

**FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PERSISTENCE OF ADULT LEARNERS IN
LITERACY LEARNING AT SEBENTA NATIONAL INSTITUTE TO
STRENGTHEN PROGRAMME DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT**

BY

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Requirements for the Award of a Master of Adult Education**

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DECLARATION

I, NOMBUKISO SHABANGU, do solemnly declare that this dissertation is a product of my own work and that sources of information other than of my own have been acknowledged. I also declare that this work has never been previously submitted at the University of Zambia or any other university.

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This dissertation of Shabangu Nombukiso has been approved for examination as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Education in Adult Education by the University of Zambia.

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the factors influencing the persistence of adult learners in a literacy programme at the Sebenta National Institute (SNI) in Mbabane, Eswatini. The study followed a qualitative approach and employed a case study design. The study had (148) participants and utilized purposive sampling to select the participants. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). The semi-structured interviews were conducted with instructors and facilitators, each interview took between 10- 30 minutes following a structured guide to ensure focus discussions. Interviews were recorded for accuracy and later transcribed for thematic analysis. Focus group discussions involved subdividing 80 eighty adult learners into four groups of twenty (20), this collaborative approach facilitated brainstorming and dialogue around factors influencing persistence conversations were recorded and summarized for thematic analysis. Thematic analysis was employed to identify and analyse patterns within the qualitative data. This involved familiarization with the data, initial coding, and theme development. Key themes emerged around motivational factors, barriers to learning, and support systems, providing a comprehensive understanding of the factors affecting adult learners' persistence.

In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of addressing adult learners' unique needs and challenges in literacy programs. By aligning with theories such as Knowles's Andragogy, Tinto's Student Departure, Bandura's Social Learning, and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, the findings emphasize the role of relevant curricula, supportive environments, and flexibility in fostering persistence. The study concludes that the motivation of adult literacy learners is significantly influenced by their desire to meet prevailing needs. The major enablers for persistence are centered around the relevance of content, supportive environments, and community support. Recommendations include increasing budget allocations to SNI, fostering collective decision-making among administrators and learners, providing scholarships, periodically reviewing the curriculum, and offering transition support for learners, all aimed at strengthening program design and development.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to, my family, my Church ,my children ,my parents , my In- Laws and friends. They have been supportive throughout the entire research study. Special thanks to my husband for his encouragement, sacrifice and support along this journey. May the Almighty God Bless them.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AE	Adult Education
AET	Adult Education and Training
AET	Adult Education and Training
ALE	Adult Learning and Education
EU	European Union
GRALE	Global Report on Adult Learning and Education
IAAC	International Assessment of Adult Competencies
IAE	Integrated Adult Education
NALEP	National Adult Literacy and Education Policy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
NUPE	Non-formal Upper Primary Education
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SNI	Sebenta National Institute
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the study

Adult learning is a lifelong learning endeavour and involves a continuous engagement of adult learners in educational and training programmes for various purposes (Challva, 2023). The location of adult learning within a lifelong learning framework is both a lens for looking back and for projecting forward (Walters, 2006). Adult learning includes all learning activities, whether formal, informal, or non-formal through which adult learners acquire skills and knowledge to solve problems (Merriam, & Bierema, 2013; Jarvis, 2004). This suggests that adult learning is a continuous learning process intended to enhance participants' knowledge, skills, abilities, and competences needed for everyday use. In terms of programme design and development, Azoulay (2022), highlights that the adult education programmes are often designed and developed in accordance with the needs of learners. The motivation for continuous learning among adult learners is to acquire knowledge and skills for adapting to their different evolving contexts and this is often reflected in different tailor designed educational programmes (Lovell & Munn, 2017; Comings, Parrella, & Soricone, 2020).

Some adult learning programmes are tailored towards job and employment creation. This has been crucial in the employment situation in Eswatini, in which the country is faced with a growing gap between workers' competencies and skill sets and the needs of the job market epitomized by gender (Brixiová Schwidrowski, et. al, 2021). The factors associated with this situation include aging populations, technological advancements, and labour market changes (Brixiová, & Kangoye, 2018; Kosyakova & Bills, 2021). The result had been refresher courses and different training programmes designed to bridge these gaps. In Eswatini like many other Sub-Saharan African countries, information is scanty on the returns to re-entering education especially among adult learners, but other studies (Marginson, 2016) have reported that the benefits differ across social categories, and access to educational programmes tend to be highly stratified. Hence the need for continued adult learning which is partly due to the growing demand for new skills caused by advancement in technology and an increase in knowledge. This is in against the deficit in basic literacy skills (Azoulay, 2022).

Over the years, governments in the Sub-Saharan region have been making numerous efforts to create educational opportunities that extend beyond the scope of formal education (Thompson, 2001). Many African governments have recognized the importance of adult literacy and have implemented programmes to address this issue (UNESCO (2022)). Some countries, such as Zambia, Namibia, Zimbabwe, and the Republic of South Africa, have integrated adult literacy into their national education plans, with the goal of achieving universal literacy. Literacy is also seen as the ability to function better in one's social context (Sichula, 2018). Thus, literacy is aimed at enhancing one's understanding of the society in which one is required to assume a functional role. The Community-based and non-formal education programmes have played a significant role in addressing adult literacy (Tett, 2023).

Eswatini also took an initiative towards equipping its citizens with literacy and technical and vocational skills. The government of Eswatini prioritizes education as a fundamental human right. In this regard, several initiatives have been put in place by the government, one of which is the establishment of the Sebenta National Institute (SNI) in 1961 (Jele, 2005). According to the policy of the Ministry of Education and Training, Sebenta, is a non-profit making organization (public enterprise), that offers a range of services through adult basic literacy and non-formal education to assist individuals in achieving their personal goals (Eswatini Ministry of Education and Training (NETSP, 2018)). Sebenta acknowledges that a significant portion of Eswatini's rural and peri-urban population lacks literacy, which hampers their development and empowerment. The rationale behind this is that an illiterate population cannot effectively support progress. Conversely, literacy equips adults to actively participate in their communities and engage in civic activities. It enables them to comprehend their rights, responsibilities, and civic duties, thereby promoting increased political involvement, community engagement, and the ability to advocate for their needs and interests. Adult literacy empowers individuals to express their opinions, contribute to the public, and actively shape their society.

Adult Literacy is a fundamental pillar for national development. In order to enhance the standard of living for all communities across the Kingdom of Eswatini, Sebenta National Institute is devoted to providing adult literacy programmes and skills training. Therefore, the institute strives to offer a comprehensive basic literacy programme with the support of well-trained staff members who possess professional expertise, have access to necessary tools, and follow a broad and inclusive curriculum. The main objective is to increase the literacy rate in Eswatini, enabling individuals to access the wealth of knowledge associated with literacy,

communicate effectively, adapt to the modern world, learn how to study independently, and improve their prospects of securing fulfilling employment or participating in self-help initiatives. Basic Literacy (SiSwati); Basic and Post Basic English and Numeracy Course; Non-formal Upper Primary Education (NUPE); and Vocational Training are among the programmes and services offered by SNI.

The Ministry of Education and Training policy (2021) adds that in 2010, SNI launched the Non-Formal Primary Education Programme in close collaboration with the Eswatini government. After work hours, the over-aged students are taught in specific primary schools. To help these adult learners learn, primary school teachers who are currently employed or have retired are sought out. Sewing, Carpentry & Joinery, and Building are among the vocational training courses offered by Sebenta. Each of these courses lasts for nine months. After finishing the Sebenta Post Basic English course, learners are eligible to go back to formal education. SNI has recently had to deal with the influx of individuals who attended formal education to enrol in some or all these courses as an added training.

The government of Eswatini has continued its efforts to provide education for citizens through different programmes – formal and non-formal education (Eswatini Ministry of Education and Training, 2018). However, for many years, there has been minimal to non-involvement of out-of-school youths in many educational policies meant to address their issues, and this contributes to the failure of some interventions. The educational experiences and perspectives of out-of-school youths tend to be ignored in favour of statistical data (Manana, 2018). But the existence of Sebenta National Institute is poised to change this scenario by providing learning opportunities for the out-of-school youth and adults. While many have taken advantage of the learning opportunities offered by the institutes, not all learners complete their respective literacy programmes. Sebenta National Institute Report (2022/2023), indicate that approximately 25% of students who enrol in the programme end up dropping out due to various economic and social factors. The remaining 75% persist and successfully complete the programme.

1.1 Statement of the problem

While numerous studies have examined the factors contributing to dropout rates among adult learners in literacy programs in Eswatini, there remains a significant gap in understanding the elements that facilitate persistence among those who complete these programs. This lack of focus on successful learners creates an information void that is critical for refining literacy program design and enhancing learner engagement, particularly in addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by youth and adults in society (Manana, 2018; Mthethwa, 2020; Dlamini, 2021). The absence of evidence-based literacy programs has often led to ineffective interventions, resulting in high dropout rates and limited long-term impact on adult education (Manana, 2018; Nkosi, 2019). For instance, previous initiatives have frequently overlooked the socio-economic barriers that adult learners encounter, such as financial instability, lack of transportation, and family responsibilities, which can hinder their ability to participate consistently (Mthethwa, 2020). Furthermore, many programs have not adequately addressed the diverse learning needs and motivations of adult learners, leading to a mismatch between program offerings and learner expectations (Dlamini, 2021).

This study, therefore, aims to explore the factors influencing the persistence of adult learners at the Sebenta National Institute. By identifying these factors, the research seeks to provide actionable insights for the future development and enhancement of literacy programs, ensuring they effectively meet the varied literacy needs within the country. The Sebenta National Institute has been instrumental in reducing illiteracy rates in Eswatini over the years. However, despite the success of its programs, many Emaswati citizens drop out of formal schooling as early as primary education for various reasons, including economic hardship and lack of support (Nkosi, 2019). Later in life, they often recognize the necessity of education to achieve their personal and professional goals, prompting them to enroll in the adult literacy program offered by the Sebenta National Institute. Yet, a significant number of adult learners do not complete the training due to various economic and social factors, while others manage to persist until the end.

Understanding the reasons behind this persistence is essential for designing effective literacy interventions that not only attract learners but also support them through to completion. By addressing the specific barriers and motivations of adult learners, this study aims to fill the existing knowledge gap and inform future initiatives aimed at enhancing literacy skills among

adults in various communities, ultimately strengthening overall learner participation and development.

1.2 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to explore the factors influencing the persistence of adult learners in the literacy programme at Sebenta National Institute and how they can be incorporated in strengthening the literacy learning programme design and development.

1.3 Research objectives

The research objectives for this study were to:

- 1.3.1 To investigate the motivations of adult learners for enrolling in literacy programs at the Sebenta National Institute, with a focus on how these motivations influence their persistence and inform program design.
- 1.3.2 To identify the enablers that support adult learners in completing the literacy program, including external factors and institutional factors.
- 1.3.3 To explore strategies that can be implemented to support adult learners in achieving their literacy goals.

1.4 Research questions

The research questions of the study were:

- 1.4.1 What are the key motivations that drive adult learners to enroll in literacy programs at the Sebenta National Institute, and how do these motivations impact their persistence?
- 1.4.2 What enablers, including external and institutional factors, contribute to the successful completion of the literacy program by adult learners, and how can these insights inform program design and development?
- 1.4.3 What strategies can be employed to effectively support adult learners in achieving their literacy goals, and how do these strategies address the barriers they face in the learning process?

