. What impact do you think the Food Bank has made on the beneficiaries during the pandemic?
8. In your perception, was there an increase or decrease in demand during the pandemic?
9. What improvements can the Food Bank do to better service the beneficiaries?
10. What are the challenges faced by Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank?
11. Are there any other issues you would like to talk about?

APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BUYISA UBUNTU FOOD BANK'S BENEFICIARIES

Food Bank Use

1. Why are you using the Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank?
2. How often do you use Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank?
3. What is your experience of Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank?
4. What difference has Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank made in your lives during COVID -19 pandemic?
5. Are you using other Buyisa Ubuntu services apart from receiving food?
   a. If yes, why?
6. Has the use of the food bank/ Buyisa Ubuntu changed your life in any way?
   a. If yes, in what ways?
7. What do you want to be included in the food parcel?
8. Do you have any point of view you want to relate?

Skills Development Program: Beneficiaries and skills development officer

9. What skill are offered by Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank for the beneficiaries?
10. Are these skills of interest to you?
11. Who decides on the skills (choice) program?
12. What difference did these skills make in your lives?
13. What skills do you need/want to change your lives?
14. Is there anything expected from you as beneficiaries?
15. What improvements can the food bank do to serve you better?

Coping strategies in the absence of Food Bank

16. What do you do when you do not have food?
17. What do you do when you do not have money to buy food?
18. How has Buyisa Ubuntu changed the way you see your self-reliance as a household?

19. Do you think that Buyisa Ubuntu can assist you to be independent of the food bank service in the future?
    a. If yes, how?
    b. If no, why not? And what could Buyisa Ubuntu do differently?

APPENDIX D: INFORMATION SHEET: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG | WITS SCHOOL OF GOVERNANCE

Dear Sir/ Madam

My name is **Lindeni Sekhokoane** and I am a Masters student in Management in the field of Governance with a specialisation in Public and Development Sector Monitoring and Evaluation at Wits University in Johannesburg. As part of my studies, I have to undertake a research project titled **Impact of Buyisa Ubuntu Food bank on livelihoods of Kagiso residents during COVID -19.** The aim of the study is to explore the change that Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank brought to its beneficiaries during COVID-19 and how these beneficiaries coped during the pandemic.

As part of this project, I would like to invite you to take part in a focus group discussion. This activity will involve answering brief questions around the above highlighted topic and will take around 30 minutes. With your permission, I would also like to record the audio of the interview using my personal phone. The audio recorded will be solely used for the purposes of data interpretation, discussion and analysis of the findings of this research.

You will not receive any direct benefits from participating in this study, and there are no disadvantages or penalties for not participating. You may withdraw at any time or not answer any question if you do not want to. The interview will not be confidential and anonymous because of the nature of the focus group. I will not be asking for your name or any identifying information, and the information you give to me will be held securely and not disclosed to anyone else. I will be using pseudonyms to represent your participation, in my final report. If you experience any distress or discomfort, we will stop the interview or resume another time.

If you have any questions afterwards about this research, feel free to contact me on the details listed below. This study will be written as a research report which will be available online through the university library website. If you have any queries, concerns or complaints regarding the ethical procedures of this study, you are welcome to contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee (non-medical), telephone +27(0)11 717 1408, Email Shaun.Schoeman@wits.ac.za

Yours sincerely,

Student name: Lindeni Sekhokoane
Email: Lindenisekh@gmail.com 079 714 0406

Supervisor: Professor Pundy Pillay
Email: pundy.pillay@wits.ac.za +27 11 717 3808

APPENDIX E: INFORMATION SHEET: INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG | WITS SCHOOL OF GOVERNANCE
UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

Dear Sir/ Madam

My name is **Lindeni Sekhokoane** and I am a Masters student in Management in the field of Governance with a specialisation in Public and Development Sector Monitoring and Evaluation at Wits University in Johannesburg. As part of my studies, I have to undertake a research project titled **Impact of Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank on livelihoods of Kagiso residents during COVID -19**. The aim of the study is to explore the change that Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank brought to its beneficiaries during COVID-19 and how these beneficiaries coped during the pandemic.

As part of this project, I would like to invite you to take part in an interview. This activity will involve answering brief questions around the above highlighted topic and will take around 15 minutes. With your permission, I would also like to record the audio of the interview using my personal phone. The audio recorded will be solely used for the purposes of data interpretation, discussion and analysis of the findings of this research.

You will not receive any direct benefits from participating in this study, and there are no disadvantages or penalties for not participating. You may withdraw at any time or not answer any question if you do not want to. The interview will be completely confidential and anonymous as I will not be asking for your name or any identifying information, and the information you give to me will be held securely and not disclosed to anyone else. I will be using pseudonyms to represent your participation, in my final report. If you experience any distress or discomfort, we will stop the interview or resume another time.

If you have any questions afterwards about this research, feel free to contact me on the details listed below. This study will be written as a research report which will be available online through the university library website. If you have any queries, concerns or complaints regarding the ethical procedures of this study, you are welcome to contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee (non-medical), telephone +27(0)11 717 1408, Email Shaun.Schoeman@wits.ac.za

Yours sincerely,
Student name: Lindeni Sekhokoane
Email: Lindenisekh@gmail.com. 079 714 0406

Supervisor: Professor Pundy Pillay
Email: Pundy.Pillay@wits.ac.za +27 11 717 3808

APPENDIX F: CONSENT FORMS

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG | WITS SCHOOL OF GOVERNANCE

CONSENT FORM

TITLE OF PROJECT:

NAME OF RESEARCHER: LINDENI SEKHOKOANE (STUDENT NUMBER) 1569314

I.....agree to participate in this research project. The research has been explained to me and I understand what my participation will involve.