1.5 Significance of the study

This study aimed to provide valuable insights for Sebenta facilitators, coordinators, learners, and their administration office. Its primary goal was to identify the key factors contributing to the persistence of adult literacy learners in the programme. By pinpointing effective strategies that keep learners engaged and motivated, this study offers practical solutions for enhancing learner completion rates.

In addition, this study shed light on the challenges faced by adult literacy learners within the programme. These challenges often acted as barriers preventing learners from successfully completing the programme. By identifying these obstacles, the study proposes ways to overcome them, cultivating an environment that fosters learner success. Furthermore, this study assesses the programme's impact on adult learners' literacy skills. By evaluating the outcomes of the programme, it will gauge its effectiveness in improving learners' literacy abilities. This evaluation does not only provide valuable feedback but also highlights areas of the programme that could benefit from further development and enhancement.

Overall, through its comprehensive analysis and expansive approach, this study provides crucial information and recommendations to optimize the adult literacy programme, ensuring the persistence and success of its learners.

1.6 Delimitations of the study

The study was conducted at Sebenta National Institute (SNI) Headquarters in Mbabane. The SNI in Mbabane was chosen because of its proximity to the researcher and because of the bigger number of adult students that it has.

1.7 Operational definition of terms

Adult Education (AE): is a process whereby adults undergo methodical, ongoing self-education to acquire new knowledge, abilities, attitudes, or values.

Adult learner: designates a person who is 25 years of age or older, or a student who is regarded as non-traditional. Students whose circumstances have changed beyond those of a traditional student are referred to by this term.

Literacy: is the capacity of an individual to read, write, and speak in English, as well as to compute and solve problems at the levels required to be successful in the workplace, in one's own family, and in society.

Persistence: is the uninterrupted continuation of enrolment at the same postsecondary educational institution until the completion of a study program.

Adult Literacy Programme: Refers to a programme which provides adults and out of school youth with organized non-formal learning to equip them with basic literacy skills, knowledge and positive attitude to make them adapt and live better in the society

Drop-outs: Refers to adult learners who have stopped attending adult literacy programme before successfully attaining the desired competencies.

Strengthen Programme: This refers to the process of enhancing the overall effectiveness, sustainability, and impact of a specific program. It involves identifying weaknesses, making improvements, and implementing strategies to ensure the program achieves its intended goals. For instance, in literacy learning, this could mean improving teaching methods, learner support systems, or community outreach to better meet learners' needs.

Design and Development: It includes careful planning, structuring, and organizing activities to align with the program's objectives. In education, this might involve developing curriculum frameworks, resources, and delivery strategies tailored to target audiences like adult learners.

1.8 Theoretical framework

This study employed a blend of Knowles's Andragogy Theory, Tinto's Theory of Student Departure, Bandura's Social Learning Theory, and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to provide a comprehensive framework for examining the experiences and challenges faced by adult learners in literacy programs. It was aligned with research objectives and objectives of the study.

Knowles's Andragogy Theory

This theory was suitable for the study as most of the learners at Sebenta National Institute are adults who have various experiences of life and when they enrolled to learn they knew what they wanted, hence making sure that they achieve what they wanted, across all adult literacy programmes. Knowles's Andragogy Theory underscores the distinct traits of adult learners, such as their self-directed nature, extensive life experiences, and readiness to learn. This theoretical framework is instrumental in understanding how these factors shape adult learners' motivations for enrolling in literacy programs. Knowles's principles advocate for instructional strategies tailored to adult learning characteristics, aiming to enhance program design to better address the specific needs of learners (Knowles, 1980). By aligning educational approaches with adult learning principles, the study investigates how self-direction and prior experiences impact participation and outcomes in literacy education.

Tinto's Theory of Student Departure

Tinto's model focuses on student retention and persistence in educational environments, highlighting the significance of academic and social integration (Petty & Thomas, 2014). This framework is pivotal in analyzing adult learners' experiences at the Sebenta National Institute. Tinto posits that persistence in education stems from a confluence of social, cultural, perceptual, and economic factors (Petty & Thomas, 2014). Key contributors to adult persistence include past learning experiences, institutional support, engagement levels, and the depth of relationships forged between learners and the institution. Furthermore, successful integration into the academic and social aspects of the learning environment enhances commitment to education (Jenson, 2011). External factors such as family, work obligations, and socioeconomic conditions also significantly impact persistence. This study explores how peer relationships, institutional engagement, and community support influence learners' decisions to persist in literacy programs.

Bandura's Social Learning Theory

Bandura's Social Learning Theory emphasizes the role of social context in learning, where observation, imitation, and modelling play crucial roles (Bandura, 1977). In the context of this study, the theory serves as a lens to examine the impact of social interactions and support systems such as mentors, peers, and family on adult learners' motivation and perseverance. By

analysing the interplay between these social factors, the study highlights how fostering a collaborative and supportive learning environment enhances engagement and drives persistence. The framework underscores the importance of leveraging positive social influences to empower adult learners in literacy programs.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs outlines human needs from basic physiological requirements to self-actualization (Maslow, 1943). This framework assesses how fulfilling essential needs affects adult learners' motivation and persistence in literacy programs. The study evaluates the extent to which learners' foundational needs such as safety, belonging, and esteem are met and how these influence their ability to achieve literacy goals. According to Maslow, addressing basic needs creates a conducive environment for higher-order learning and self-fulfilment, thus fostering engagement and persistence in educational pursuits. By applying this framework, the research identifies strategies to support learners in overcoming barriers related to unmet needs, enhancing overall program effectiveness.

Together, these frameworks provide a multi-dimensional lens through which to analyse the factors influencing adult participation and persistence in literacy programs, ensuring the study addresses both individual and systemic dynamics.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Motivation for engaging in literacy programmes

Adult learners are often motivated by the need to address real-life challenges and improve their quality of life. According to Toit-Brits (2019), adults engage in literacy programs to solve practical problems, such as enhancing employability or managing daily tasks more effectively. Knowles et al. (2012) emphasize that adult learners are driven by intrinsic motivations, including self-improvement and the desire for independence, which align with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Hossain and Terwelp (2015) further highlight that fulfilling basic needs, such as safety and belonging, plays a critical role in motivating adults to enrol in literacy programs. These motivations not only influence learners' persistence but also inform the design of programs that cater to their specific needs and aspirations. Motivation is a key factor for successful learning because it can stimulate people's need to learn. Adult learners are stimulated to learn in a variety of ways. Knowles et. al (2012) found that adults are motivated to learn by internal and external factors. Adults have special learning needs that are closely associated with social roles. For them, learning is problem-centered and intrinsically motivated. Adult learners will drop out if they are handled like child learners. They will need flexibility in whatever they do at the learning centres and their educators should try to "understand their learners" in order to help them remain participating in learning programmes.

Hossain and Terwelp (2015) believe that adults venture into school based on the desire for self-esteem or attaining the highest level of personal improvement. This motivational factor can be related to Abraham Maslow's theory of human motivation with the understanding that humans would need to undergo five distinctive stages namely: physiological needs, safety needs, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. These stages could be pursued through adult literacy programmes regardless of the challenges that could have been faced. This theory could also be related to the ideologies given by Beck (2004) who argues that adult learning could be motivated with other personal factors such as the learner's background, familiarity the course being taught as well as with various learning tools, the degree of numeracy and literacy skills, different social experiences, as well as the level of the learner's self-esteem. The ABC Canada

Literacy Foundation (2023) reported that many adults have difficulty reading basic texts they encounter in their daily lives, resulting in struggling readers often avoiding engaging with texts. He postulated that when individuals are motivated to read, they are more likely to remain interested and engage with texts, as well as attempt to understand and extract meaning from what they read. The assertion made by ABC Canada Literacy Foundation (2023) above suggests that motivation level of learners has a positive impact on learner persistence, regardless of difficulty in what is learned.

The studies above focused on determining whether motivation constructs differed across typical and studying adult learners, suggests that motivation level of learners has a positive impact on learner persistence, regardless of difficulty in what is learned. Hence, the current study sought to analyse motivation levels of adult basic literacy learners at Sebenta National Institute to determine the role of motivation on adult learner persistence.

According to Richards (2020), adult learners can learn because they possess the discipline and ability to exercise self-control and self-direction. They are driven by the desire to achieve their objectives that include seeking self-fulfilment, certification, academic qualifications and promotion among others.

Murphy (2022) notes that majority of the adult learners want to grow in self-esteem and self-assurance, find purpose in their work, and persevere in the face of difficulties. Support staff members have the chance to revisit and reacquaint students with their initial motivation and purpose for pursuing higher education when they begin to question their decision to invest in their education or lose sight of their intrinsic motivation to finish the programme.

2.1 Participation in literacy learning programmes

The International Assessment of Adult Competencies (IAAC) describes literacy as the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in their community and wider society.

Sichula (2018) identifies the pedagogical practices that contribute to the persistence of adult learners in nonformal adult literacy classes. The study found that pedagogical practices that promote learner centeredness, relevance, and participation are essential for adult learners' persistence in non-formal adult literacy classes. In another study Sichula (2012) adds that programmes designed to foster literacy programmes among the adults must also include opportunities for them to reflect on levels of participation. In Sebenta National Institute many adult learners are there specifically to build skills to advance their careers and are making sacrifices in other areas of their lives to do so, so it's important for those developing adult training programmes to focus on what matters to these students to keep them engaged. Idoko (2018) investigated the elements that students thought had a significant impact on their perseverance and retention in adult basic education courses. The purpose of the research was to identify the elements that encourage students to stay involved in their academic courses. The results showed that learner's persistence was sustained by a variety of factors, including personal motivation, the instructor's support and high expectations, pertinent topics, and a connection to the classroom. Both authors emphasized the learner pedagogical practices and relevant content that are critical for sustaining participation. The studies did not adequately address the diverse background and experiences of adult learners including those from marginalized community so there was conceptual gap.

According to UNESCO (2022), overall, the 12-year period's ALE participation appears to have increased, according to the Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (GRALE) reports. According to GRALE 5, there has been a noticeable rise in participation in TVET and the literacy/basic skills domain. There has been a noticeable but less significant increase in ALE for active citizenship. Additionally, there has been an increase in the number of nations gathering data on participation rates, possibly due in part to the emphasis placed specifically on GRALE 4 participation. It is encouraging from an equity standpoint to see that participation rates have increased dramatically for a few marginalized groups. Although women made up the majority of adult learners in several countries and their participation had increased overall, GRALE 4 pointed out that there were certain nations where women had little to no access to education. Additionally, GRALE 4 stated that the expansion of employer-led TVET was the main factor driving the overall increase in ALE participation levels.

One of the most notable aspects of contemporary life course and social stratification systems is the decision made by adults to return to formal education after taking time off for work, family, or other responsibilities (OECD, 2020). The rising prevalence of adult education is driven by a number of social and macroeconomic trends. In many places, the economic returns on higher education are at historically high levels and are even increasing. A growing number of adults view their early schooling experiences as insufficient for the skill or credential requirements of advancing in their careers, and they look to additional education to fill in those skill gaps (Cronen et al., 2017).

According to Azoulay (2022), one of the main issues facing adult learning and education (ALE) has always been access and participation. If ALE is to fulfil its potential contribution, overall participation rates are too low, and participation is significantly lower in some groups than in others. Whether these are the broader benefits of employment, prosperity, well-being, health, and civic engagement that were explored in GRALE 3, or the more fundamental functional skills of literacy and numeracy that were investigated in GRALE 2, unequal participation means unequal access to the benefits of ALE. Still. As GRALE 4 clearly showed some segments of the population, such as migrant workers and refugees, participate at a persistently low rate, even though they may be the ones who need ALE the most.

2.2 Challenges faced by the learners who enrol in the programme

The completion of literacy programs by adult learners is often facilitated by a combination of external and institutional factors. Hemmerich (2014) and Hart (2012) underscore the importance of family and community support in promoting persistence among adult learners. Such support systems provide emotional encouragement and practical assistance, enabling learners to overcome barriers. Institutional factors, such as relevant curricula and conducive learning environments, are equally critical. Sogunro (2015) identifies that adult learners thrive in programs that are tailored to their needs and offer flexibility to accommodate their responsibilities. Additionally, Kinyua (2022) highlights the significance of adaptable learning options, which allow learners to balance education with work and family commitments. These enablers create a supportive framework that fosters persistence and program completion.

However, the literacy survey report by KNBS (2007) reveals that one of the challenges affecting adult literacy programmes is that the curriculum and learning resources used in adult literacy centres are not relevant to learners' needs hence they do not find value in attending the adult literacy programmes. While some adult learners prefer to pursue programmes full-time and attend daytime, weekday classes, Wallenstein (2023) notes that some adult learners may find it challenging to attend full-time or daytime courses due to competing priorities. According to the Lumina Foundation, 24% of adult learners are responsible for children or other dependents. Childcare that is both affordable and available on campus increases these students' chances of enrolling in and thriving in college. According to a survey of student parents, 63% of participants missed one or more classes because there wasn't enough childcare. It makes sense that over 50% of student-parents drop out of school before receiving a degree.

Myrtle (2020) studied attrition patterns and obstacles for adult learners at a community college. Nine adult learners who enrolled for one or more semesters between 2012 and 2014 but did not complete their studies or re-enrol gave their consent to be included in the research. Semi-structured face-to-face interviews were used to gather the data, which were then thematically analyzed using axial and open coding techniques to identify emerging themes. The participants believed that their lack of persistence was caused by inadequate access to technology and student support services, such as advising, childcare, orientation, and streamlined degree pathways.

Bailey (2017) reports that there is a low retention rate among adults who enrol in the local community college. Concerns from adult learners who try to navigate the college setting while finding success in pursuing career-related education and their inability to easily access the support required for advice and guidance have made this issue worse. One of the biggest obstacles to college success and retention is a lack of aptitude in reading and math. Adult learners face a variety of difficulties, including financial constraints, distances to commute, and scheduling conflicts between work and school. Once enrolled, they are usually on their own to handle their own academic needs. According to Palmadessa (2017), the focus of research on student attrition has been influenced by the perception of high rates of adult dropout, especially for those enrolled in distance and open learning programmes, and, at least in Western societies, by the unwillingness of governmental funding sources, like financial aid.

According to Marcaletti, Berrozpe, and Koutra (2018), the Swedish Adult Education Initiative educated 500,000 adults between 1997 and 2002, but it had no effect on the pattern of nonparticipation among the hardest-to-reach adults. Adult learning is increasingly seen as widening rather than bridging opportunities gaps as a result of failing to effectively address the persistent non-participation of certain groups of vulnerable adults. This phenomenon is known as the Matthew effect, which refers to cumulative advantage and cumulative disadvantage. According to Hubbard (2017), adult learners have a variety of particular obstacles to overcome. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that less than 40% of adult learners complete their academic program.

2.3 Support for adult learners in literacy programmes

Effective strategies for supporting adult learners focus on creating responsive and learner-centered programs. According to the National Academies Press (2012), building self-efficacy and fostering engagement are essential for motivating learners to persist. Flexible learning experiences, as suggested by ABC Life Literacy Canada (2020), allow learners to choose the pace and format of their education, making it easier to integrate learning into their busy lives. Incorporating real-life contexts into the curriculum, as noted by Rogers (2003), ensures that the content is relevant and immediately applicable, enhancing learners' interest and commitment. Additionally, creating safe and welcoming environments, as emphasized by the University of San Diego (2020), encourages learners to actively participate and share their experiences. These strategies collectively empower adult learners to achieve their literacy goals and sustain their engagement in educational programs.

Broek, Linden, and Semeijin (2023) assert that policies pertaining to adult learning must be grounded in an awareness of the disparities in the adoption and advantages of education, as well as the reasons why adults may choose not to engage. This needs to be more than just recognizing obstacles that, when taken down, give adults no excuse to stay home. In order to create policies and programmes that cater to the needs of adult learners, it is imperative to comprehend the underlying dynamics that drive adults' involvement or lack thereof in the learning process. Policies and programmes cannot effectively engage adults who most need to learn if they are not fully captured.

People believe that barriers prevent them from wanting to learn because they know that if they

don't, they will lag behind their rivals (Regmi, 2015). This has the effect of increasing individual accountability for success and failure in terms of policies. This gives rise to the policy-theory, which holds that people will decide learning is beneficial to them and engage in adult learning programmes when policies remove obstacles and lower thresholds for participation. Governments can claim that policies give everyone the same opportunities to participate under this barriers-related paradigm, but some people just choose not to (Boyadjjeja and Ilieva-Trikova, 2021).

Parker (2023) argues that in order to effectively teach adults, educators must first understand how traditional teaching approaches differ for younger students. The various life issues that will affect the adult learners' success and progress during their enrolment in the program must also be acknowledged and taken into consideration by the educator. Evaluations are valuable additions to the process of completing a degree and have a pertinent role in the "placement" of the student and credit award.

Murphy (2022) asserts that adult learners differ from conventional students. Institutions stand a far better chance of motivating them to complete, even in the face of obstacles and setbacks, by creating plans, strategies, and resources tailored to their unique needs. In order to spot issues and offer suggestions, it's critical that the student services staff at an institution be aware of this network as well as each student's particular support system. This will support you in problem solving, coming up with ideas, and handling challenging situations. According to Murphy (2022), programmes made for working adults must start with a strong foundation of pertinent learning objectives, community components that foster a sense of belonging, feedback loops, and stimulating activities that enhance aptitude, mastery, and competency.

2.4 The Education System Context in Eswatini

The education system in Eswatini is organized into four key subsectors: early childhood care, development and education (ECCDE); primary education; secondary education; and post- school education and training (PSET), comprising tertiary education and technical and vocational education and training (TVET). In addition, adult education and lifelong learning (AELL) is provided for those who never enrolled in, or who dropped out of, the formal education system.

2.4.1 Primary and Secondary education

Primary and secondary education are provided by schools through formal and non-formal settings. In 2018, there were 618 primary schools and 275 secondary schools in Eswatini. Primary enrolment is at 237,000, junior secondary enrolment is at 77,000, and senior secondary education is at 39,000 students. Primary education starts at the age of 6 and lasts for seven years. It seeks to ensure that learners acquire the skills, knowledge, values and attitudes that are required for general and vocational education, and for the execution of basic life roles. This level of education addresses learners' intellectual and emotional development, the development of their creativity and the acquisition of social, cultural and physical skills. At the end of primary education (Grade 7), learners must pass the national examination to obtain the Eswatini Primary Certificate (EPC) in order to proceed to junior secondary education.

Eswatini is very close to achieving universal access to primary education. This can be attributed to the FPE programme that was introduced in 2010, following the adoption of the FPE Act. The Act stipulates that “every Swazi child enrolled at a public primary school is entitled to free education at the public primary school beginning with Grade 1 up to and including Grade 7” (Swaziland, 2010). FPE has been viewed as a consolidated programme aimed at creating a conducive learning environment that is characterized by minimum barriers to access quality primary education. The FPE programme specifically aims to reduce financial (school fees), physical (distance to school) and sociocultural barriers to education.

Secondary education spans five years: three years of junior secondary and two years of senior secondary. Secondary education is neither compulsory nor free in Eswatini, and the theoretical age group for this level is children aged 13–17 years. The purpose of secondary education in Eswatini is to equip learners with the knowledge and skills required for postsecondary education, to find employment, or to start a business. Fee exemptions are targeted at orphaned and vulnerable children through the OVC education grant. At the end of junior secondary education (Form 3), students sit for the high-stakes Junior Certificate (JC) examination, which they are required to pass to proceed to senior secondary education. At the end of senior secondary education (Form 5), students sit for the Eswatini General Certificate of Secondary Education (EGCSE) and the Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), which qualifies them for entry into tertiary institutions.

Four public secondary schools and a small number of private secondary schools offer Form 6, at the end of which students sit for the A/AS-level General Certificate of Secondary Education (GSCE) examination, which is equivalent to qualifications in the Southern African Development Community region. Some secondary schools in Eswatini also enable students to sit for the South African Matric examination and examinations set by the Independent Examinations Board.

2.4.2 Post-school Education and Training (PSET)

The post-school education and training sector comprises tertiary education and TVET. The purpose of tertiary education and TVET in Eswatini is to equip students with skills and competencies that are demanded by the labour market to drive economic growth. The overall regulatory function of post-school education and training rests with MoET. Tertiary education includes public and private universities, which typically offer three- to four-year courses for students aged 18 years and older. These are complemented by public and private colleges, a majority of which are specialized learning institutions focusing on one professional area, such as teacher training colleges. The private institutions are mainly operating branches of foreign tertiary institutions, originating, for example, in South Africa. The largest tertiary institution in Eswatini is the University of Eswatini (UNESWA).

TVET is provided both at the secondary and tertiary level. What is considered to be formal TVET falls under MoET's Chief Inspector Tertiary, while industrial training is regulated by the Department of Industrial and Vocational Training in the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MoLSS). There are two points of entry into TVET: following the EPC for entry into the industrial and agricultural colleges; and following the completion of the secondary education certificate for entry into public or private formal TVET institutions for youths aged 18 and above. In 2019, MoET had recorded 34 TVET institutions, five of which are public. The public institutions enrolled about 1,700 students in 2016. Public formal TVET is limited to 10 occupational fields focusing on traditional technical trades, education, business professions, information and communications technology (ICT) and agriculture. Private TVET provision of education is significant in terms of enrolment and the range of programmes offered. Students can also access public non-formal vocational training through MoET's rural education and skills centres and the Sebenta National Institute, which is managed by the adult

and non-formal education programme of MoET. These non-formal vocational training programmes offer short courses such as carpentry, sewing, catering and computing. While these courses were originally targeted at those who had completed adult education programmes, students from the general education sector who have an interest in these courses are also accepted. AELL caters for out-of-school children and youth, as well as adults who have never enrolled in, or dropped out of, the formal education system. The aim of AELL is to empower the more vulnerable in society in accordance with their needs and interests and to prepare them for the world of work. These individuals can access non-formal primary and secondary education through the Sebenta National Institute and Emlalatini Development Centre.