I agree that my participation will remain anonymous. YES / NO (please circle)

I agree that the researcher may use anonymous quotes in his research report. YES / NO

I agree that the interview may be audio recorded. YES / NO

I agree that the information I provide may be used anonymously by other researchers following this study. YES / NO

Name of Participant: .....

Signature: .....

Date: .....

www.wits.ac.za/wsg

2 St David's Place, Johannesburg, 2050, Parktown, South Africa
E: admissions.wsg@wits.ac.za or shortcourses.wsg@wits.ac.za | T: +27 717 3520

APPENDIX G: PERMISSION LETTER: BUYISA UBUNTU FOOD BANK

Plot 259 Brandvlei, Rand West
Randfontein
Gauteng
1779

Tel: +27 11 955 6583
Cell: +27 82 853 8004
Email: info@csmc.org
mrmotaungm@outlook.com

CARROLL SHAW
Memorial Centre

07 February 2022

10 Jackson Street
Luipaardsvlei
Mogale city
1743

Mrs Lindeni Sekhokoane

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT BUYISA UBUNTU FOOD BANK.

This correspondence serves as formal permission for you, Mrs Lindeni Sekhokoane, to conduct your research on the impact of Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank on the livelihoods of Kagiso residents during the Covid-19 pandemic.

We agree to the terms mentioned in the letter addressed to Mr Mpho Motaung, dated 07 May 2021.

We hereby grant you permission and access to any data and knowledge that we have at our disposal to conduct the above mentioned research. We will assist you as far as possible and commit our full cooperation to you. We will also make available our boardroom at our Buyisa Ubuntu premises to conduct any required interviews.

Please feel free to contact me if any further assistance is required. We are looking forward to working with you.

Yours Sincerely.

Mr. M. Motaung
Executive Director
Carroll Shaw Memorial Centre

APPENDIX H: ETHICS CERTIFICATE



CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCE IN RESEARCH ETHICS

Name: LINDENI SEKHOKOANE

Student/Staff No: 1569314

Date of Certification: 29 July 2020- 28 July 2023 (This certificate is valid for a period of three years)

TRAINED BY:

PROFESSOR JASPER KNIGHT
(RESEARCH ETHICS)

SIGNATURE

UNIVERSITY OF THE
WITWATERSRAND
JOHANNESBURG

ISSUED BY:

DR ROBIN DRENNAN
(DIRECTOR: RESEARCH
OFFICE)

SIGNATURE

This certificate is confirmation of successful completion of a training course in Research Ethics for Non-Medical human research, based upon achieving a minimum level of competence in different assessment tasks.

APPENDIX I: ETHICS CLEARANCE LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

WITS SCHOOL OF GOVERNANCE
UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

Research Office:
Lehlohonolo Mmolotsane
Tel: 011 717 3968
Email: lehlohonolo.mmolotsane@wits.ac.za

Research Ethics Chair:
Rekgotsofetse Chikane
Tel: 0117173869
Email: rekgotsofetse.chikane@wits.ac.za

3 February 2023

Dear **Lindeni Sekhokoane**,

Title: Impact of Buyisa Ubuntu Food Bank on livelihoods of Kagiso residents during COVID-19
Student Number: 1569314
Degree: Master of Management
Ethics Clearance Number: *WSG-2023-02*

All candidates must satisfy the University's ethical standards for research. Your ethics application has been received and reviewed by the Wits School of Governance Human Research Ethics Committee.

Your ethical clearance has been approved subject to you getting permission to conduct research from all sites where research is conducted. The letter(s) of permission to undertake research must be submitted to the WSG Research Office and kept on file with your final proposal and other ethics documents.

You may commence your data collection under the guidance of your supervisor. In the event that the scope, methodology or nature of the research changes, you are required to submit another ethics application reflecting the changes.

The onus is on you as the candidate, with support from your supervisor, to ensure your research complies with university human research ethics policies and protocols at all stages of the research process.

It is recommended that you keep this letter in a safe place as you are responsible for ensuring you have proof of ethics clearance and have lodged the ethics clearance / protocol number with Faculty before final submission of your research report. If you do not have an ethics clearance number, you are not permitted to graduate.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely,

Rekgotsofetse Chikane

Rekgotsofetse Chikane
Research Ethics Chair

APPENDIX J: EDITING CERTIFICATE

Unit 3 West Square Business Park
407 West Avenue
Randburg
2194

Tel: +27 84 513 3707• Fax: 086 532 6404• e-mail: caption@webmail.co.za • P O Box 1550 • Honeydew • 2040

9 July 2023

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This serves to confirm that I have edited and made the necessary corrections and emendations to the thesis:

IMPACT OF BUYISA UBUNTU FOOD BANK ON LIVELIHOODS OF KAGISO RESIDENTS DURING COVID-19

by

Lindeni Sekhokoane

Sincerely

J Musi
Editor, Translator and Publisher