2.4.3 Adult education and lifelong learning

The public PSET provision is complemented by AELL, targeting out-of-school children and youth, as well as adults, with the aim of empowering the more vulnerable in society in accordance with their needs and interests and to prepare them for the world of work. AELL in Eswatini follows two directions: (i) basic and general education with the aim to complete missing educational steps; and (ii) creating opportunities for the acquisition of skills to improve employability, which is part of the non-formal skills development system. A key provider of basic adult education is the Sebenta National Institute, which offers free non-formal primary education (NPE) for children, youth and adults who have either never enrolled in, or have dropped out of, the formal education system. It is delivered by volunteer primary teachers in modular programmes for two hours a day, three days a week, to small groups of learners in various locations, including churches, neighbourhood care points and schools. The Sebenta National Institute programme comprises five levels, enabling learners to complete the primary curriculum in five years. The curriculum is aligned with the formal primary curriculum. Learners in Level 5 can sit for the EPC through the Sebenta National Institute or by (re-)joining the formal education system.

After passing the EPC learners can continue with a non-formal junior secondary and senior secondary education programme, also offered by the Sebenta National Institute. MoET's Emlalatini Development Centre assists learners to complete secondary education through distance learning combined with face-to-face teaching. The Emlalatini Development Centre uses the same curriculum as the formal general education system, with learning materials

converted into distance-learning modules. Distance learning under the Emlalatini Development Centre also provides opportunities for workers to continue their education and upgrade their educational qualifications.

Sebenta National Institute and Emlalatini Development Centre programmes are intended to provide effective pathways back into formal education. To avoid discrimination against non-formal education and to ease the transfer of students from the non-formal to the formal education system, the MoET Examinations Council and Sebenta National Institute decided that learners from both streams should be awarded the same EGCSE. Relative to the high number of out-of-school children and other people without completed education, enrolment rates in non-formal adult programmes are very low. For the year 2016, MoET reported a total of just over 11,000 youth dropping out of primary school alone (MoET, 2018c). A total of 2,851 students were enrolled in general education Sebenta National Institute programmes in 2017, and 519 in the Emlalatini Development Centre. Notably, enrolment in the distance education programmes of the Emlalatini Development Centre decreased during the second half of the last decade, dropping from 942 students in 2014 to 519 students in 2017. Overall, more adult education participants pursue certificates at primary school than secondary school level. While the Emlalatini Development Centre targets secondary education with a majority of students studying at senior secondary level, most Sebenta students are enrolled at primary level.

2.5 Gaps in the Literature

The brief of the reviewed literature related to the study shows that there is little research conducted on adult education persistence especially in the African context hence, this made this study worth conducting in order to add a new scope of knowledge and the adult education in Eswatini. Another notable gap in these studies is that they adopted a quantitative approach which only focused on more objective and generalizable data whereas subjective data, also some of the studies covered the retention of students in the 18 – 24-year-old category whereas this study is about adult learners. Though providing a valuable insight on persistence of adult the studies did not sufficiently address the question why adult learners persist in learning. The current study sought to explore the persistence of adult basic literacy learners at Sebenta National Institute in Eswatini, in order to use the findings to eradicate dropouts by improving programme design and learner persistence. McDonnell, Soricone & Sheen (2014) went on to state that provision of support services such as integrated network of academic, non-academic,

career, personal, and financial supports are a critical factor in improving persistence and completion. Noted is that various research studies which related to this study provided a valuable insight on persistence of adult but did not sufficiently address the question why adult learners persist in learning. Notable gabs, time gap, population gap methodological gap , geographical gap, conceptual gap, methodological gap, Age gap and context gap.

2.6 Chapter summary

This chapter discusses the related literature review on what different scholars have said and what research has found on adult literacy learners in literacy learning programmes. It is organized and presented in three sections. The first section specifically reviews literature on factors influencing persistence of adult learners in adult literacy programmes. The second section presents the enablers of the adult literacy learners to stay to completion of the adult literacy programme. The third section further covers literature on the completion rate of the learners who enrol in the programme, and the fourth section focuses on strategies to support adult learners in their pursuit of knowledge.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Research paradigm

Kumatongo & Muzata (2021) defined a paradigm as the pair of glasses that researchers wore to see and make sense of the world. It consists of beliefs and assumptions that shape the structure of research. This study utilized an interpretivist paradigm to provide a valuable framework for exploring the interplay between individual adult learners and the contextual factors that influence their persistence in literacy programs. The study adopted an interpretivist paradigm employing three philosophical stances to allow the researcher to explore the subjective experiences and perspectives of adult learners. This paradigm assumed a subjectivist epistemology, relativist ontology, and a balanced axiology. Epistemological it recognizes that knowledge is co-created through social interaction and personal reflection by prioritizing qualitative methods which were focus groups and interviews. Ontological to acknowledge that each learner brings a unique background context and set of experiences, resulting in diverse interpretations of their learning journey. Axiological it guides researcher to consider or to respect ethical implications.

3.1 Research approach

The qualitative research approach was deemed most appropriate for this study to investigate the factors influencing the persistence of adult learners in a literacy programme. Qualitative research was used to gather in-depth insights into a problem or generate new ideas for research (Bhandari, 2020). This method allowed for the collection of rich, comprehensive data to gain a profound insight into the experiences, perspectives, and motivations of the participants. Through interviews, focus groups, and observations, the study explored the complex and factors that influenced adult learners' persistence in the programme offered at Sebenta National Institute (SNI), including personal motivations, participation barriers, learning preferences, and perceptions of program effectiveness. The flexible and iterative nature of qualitative research enabled the adaptation of methods to capture the unique experiences of each participant, resulting in detailed descriptions and narratives that provided valuable insights for program design and improvement. Ultimately, the qualitative approach facilitated a deeper understanding of the factors affecting adult learners' participation and persistence in a literacy program, and informed strategies for enhancing program design and student engagement.

3.2 Research design

This study utilized a case study design to explore the factors affecting the persistence of adult learners in a literacy program, focusing on the experiences of sixty individual learners. Each learner's unique background contributes to their distinct perspectives, making this approach particularly relevant. The choice of a case study aligns with the interpretivist paradigm's emphasis on understanding individuals' lived experiences and perceptions (Moustakas, 1994). The case study offers valuable insights into the real-world experiences of adult learners, which is essential for designing and implementing effective interventions to support them at Sebenta National Institute (SIN). According to Yin (2003), a case study is an empirical investigation of a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context. This method excels at providing a deeper understanding of complex issues and can enhance existing knowledge through insights gained from previous research.

In this study, the case study approach enables an in-depth exploration of the specific context of the literacy program, allowing researchers to capture rich, detailed insights central to qualitative research (Creswell, 2013). The findings from this case study can inform actionable recommendations to enhance the literacy program and improve learner participation, aligning with the transformative potential of qualitative research to create positive change based on a thorough understanding of individuals' experiences (Finlay, 2009).

3.3 Research Setting

The research setting refers to the place where the data are collected. In this study, data were collected at Sebenta National Institute head office in Mbabane Eswatini. The SNI was chosen as case study because Government of Eswatini recognizes the importance of education and the role it plays in building its human capital, reducing poverty, and transforming the economic and social landscape. The ultimate objective is to provide access to quality education at each level to all Swazi citizens (MoET, 2018a). The strong commitment to improve the education sector is evidenced by the high priority given to the sector in terms of overall public spending and the introduction of adult basic education programme significant to adult learners because it empowers them with the Knowledge that they require to deal with day to day life, for instance, most adults who have successfully completed their studies, know how to compute,

write and read. Meaning that this programme has basically transformed peoples' life's in the society (MoET, 2018a).

The SNI was founded in 1961 to "promote adult education and community development in Swaziland". After a short period during which several activities were attempted (including financial support for the building and running of a few primary schools in disadvantaged areas) Sebenta decided to specialise in adult literacy since (it is estimated that) 74% of the adult population of Swaziland is illiterate. In-1968 Sebenta broadened this aim to include the teaching of Siswati and English as second languages.

3.4 Study Population

Hill and Hill (2015) define a population as the entire group of individuals who possess a specific set of traits. The study population refers to the portion of the target population that is available for research. According to Schumacher and McMillan (2006), this term encompasses all individuals, units, objects, or events considered in the study. For this research, the study population is one hundred and forty-eight (148) consists of three (3) instructors and five (5) facilitators at the institute's headquarters, along with (140) One hundred and forty adult learners enrolled in adult basic literacy, primary education, and vocational skills training programs. This population was selected for its relevance and appropriateness in facilitating an understanding of the factors influencing adult learners' persistence, thereby helping to address the research objectives.

3.5 Sample and Sampling Techniques

3.5.1 Sample

The sample size is defined as a portion of the total population selected for the study to represent the whole population (Leo & Xavier, 2020). In this study, the sample size included eighty eight(88) participants, comprising eighty (80) adult learners each, five (5) facilitators, and three (3) instructors. All participants were drawn from within the Sebenta National Institute.

The study employed purposive sampling techniques to select the adult learners across the three literacy programs (adult basic literacy, primary education, and vocational skills training), as well as the five instructors and three facilitators. This targeted approach was chosen for its relevance and appropriateness in understanding the persistence of adult learners and addressing

the research objectives. The researcher believed these sampling techniques were appropriate for the qualitative nature of the study.

3.5.2 Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling was utilized to select the three (3) instructors, five (5) facilitators, and eighty (80) adult learners at Mbabane SNI. Total sample size was 68 participants. According to Touvila, Mansa, and Courage (2020), purposive sampling is a widely used technique in research that aims to select cases rich in information while utilizing minimal resources. The researcher selected the three (3) instructors, eighty (80) adult learners and five (5) facilitators based on their knowledge, skills, and experience in facilitating the adult literacy program at SNI.

The instructors and learners participated voluntarily in the study and not by inducement due to respect of their social values and laws that govern the institution. Upon obtaining consent, the researcher compiled a list of participants, including their contact details. Out of the 120 learners, eighty (80) agreed to participate voluntarily. The researcher then coordinated with them to arrange suitable dates and times for the interviews. Purposive sampling was found to be efficient, quick, and straightforward for selecting participants. Bakkalbasioglu (2020) emphasizes that this technique not only reduces access time and mitigates non-commitment from potential interviewees but also gives the researcher a degree of insider status in the studied environment, potentially enhancing the quality of the interviews. However, it's important to note that this sampling method may not yield a representative sample and could introduce sampling bias.

3.6 Inclusion/exclusion criteria

Only learners enrolled in the literacy programme at Sebenta National Institute were included in the study, as well as instructors and facilitators serving at the institute. The inclusion criteria protocols applied in this study were:

- (a) All participants must be employees from the SNI employees and SNI students;
- (b) Above age of 18 years.
- (c) Must have over 5 years' experience in government particularly the SNI.

3.7 Data collection instruments

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). The semi-structured interviews were conducted with instructors and facilitators, each interview took between 10- 30 minutes following a structured guide to ensure focus discussions. Interviews were recorded for accuracy and later transcribed for thematic analysis. Focus group discussions involved subdividing 80 adult learners into four groups of twenty (20), this collaborative approach facilitated brainstorming and dialogue around factors influencing persistence conversations were recorded and summarized for thematic analysis. Interviews provided flexibility in probing participants' experiences while maintaining a structured framework for comparison. FGDs facilitated dynamic interactions among learners, allowing for the emergence of shared experiences and diverse perspectives. The interview and FGD guides were developed based on existing literature, expert consultation, to ensure clarity and relevance. These instruments (Appendices A and B) served as structured tools to guide the researcher in asking questions aligned with the study's research objectives. They were used to collect data from literacy learners and facilitators/instructors, focusing on understanding the persistence of adult learners in literacy programmes.

3.7.1 Interview guide

The researcher collected data from five (5) instructors face to face Interview guides were used to conduct in-depth interviews to collect the data from the instructors and facilitators to share their experiences in adult literacy classes. According to Marshall (2016), the benefits of in- depth interviews include the ability to gather more detailed information and comprehend it thoroughly, the ability to identify and interpret body language and facial expressions more clearly, and the ability for the interviewer to elicit explanations from respondents. In this study the researcher had expected the in-depth interviews to be helpful in providing detailed information that was needed, and the interviews were flexible since probing was possible.

However, the interviews were time consuming in gathering and analysing the data, and the results may not be generalizable because of the small sample used. This is to mean that the views of the sample may not have represented the views of the larger population of Eswatini.

3.7.2 Focus group schedule

Focus group discussion provided the opportunity for the adult literacy learners to interact and shared experiences and perceptions to generate rich qualitative data, schedule was used to collect data from the learners enrolled in the adult basic literacy, primary education and the vocational skills training programmes. The focus group discussion technique according to Alsaawi (2016), involves data collection through brainstorming in a focus group of comprising four (4) focus groups of 20 adult learners each. The focus group discussions were most appropriate for the learners to save time as interviews take long to complete and were appropriate for the research topic on factors influencing the persistence of adult learners in literacy learning at Sebenta Institute to strengthening programme design and development. The topic did not touch on sensitive information that would have constituted individual interviews for confidentiality.

3.8 Data collection procedures

The researcher gathered all the needed permissions to conduct this study. She was cleared by the University of Zambia ethics committee to conduct the study. The institute, through the Assistant Dean of School of Adult Education also cleared the researcher to conduct the study. The researcher then visited the selected Sebenta National Institute, Mbabane branch and introduced the study to the administrators and identified the participants. The researcher made an agreement with the participants on the dates and venues for the data collection process.

3.8.1 Interviews

In conducting the interviews, the researcher followed the interview guides in asking the questions. Each interview lasted for 10-30 minutes. At the beginning of each interview session, the researcher explained the purpose of the research study and outlined the ethical considerations, upon which she asked each to sign the consent form as evidence that the interviewee voluntarily consented to participating in the data collection process. Thereafter, the interviewees were asked to explain their answers where necessary and probing questions were posed. The researcher started the interview with a general, open-ended question, then asked the questions while allowing the interviewees to do most of the talking. The researcher respected the interviewee's pace. The researcher kept the interview focused on the research questions. The researcher avoided suggesting answers and was careful not to ask leading questions. Open

ended questions were used to give interviewees room to elaborate their views. A Smart phone was used to record the interviews for purposes of collecting all necessary information.

3.8.2 Focus group discussions

The researcher sub-divided the eighty (80) sampled learners into 4 groups of 20 learners to conduct the focus group discussions. The researcher began by explaining the purpose of the research and ethical considerations, while asking a representative from each group to sign the consent form to show that they voluntarily consented to participating in the data collection process. The researcher would pose a question following the interview schedule, and allow two or three participants to respond while asking to follow up questions where clarity was needed. During the discussions, the conversations were recorded using pen to write key points on spaces provided on each interview schedule, while a Smart phone was also used to capture details of the conversations. Permission was sought from the participants to have the conversations recorded. Data captured using the Smart phone were later transcribed into text matter in preparation for analysis.

Data captured using the interview guides and focus group discussion schedule were used in identifying themes for ease of analysis.

3.9 Data analysis

Thematic data analysis is a qualitative method used to identify and analyse patterns within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis was employed to identify and analyse patterns within the qualitative data. Thematic analysis involved systematically identifying, organizing, and interpreting patterns within the collected data from interviews and focus group discussions. First, all audio recordings were transcribed into text to ensure accuracy. The researcher familiarized herself with the transcribed data through repeated readings, noting initial observations. Using an inductive approach, the researcher assigned codes to recurring ideas or phrases that appeared in the responses, such as "motivation," "barriers," "support systems," and "flexibility." These codes were then grouped into broader categories or themes that aligned with the research objectives. For example, themes such as "Learning Motivations," "Institutional Support," and "Persistence Factors" emerged from analyzing participants' explanations and interactions. Quotes from participants were used to illustrate each theme and provide a deeper understanding of the findings.

To ensure reliability, the researcher revisited the themes to confirm they accurately represented the data. Additionally, connections between themes were explored in relation to existing theories, such as Knowles's Andragogy and Tinto's Student Departure models. This step enriched the analysis by linking the findings to established frameworks in adult education, enabling the researcher to draw meaningful conclusions and recommendations.

3.10 Ethical considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant institutional review board. Informed consent was secured from all participants, ensuring voluntary participation and confidentiality. To protect participant identities, pseudonyms were used, and all interviews and FGDs were conducted in a neutral, non-coercive environment. Ethical considerations were rigorously applied throughout the study. According to Bhandari (2022), ethical considerations in research refer to a set of guidelines that govern research design and procedures, ensuring integrity and respect for participants. Researchers must adhere to a strict code of conduct when collecting data from human subjects. In this study, key ethical principles were upheld, including the following.

(i) Institutional approval and permission

The Research Proposal was submitted to the Ethical Review Board at the University of Zambia for clearance before commencing the study. The researcher then obtained proper permission from the institution management to access the department where the research took place. A letter was written to the Chief Executive Officer (C. E. O) through the Senior Curriculum & Learning Officer who represents the Institution's management.

(ii) Informed consent

The researcher sought permission and consent from the Sebenta National Institute and the adult learners in the institution before conducting the research so that they took part in the study. This was done through a letter which was drafted by the researcher to seek consent from the adult learners.

(iii) Anonymity

To ensure anonymity, the researcher asked the participants not to reveal their names at any stage of the data collection process. The researcher also avoided biasness by treating all participants equally. Notably, the researcher did not cause any physical or psychological harm to the participants by avoiding asking sensitive questions.

(iv) Confidentiality

The researcher visited the instructors and the learners to establish rapport and gain trust from the participants before the scheduled day of the data collection exercise. This was to ensure that all the participants in the study (researcher and learner) understood that confidentiality and privacy of the respondent were protected by keeping the information given confidential and their identity anonymous unless they wished to.

(v) Voluntary participation

The instructors and learners participated voluntarily in the study and not by inducement due to respect of their social values and laws that govern the institution. Participants were informed on the duration of the study and time to conduct the interview. Most importantly, participants were informed that they were free to withdraw from the study whenever they felt so.

(vi) Safety and protection of the participants

The researcher protected the participants from possible harm during the course of the study by keeping data securely safe. The researcher employed the SiSwati language as it was familiar to the participants and also the rights and privacy of the participants were respected.

3.11 Communication/Dissemination of the Findings

The findings of the study will be disseminated following the University of Zambia Research policy and University of Zambia Copy Rights Policy Framework. Should the Ministry of Education and Training in Eswatini want to get the research findings they will need to liaise with University of Zambia.

3.12 Chapter summary

This chapter presents the main methodological aspects of this study by summarizing the research procedures that were involved in the collection and analysis of the data, research paradigm, research approach, research design, study population sampling size and sampling techniques, data collection instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis and ethical considerations.

This study acknowledges certain limitations. Researcher bias is a potential concern due to the interpretive nature of qualitative analysis. To mitigate this, reflexivity was maintained through a research journal, and peer debriefing was conducted to challenge subjective interpretations. Additionally, while qualitative research does not aim for generalizability, transferability was enhanced through thick descriptions of the research context. Sampling bias is another potential limitation, as participants who volunteered may be more motivated than those who did not participate. To address this, the study ensured diverse representation across different literacy program settings. This study's methodological approach directly addresses gaps identified in the literature. While prior research has extensively documented adult literacy program outcomes, fewer studies have qualitatively examined learners' intrinsic and extrinsic motivations and their persistence challenges. By employing a case study approach and thematic analysis, this research provided an in-depth, contextually grounded understanding of adult learners' experiences, filling a critical gap in existing scholarship. This refined methodology strengthens the study's credibility by ensuring a well-justified sampling strategy, detailed data analysis procedures, critical reflection on limitations, and explicit alignment with gaps in the literature.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study whose purpose was to explore the factors that influence the persistence of adult literacy learners to stay to completion of the adult literacy learning programme at Sebenta National Institute (SNI) in Mbabane, Eswatini. This was envisaged that the study might generate knowledge for strengthening the design and implementation of the literacy programme including learner participation in Eswatini. The findings are presented in two sections. The first section presents findings from the adult literacy learners enrolled in the adult literacy programmes comprising of adult basic literacy, primary education, and vocational skills education. The second section presents findings from the literacy facilitators who teach and train the learners. Pseudonyms are used in place of the names of the participants for purposes of confidentiality, anonymity and privacy of the research participants. LF1-LF8 are used to mean Literacy Facilitators, BLL1-BLL10 to mean Basic Literacy Learners, PEL1-PEL15 to mean Primary Education Learners, and VSL1-VSL35 to mean Vocational Skills Learners. The findings address the three research questions of the study, and have been organized under the themes that emerged from the findings. The data from the adult literacy learners are presented under Section A, while the literacy facilitators' data are presented under Section B. The research questions of the study were:

- (i) What are the key motivations that drive adult learners to enrol in literacy programs at the Sebenta National Institute, and how do these motivations impact their persistence?
- (ii) What enablers, including external and institutional factors, contribute to the successful completion of the literacy program by adult learners, and how can these insights inform program design and development?
- (iii) What strategies can be employed to effectively support adult learners in achieving their literacy goals, and how do these strategies address the barriers they face in the learning process?

4.1 Presentation of findings

Section A: Findings from the adult literacy learners

The findings reveal that the adult learning programme at the Institute included adult basic literacy, primary education and Vocational skills training as shown in table 1 below.

Table 1: Programme enrolled in by the participants

Programme	Number
Adult Basic Literacy	10
Primary Education	15
Vocational Skills Training	35
Total	60

Table 1 above shows that 10 participants were enrolled in the Adult Basic Literacy programme, while 15 enrolled in a primary education class to continue with their formal education, and 35 were enrolled in vocational education skills training mainly for employment purposes.

Theme 1: Motivation for enrolling in the adult learning programme

This theme relates to research question one of the study which sought to find out the factors motivating the participants to enrol in the adult learning programme.

Table 2: Factors for participants enrolling in a selected programme

Programme	Motivating factors
Adult Basic Literacy	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Desire to read and write2. To enhance business skills3. To improve the written communication skills4. Peer pressure
Primary Education	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Desire to advance basic literacy skills2. To obtain a formal school certificate3. Desire to enrol in the vocational skills training programme
Vocational Skills Training	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Acquire market-driven skills for self-employment2. Increase chances for obtaining a job3. Provide in-demand technical services to the community4. To take over running of family business

Subtheme 1.1 Factors for the adult basic literacy programme

The motivational factors associated with the participants enrolling in the basic literacy programme were: the desire to learn how to read and write, enhance business skills, improve communication skills and peer pressure.

Subtheme 1.1.1 Desire to learn to read and write

It emerged that the desire to learn how to read and write was a driving force for the participants to enrol in the basic literacy programme. It was seen valuable and important for the reason that many of them have come to realize the value of reading and writing in many aspects of their lives as evidenced by the following quotations: Literacy learning participant BLL3 shared that, she was motivated to join the class because she realized that she needed the skills of reading and writing to use the mobile phone effectively.

“For me I was motivated to enrol in the adult basic literacy programme because I wanted to acquire the basic literacy skills to read and write. I often used to struggle to read and send messages using my mobile phone. I used to rely on other people whom I could privately ask to read for me and this was risky. Seeing my age mates advance in literacy skills from basic to vocational skills triggered my inward drive to start the journey of adult learning”

Participant BLL10 echoed participant BLL3’s submission when saying,

“In life I realized that if you do not have education you struggle to associate yourself with your age mates to share ideas and/or life experiences. Hence, I decided to enrol for the basic literacy programme as a starting point, hopping to advance to the level where I can acquire vocational skills for employment purposes.”

Participant BLL9 had this to say,

“I was mainly motivated by the desire to learn how to read and write so that I could be able to read books such as the Holy Bible, and other books with important information on issues related to our lives like health, and/or business opportunities. In addition, I was motivated by the ambition to improve my written communication skills to be able to write reports for the church and the community.”

Participant BLL2 had this to say,

“As I serve in a number of committees like secretary of the youth committee at the constituency, and the Chairperson of the Sunday School committee at my church, I am required to write progress reports for the committees to read and make informed decisions regarding improvements where necessary.”

Subtheme 1.1.2 Primary education

The adult learners who enrolled in the primary education programme were mainly on the path to continuing with formal education. Few others simply wanted to have an experience of formal education.

Participant PEL6 from the primary education programme stated that,

“After completing the adult basic literacy programme, I wanted to continue with formal schooling to obtain a formal primary school certificate. The certificate would then qualify me to enrol in the vocational skills training programme to acquire technical skills for employment”

Emphasizing participant PEL6’s submission, participant PEL4 said,

“Completing the adult basic literacy programme made me realize that it would be useful to me because at the end of the day I wanted to acquire vocational skills and become self-employed. In fact, my former classmates played a role also in motivating me because I couldn’t see myself lagging as they proceeded to the formal schooling level”

Participant BLL1 had this to say,

“After completing the basic literacy programme, I thought I was okay as I could read and write documents like the SiSwati Bible, as well as some pamphlets written in SiSwati like those, we get from health practitioners. However, my former classmates encouraged me to enrol for the primary education to be able to read and write documents in English as well, while also obtaining a formal school certificate to help be advance to vocational skills training.”

Participant BLL8 advanced that,

“Although I was reluctant to continue to formal education, my former classmates advised me to enrol to increase my chances of participating in most activities within the community which requires some formal education. I used to decline election to serve in constituency committees citing challenges of inability to read material written in the English Language like proposals for funding, hence, I decided to adhere to my classmates’ advice to continue to formal education”

Participant BLL7 postulated that,

“I was mainly motivated by the desire to learn how to read and write so that I could be able to read books such as the Holy Bible, and other books with important information on issues related to our lives like health, and/or business opportunities. In addition, I was motivated by the ambition to improve my written communication skills to be able to write reports for the church and the community.”

Subtheme 1.1.3 Vocational Skills Training

The adult learners who enrolled in the vocational skills training programme were mostly motivated by the desire to provide services that were in demand to the community using technical skills acquired from the programme. Providing such services could help the learners earn income and continue family legacy.

Participant VSL34 postulated that,

“After realizing that there was need for building construction artisans in my community, I took the responsibility to enrol in the building construction programme to be able to help the community while earning some income. I was therefore motivated by the desire to become building construction artisan and provide such services which were in demand to the community”

Supporting participant VSL34’s response, participant VSL28 had this to add,

“Adding to what my former classmate has said, I was motivated by the fact that my father is running a family business based in carpentry & joinery in which we manufacture and fix damaged domestic furniture. Upon realizing that my father is getting older, I took it upon myself that I must acquire technical skills in carpentry & joinery to be able to take over running of the business”

Participant VSL34 postulated that,

“I was motivated to enrol in the vocational skills training programme to acquire computer skills to use in typing personal and business documents for individuals and organizations like churches in order to generate income as job opportunities were limited in the country. Some people need business plans typed to submit to financial institutions for loans, while some organizations like churches need typed documents like constitutions which they pay for. I am planning to use my laptop to offer secretarial services to the community and charge for the services to generate income to cater for my needs”

The findings presented above shows that the participants from the adult basic literacy programme were motivated by the desire to read and write in order to improve their written communication skills, and to enhance their business skills; while those under the primary education were motivated by the desire to advance their basic literacy skills, and to obtain formal school certificate to qualify to enrol in vocational skills training programme. Those from the vocational skills training programme were motivated by the desire to acquire in- demand technical skills to help the community while earning income, and to continue family legacy.

Theme 2: Benefits of enrolling in the chosen adult learning programme

Similarly, this theme relates to the first research question of the study, which sought to explore the factors motivating the participants to enrol in the adult learning programme. The benefits accrued to the participants are listed in table 3 below.

Table 3: Benefits of enrolling in chosen programme

Programme	Benefits
Adult Basic Literacy	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ability to read and analyse important messages/information2. Ability to compile and keep records for business3. Ability to write reports for the church and community4. Advancing to the primary education programme
Primary Education	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Improved written and spoken communication skills2. Obtaining the formal school certificate3. Qualifying to enrol in the vocational skills training programme
Vocational Skills Training	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Running own business in the community2. Securing a job3. Working in family business

Subtheme 2.1 Benefits accrued from the adult basic literacy programme

The study found out that the adult basic literacy programme added value to the participants mainly in four ways: (1) Acquired basic analytical skills, (2) Record keeping, (3) Report writing, (4) Education transition and progression.

Subtheme 2.1.1 Acquired basic analytical skills

The participants from the adult basic literacy programme were empowered with basic analytical skills that enabled them to read written documents and/or messages and derive meaning to make sense of whatever information is contained in that document/message. This was evidenced by Participant BLL4 who said,

“After acquiring the adult basic literacy skills I am now able to read and analyse important documents and/or books that provide us with life related information, with understanding. For example, I can now read the information pamphlets on family planning with understanding, yet, before enrolling on the programme I used to listen to health practitioners making presentations and take the pamphlet to put it at home without reading for further information”

Participant BLL8 had this to say,

“It pleases me that I can now read and retrieve messages on my phone without asking my children to read them for me, as that compromises my privacy. In fact, I would sometimes ask my neighbour in the absence of my children to help me read out family related messages that are not supposed to be seen by strangers”

Subtheme 2.1.2 Record keeping

It was established from the participants that after acquiring the adult basic literacy skills they were able to keep records of activities and/or transactions taking place in the farming business managed by a group of women from the local communities around Mbabane. Supporting these findings, participant BLL2 had this to say,

“I feel excited that after completing the basic literacy programme, I am able to write down records of activities that take place in our farming business which produces different kinds of vegetables which we sell to customers from the community and those from other places around Mbabane. We bought an exercise book where I write down major activities such as purchases and payments for services rendered to our business. In addition, I keep records of financial transactions like income generated and liabilities. This helps the business in keeping track of the performance of the business”

Participant BLL6 had this to say,

“I am happy that I can now keep records for my business in terms of how the business performs at least on monthly basis. All I had to do was purchase a spreadsheet notebook and record all financial transactions including start-up capital for the business, income generated and money spent. Keeping records for the business has helped me make informed decisions about growing the business”

Subtheme 2.1.3 Report writing

The participants further revealed that acquiring the basic literacy skills helped in empowering them with report writing skills, wherein they were able to compile reports on various activities taking place in different organizations like churches. This was emphasized by participant BLL1 when saying,

“To date I have written about three reports taken from services that occur quarterly at my church. The services focus on revivals wherein special guests are invited to share the Word of God on themes determined by the church. The services involve payments for any expenditures such as electricity and water usage. Writing such reports helps the church leadership refer when setting budgetary allocations for future services, hence, not only myself have benefitted from the programme, but the church as well”

Participant BLL3 had this to say,

“I have benefitted from the programme through report writing. In the past, I used to ask my school-going children to compile reports for me based on development projects where I participate as one of the committee members like piggery production project. The report is required for submission to funding agents and community development committee. Before enrolling for the basic literacy programme, I would tell my children what to include in the report, that which I could remember, but now I am happy that I can take notes while participating in the project activities and at the end of the project compile a formal report from the notes on my own.”

Subtheme 2.1.4 Education transition and progression

The participants mentioned also that they benefitted from the basic literacy programme in terms of acquiring reading and writing skills that qualifies them to advance to the primary education programme. Participant BLL5 had this to say,

“Having acquired the basic reading and writing skills from the basic literacy programme has enabled me to advance to the primary education programme where I will advance my reading/writing skills from basic to formal. This will help me to progress in education to a level where I can read and write and kind of documents with ease of understanding”

Participant BLL2 stated that,

“One major benefit for me I am enjoying from completing the basic literacy programme is progressing to the formal education which I am aiming to obtain the primary education certificate that I can use to enrol in one of the vocational skills training programme for employment purposes”

Subtheme 2.2 Benefits accrued from the primary education programme

The study found out that the primary education programme was beneficial to the participants mainly in three ways: (1) Improved communication skills, (2) Formal school certificate, (3) Qualification to enrol for the vocational skills training.

Subtheme 2.2.1 Improved communication skills

It emerged from the findings that the majority of the participants benefitted from the primary education programme by way of improved written and spoken communication skills. This was emphasized by Participant PEL4 who shared that,

“After graduating from the primary education programme, I can now communicate effectively in spoken English as we sometimes interact with the white people who provide us with funding for various community development projects such as the rural water supply scheme. I am also able to read important documents like those you find in banks which provide information on the different products offered by banks; and write documents such as business proposals to donor agencies in the English Language”

Participant PEL4's submission was echoed by participant PEL15 when saying,

“After completing the primary education programme, I can write and speak English better, as I have been elected to be the Secretary of the committee for an income generating project based in farming at the local community”

Subtheme 2.2.2 Formal school certificate

The findings show that most of the participants benefitted from the primary education programme by means of acquiring the formal school certificate which qualifies them to enrol in the vocational skills training programme for employment purposes. A few participants benefitted from securing employment with the certificate. Supporting these findings, participant PEL12 advanced that,

“Obtaining my Primary Education certificate qualified me to enrol in any vocational skills training programme of my choice. I desperately needed to acquire vocational skills to be able to secure employment and earn income to cater for my financial needs such as paying for the education of my children”

Participant PEL6 stated that,

“I managed to get a job as shop assistant at a local shop after obtaining the primary education certificate because I can now communicate effectively with my Indian boss, while I am able to read important information attached to different commodities like expiry dates on consumables”

Subtheme 2.2.3 Qualification to enrol for the vocational skills training

The participants further revealed that acquiring the primary education certificate qualified them to enrol in the vocational skills training programme to secure employment and/or earn income through piece jobs in the local community. This was emphasized by participant PEL10 when saying,

“I have been admitted to start vocational skills training in International Computer Driving License (ICDL) because of the primary education certificate. I am excited because it has always been my desire to acquire vocational skills in computer literacy so that I can work in primary schools as the typist”

Participant PEL7 shared that,

“Acquiring the primary certificate has motivated me to fulfil my desire of enrolling in the vocational skills training programme to acquire skills in fence making so that I can start my business of providing the community with fence making services to earn income. The primary certificate has played a role in influencing the institution's decision to admit me for training in fence making”

Subtheme 2.3 Benefits accrued from the vocational skills training programme

It emerged from the findings that the vocational skills training programme benefitted the participants mainly in three ways: (1) Running own business, (2) Securing a job, (3) Working in family business.

Subtheme 2.3.1 Running own business

It emerged some of the participants were able to start and run own businesses after graduating from the vocational skills training programme in different trades. This was supported by Participant VSL23's submission when saying,

"I am now running a carpentry shop at the local community where demand is reasonably high for services such as making church benches and household furniture. This benefit has enabled me to generate enough income to cater for my basic needs while also providing in-demand services to the community"

Adding to participant VSL23's response, participant VSL18 submitted that,

"My ICDL skills have enabled me to generate income through providing typing services to the community such as business plans, personal letters and organizational reports. I believe that in the near future I will start a secretarial service shop where I can offer more services such as internet café, photocopying etc."

Subtheme 2.3.2 Securing a job

In addition to starting own businesses, it emerged that some participants benefitted by securing paid employment in different organizations/companies. Participant VSL19 had this to say,

"I was promoted from cleaner to personal assistant to the principal of a private school after completing the ICDL course. I am currently providing services to the school such as typing letters to parents, typing school committee minutes etc. using my computer literacy skills"

On another note, participant VSL22 said,

"After graduating from the vocational skills training programme in building construction, I secured a job at a construction company that constructs and maintains buildings for an Estate agent based in the Capital City of Mbabane. I specialize in bricklaying and plastering"

Subtheme 2.3.3 Working in the family business

A few participants revealed that they worked in family businesses after acquiring knowledge and skills relevant to the core of family business such as carpentry and computer literacy. This was emphasized by participant VSL32 when saying,

"My father is running a carpentry & joinery shop where he manufactures different household and general furniture to sell to organizations and individuals around"

Mbabane community. I am now a qualified carpenter who helps my father in the business by manufacturing less complex furniture like portable coffee tables and repair broken household furniture like wooden doors. My contribution has not only benefitted me through financial gain but the family business as well through saving money that would have been paid to employees from outside the family”

Participant VSL29 shared similar sentiments as participant VSL32 by stating that,

“The knowledge and skills I acquired from the building construction programme enabled me to assist my uncle who is running a construction business that specializes in domestic construction related projects such as constructing one or two-room flats, two or three bedroom houses etc. My uncle pays me reasonable wages for my services which include bricklaying and plastering. This has enabled me not only to earn income but to gain work experience that will lead me to start my own business someday”

The findings presented in Table 3 show that the participants from the adult basic literacy programme benefitted as they were able to read and write and analyse important documents, as well as being able to compile reports and qualify to enrol in the primary education programme. Those under the primary education benefitted by obtaining the primary education certificate to qualify to enrol in the vocational skills training programme. They also improved on their written and spoken communication skills. Those from the vocational skills training programme benefitted as they used their vocational skills to provide in-demand services to the community while earning income.

Theme 3: Enablers of adult literacy learners to stay to completion of the adult literacy programme

This theme relates to research question two of the study which sought to establish the enablers of the adult literacy learners to stay to completion of the adult literacy programme.

Table 4: Enablers of learners to stay to completion of the programme

Programme	Enablers of learners to stay to completion
Adult Basic Literacy	1. Relevant content to real life 2. Supporting learning environment 3. Support from family and the community
Primary Education	1. Relevant content to real life 2. Supporting learning environment 3. Support from family and the community
Vocational Skills Training	1. Relevant content to real life 2. Supporting learning environment 3. Support from family and the community

Subtheme 3.1 Enablers of learners to stay to completion of the programme

The findings show that the factors that enabled the learners to stay to completion of the adult literacy programme were: the relevance of content to real life, supporting environment, and support from family and the community.

Subtheme 3.1.1 Relevance of content to real life

It emerged that the relevance of the curriculum from the three adult literacy programmes enabled the participants to stay to completion of the programmes. The participants stayed to completion of the programme because the knowledge and skills they acquired from the programme was applicable to real life situations as evidenced by the following quotations: Basic literacy learning participant BLL5 shared that, he stayed to complete the programme because he could apply what he had learned from the programme.

“I stayed to complete the programme mainly because the basic reading and writing skills I acquired from the programme helped me cope with the needs of the community. For instance, I can now type documents for the church. This is something I realized three months enrolled in the basic literacy programme, and it motivated me to stay to learn more because I could understand that the content was indeed relevant to real life”

Emphasizing participant BLL5’s submission, participant BLL2 submitted that,

“What made me stay longer in the programme was realizing that the knowledge on how to read and write was relevant to my real-life situation as I can now fill bank withdrawal and/or deposit slips on my own without asking for help from other people who might steal my personal information to use it for fraudulent purposes. In addition, I am able to use my Smart phone to read and send messages, and process transactions on my Mobile Money account without assistance from strangers”

Participant PEL15 from the primary education programme stated that,

“The knowledge I gained from the programme helped me improve my written and spoken communication skills such that I started writing reports from committee meetings at my church before even completing the programme. This kept me going because the content proved relevant to my real-life situation”

Participant PEL11 had this to say,

“My communication skills in reading and writing using the English language was not good enough after completing the basic literacy programme, hence, I advanced to enrol in the primary education programme. When doing Grade 5 of the 12 year programme, I was able to read and understand most vocabulary in English, while also being able to compile family meetings reports. This made me realize the relevance of the content to real life situation, hence, I continued to stay to completion of the programme in spite of financial challenges”

Participant VSL1 from the vocational skills training programme advanced that,

“I realized after three months in the carpentry & joinery programme that I was able to fix broken doors and/or make simple coffee tables to sell to the community. This was because the knowledge and skills I acquired from the programme were relevant to real life situation, hence, I stayed to complete the programme.”

Participant VSL35 said,

“During the fifth month receiving training on computer literacy, I was able to download applications and upload documents to attach to emails which I sent out to clients at my secretarial business. This was an indication to me that the skills I gained from the vocational skills training programme were applicable to real jobs I was demanded to do for my clients, rendering the content of the programme relevant to real life”

Subtheme 3.1.2 Supporting learning environment

Similarly, it emerged that the participants stayed to complete the literacy programme because the learning environment was conducive for adult learning. Supporting the findings was BLL8 who mentioned that the learning environment at SNI was friendly and motivating, as instructor assistance was provided, with user-friendly learning materials accessible.

“I stayed to complete the programme mainly because the learning environment was motivating. The facilitators are friendly and caring as they pay attention to individual learning challenges and assist in improving performance. Also, the textbooks and other learning materials such as slide presentations are designed in such a way that they are easier to read and understand.”

Emphasizing participant BLL8’s submission, participant BLL2 stated that,

“The learning environment at SNI has been so motivating, hence, I stayed to complete the programme in adult basic literacy. The instructors and the learning materials motivated me the most as the instructors made my learning easier even when I thought of giving up due to the difficulty of learning at an old age. They even gave me extra work to try and catch up where I was lagging behind, I really appreciate their continuous support”

Participant PEL15 from the primary education programme noted that,

“I used to face the challenge of lacking understanding of some of the words used in the books we get from the facilitators due to my poor vocabulary. However, with the help of the institution’s Library resources such as dictionaries, I managed to improve my vocabulary, thus, I stayed to complete the programme.”

Participant PEL5 had this to add,

“The situation at SNI is conducive for adult learning as the study materials are written in simpler terminology, while the instructors are friendly enough to pay attention to individual performance and assist where necessary. As a result, I managed to stay to obtain a second class pass result from the Exams Council of Eswatini”

Participant PEL12 shared similar sentiments as participant PEL5 when saying,

“The teachers contributed a lot in making me stay to complete the programme because they were loving, caring and patient with us. Sometimes I would score as low as 35% in a test, but they gave me another opportunity to write another test after helping me improve my learning abilities. In that way I would go for the end-of-year exam with a reasonable score of not less than 70% from my continuous assessment activities.”

Participant VSL17 from the vocational skills training programme had this to say,

“The instructors were friendly and encouraged me to spend more time doing practical’s in the real world where I applied and mastered the knowledge and skills I had acquired to gain work experience. Textbooks were also made available both in hard copy and soft copy accessed online. This made the learning environment conducive”

Participant VSL2 advanced that,

“The instructors motivated me to stay to complete the computer literacy programme because they would give me extra exercises like practising to typeset a report using words and tables. This support helped me master my skills in computer literacy, hence, I stayed even when some tasks appeared difficult”

Subtheme 3.1.3 Support from family and the community

It emerged also that the participants stayed to complete the adult literacy programme because they received support from their families and the community. Notable support include assistance with home assignments, encouragement from the community, and motivation from age mates who had completed the programme. Participant BLL9 from the basic literacy programme submitted that,

“My family has been supporting me in every way possible as my children used to help me read and write home assignments to ensure I performed to my best level. What made me stay longer in the programme also was that the community kept encouraging adults to enrol in the adult literacy programme offered by SNI to become functional in our society. This motivated me to stay to complete the basic literacy programme because I wanted to assist the community with services such as writing of proposals for funding and/or constitutions for the development associations we establish in our community.”

Participant BLL10 postulated that,

“Living in a community where most of the adults are literate and they play a role in contributing to the development of the community using their literacy skills put pressure on myself to want to become literate as well. There were situations where I struggled to attend classes at SNI due to family commitments like taking my livestock to the dipping tank. My neighbour would agree to take my livestock to the dipping tank without even charging me for the services to ensure I did not miss classes. That support enabled me to stay to complete the programme. In addition, my family was always

supportive as they made sure I spend more time doing my schoolwork even when at home.”

Participant PEL7 from the primary education programme had this say,

“I used to face the challenge of lacking understanding of some of the words used in the books we get from the facilitators due to my low-level vocabulary. However, with the help of my aunt who is a teacher by profession, I ended up mastering most of the words while improving on my reading/writing skills, thus, I stayed to complete the programme. The community as well played a role in motivating me to stay to complete the programme because most of my age mates had attended and completed the programme successfully”

Participant PEL15 from the primary education programme had this say,

“When I started learning in the primary education programme, I enjoyed the first five years of the 12 year programme. However, when doing Grade 6, the content became complex with the amount of work and difficult tasks in subjects like mathematics. Nonetheless, with the help of my daughter who was doing Form 4 then, she used to assist me simplify the difficult tasks for me to understand. As a result, I persisted to complete the programme because of my daughter’s encouragement and assistance”

Participant VSL3 from the vocational skills training programme said,

“I stayed to complete the programme because I got support from my uncle who used to buy me some of the material needed to reinforce my skills through servicing the community by means of fixing broken doors, tables and/or manufacturing home-made wooden furniture”

Participant VSL30 had this to add,

“One of the enablers that made me stay to complete the building construction programme was the support I got from my father who used to take me with him to construction site during weekends where he gave me the opportunity to practice what I learn at SNI.”

The findings presented above show that the participants stayed to complete the literacy programme due to three main factors. Firstly, the knowledge and skills they acquired proved applicable to real life situations. Secondly, the learning environment at SNI was motivating as the facilities, instructors and learning materials were user-friendly even to those adult learners who encountered challenges such as inadequate finances. Thirdly, families and the community motivated the participants to stay to complete the programme in different ways. For instance, family members and neighbours would stand in for learners to allow them to attend classes even when there were social responsibilities to attend to in the community.

Theme 4: Challenges faced by learners

Likewise, this theme relates to the second research question of the study, which sought to establish the enablers of the adult literacy learners to stay to completion of the adult literacy programme. The challenges faced by the participants are listed in table 4 below.

Table 5: Challenges faced by learners

Programme	Challenges
Adult Basic Literacy	1. Conflicting social responsibilities 2. Economic demands
Primary Education	1. Conflicting social responsibilities 2. Economic demands 3. Familiarization with timeous submission of assignments
Vocational Skills Training	1. Conflicting social responsibilities 2. Economic demands 3. Working under high risk environment

Subtheme 4.1 Challenges faced by the adult basic literacy learners

The study uncovered that the adult basic literacy learners were faced with the following challenges during the course of learning: Conflicting social responsibilities, and economic demands.

Subtheme 4.1.1 Conflicting social responsibilities

It emerged from the findings of the study that the participants from the adult basic literacy programme encountered the challenge of conflicting social responsibilities. Participant BLL5 advanced that,

“There were times when I was faced with the challenge of conflicting social responsibilities, wherein I found myself having to either sacrifice time for classes to attend to family duties or ignore family duties to attend classes. For instance, I have the duty to ensure I do piece jobs such as going to sell vegetables at the market to raise money for the family on a day of going to class. In dealing with this challenge, I usually sacrifice attending classes because I need the money to even pay tuition at SNI. I thereafter, ask for the notes taken from my classmates to ensure I catch up on what I missed”

Participant BLL1 had this to say,

“For me, one of the challenges has always been having to attend to community development meetings where we discuss ways of improving our livelihoods through income generating activities. It is hard to miss attending such meetings because you might not be welcome to join associations that are established to obtain funding; yet, I have to be in class at SNI at the same time. As a result, I sacrifice the time for going to class because at least my classmates and our friendly instructors are there to assist me catch up after working ours”

Subtheme 4.1.2 Economic demands

It was found out from the participants that another challenge faced by learners from the basic literacy programme was economic demands. Participant BLL9 stated that another challenge he faced was inadequate finances to cater for basic, family and academic needs.

“I am unemployed but rely on piece jobs that I do for the community such as making bricks to raise money to cater for personal, family and academic needs. Life was tough as I had no other source of income beside piece jobs. However, I turned to farming where I grew vegetables for sale to the community. At least, that business did not require me to be there for the whole day as the garden was well fenced, yet it generated enough income for me to meet the economic demands”

Participant BLL1 had this to say,

“Economic demands were on my neck as I earned very little from my employer (Local mini shop owner) to be able to cater for all my needs. I ended up owing school fees which I sometimes paid on a later date after my results were withheld. However, I used to raise more money by doing laundry for my neighbours during weekends, and they paid me for the services”

Subtheme 4.2 Challenges faced by the primary education learners

The study found out also that the primary education learners were faced with challenges of conflicting social responsibilities, economic demands and familiarization with timeous submission of assignments.

Subtheme 4.2.1 Conflicting social responsibilities

It emerged from the findings that the participants from the primary education programme faced the challenge of conflicting social responsibilities as well. This was emphasized by participant PEL14 who shared that,

“The academic activities involved in the primary education programme are too much for an adult like me who has multiple social responsibilities to attend to, at home, at church, and in the community. The home work given to us by the instructors requires one to spend more time on academic assignments even when at home. As a result, I had to employ some guy from the community to assist me with some of the family

responsibilities such as looking after livestock and the fields. His assistance has helped me cope with the conflicting responsibilities”

Participant PEL4 had this to say,

“I am a member of the steering committee at my constituency where we have to meet every Tuesday to discuss strategic issues that relate to community development. Sometimes, we attend workshops, which means I cannot be absent, except on dates when we write tests or exams. Otherwise, in dealing with this challenge, I sacrifice time for classes but request to be released on crucial dates like on exam dates, which they do because the community understands the important role of education on community development”

Subtheme 4.2.2 Economic demands

Similarly, the participants from the primary education programme faced the challenge of economic demands as about half of them were self-employed, with some generating stable income while others relied on piece jobs. Participant PEL1 stated that she did not have enough money to cater for all the economic demands she was faced with, such as paying school fees for herself and her children. This was because although her retail business of selling second hand clothes at the market generated stable income, it was not enough.

“Although I generate stable income from buying and selling second hand clothes at the Mbabane market, it is not enough to cater for all the economic demands that arise from family and school. The economic demands overpower me although primary education in Eswatini is free, due to expenses such as transport fees, uniform, toiletry etc. which I have to cater for, the demand becomes hard for me to meet. Nonetheless, I survive by baking some buns for my children to sell at school to raise at least bus fare, and it works”

Participant PEL13 advanced that,

“I used to struggle with transport fees to SNI for classes because of earning lower salary which I get from the family I work for as a housemaid. This was a challenge that forced me to miss classes sometimes, until I resigned from my employer to start a confectionery business at home wherein I would bake wedding and party cakes, and rocky buns to supply to the community to earn income. Today, that challenge is a thing of the past as I increased the supply according to market demand, hence, I am able to generate more than enough income to cater for my personal and academic needs and that of my family”

Subtheme 4.2.3 Familiarization with timeous submission of assignments

The participants further stated that apart from the challenge of conflicting social responsibilities and economic demands, they also faced the challenge of struggling to familiarize themselves with submission of assignments within specified time frame. This was emphasized by participant PEL4 when saying,

“When I reached Grade 4, the instructors introduced to us home assignments which had to be submitted within specific time frames. This was something I wasn’t used to because the assignments were too much to handle, like having to write four at home to submit the following day. This challenge taught me to draw up a study timetable to use at home where I scheduled time for household chores, writing of assignments and then study, no time for TV. The timetable worked positively for me as my performance improved while submitting assignments on time”

Participant PEL7 shared that,

“The amount of academic work the instructors gave us when we reached Grade 5 demanded for more time to spend on academic activities even when we get home, in spite of the other social responsibilities we had to attend to. I had to strategize my timetable in such a way that I asked my family to excuse me from household chores when I got home to allow me to concentrate on my academic assignments which involved recap of what was learned in class on the day, and writing of assignments that had to be submitted the following day. It worked for me as I never skipped submission of assignments and my performance improved”

Subtheme 4.3 Challenges faced by the vocational skills training learners

The findings revealed that participants from the vocational skills training programme were faced with the following challenges as they pursued their training: Conflicting social responsibilities, economic demands and working under high risk environment.

Subtheme 4.3.1 Conflicting social responsibilities

It emerged some of the participants from the vocational skills training programme were faced with the challenge of dealing with conflicting social responsibilities in a similar manner as the participants from the other programmes. Participant VSL11 revealed that he had a challenge focusing on social responsibilities at home and at the community, while having to also attend to vocational skills training at SNI.

“Sometimes I faced the challenge of having to attend to training at the same time that the community needs me to attend to development activities like water project meetings. Also, there were duties to perform for the family such as doing piece jobs to earn income. This challenge made my life difficult because all the responsibilities were equally important as I needed the vocational skill to earn income to cater for family needs, while I also needed to participate in development activities because it is a call from community authorities. Nevertheless, I learnt to make up my mind about prioritizing the responsibilities, to the extent that I sacrificed training sessions to do piece jobs because I mastered my skills while earning income to cater for family needs.”

Participant VSL29 submitted that,

“When faced with the challenge of having to be at training while I had to be at the market place where I usually go there to sell vegetables, it became strenuous because both responsibilities are equally important. I need money to cater for family

needs as much as I needed the computer literacy skills to be able to manage my business using computer technology. I survived by God's grace as I used to ask my friend who runs a dressmaking business at the same market place to stand in for me on those dates I attended training at SNI"

Subtheme 4.3.2 Economic demands

It emerged that some participants were faced with the challenge of inadequate finances during their course of training at SNI. The challenge is understood to have emanated from the fact that those affected participants did not earn much income to meet their economic needs such as family needs and money to buy some of the tools needed for training as the institution did not supply learners with portable tools. In dealing with the economic challenge demands participant VSL11 revealed that he used to borrow the tools from a friend who was running the fence making business at a fee, until he later managed to buy his tools using income generated from piece jobs.

"At SNI they provide the heavy machinery for training while learners are required to bring their own portable tools such as pliers, and small spanners. This was a challenge that at some stage caused me to miss practical lessons until I approached a friend of mine who lent me the tools on the dates of practical at a fee. Later on I used the income generated from piece jobs that I was doing for the community during weekends to purchase my own tools"

Participant VSL22 advanced that,

"While attending training at SNI in building construction, I did not have enough money to buy the needed portable tools such as the trowel, spirit level, etc. The portable tools were needed during practical lessons. My uncle who services the community by doing piece jobs such as constructing buildings and renovations used to lend me such tools when not using them. However, my challenge was when I needed them while he was using them for piece jobs, I missed the practical lessons. Nonetheless, I managed to catch up on missed lessons later when my uncle's tools were available, hence, I stayed to complete the programme and graduated"

Subtheme 4.3.3 Working under high-risk environment

Participants who had graduated from vocational skills training programmes such as building construction, fence making and carpentry & joinery revealed that they worked under high-risk environment as the machinery and equipment used in these trades were dangerous if not handled properly. This was emphasized by participant VSL32 who stated that although his father was running a carpentry & joinery shop, he had a challenge when he went to SNI for training in the same trade because he had not touched the dangerous machines his father uses. He went on to narrate that he nearly dropped out as the instructor told them that there had been accidents encountered by learners before which resulted in some losing their fingers. However,

the participant explained that he stayed to complete the programme because he so much wished to take over the family business after his father retires.

“My greatest challenge was that at first I was afraid to work on the dangerous machines such as the table saw which could cut the operator’s fingers if not handled properly. According to our instructor, they witnessed such accidents in the past. Upon hearing that and looking at the machines, I nearly dropped out because at home I had never touched these machines because my father was operating them until now that I have graduated he allows me to operate such machines. I continued to stay on the programme because of encouragement from my father who stressed that I must train hard to take over the business when he retires”

Participant VSL23 shared similar sentiments as participant VSL32 by stating that,

“Training under the fence making programme can be risky as the gas emissions from the materials used can affect one’s health condition in many ways such as losing sight, lung damage, etc. In that vein, I had a challenge of eye strain when I started using the welding gases and it was so severe I had to miss training to go to hospital. Luckily for me, my mother who is a civil servant took me to an eye clinic where I was treated and given special eyeglasses to use and they worked for me as I completed the course.”

The findings presented in Table 5 show that all the participants from the different programmes shared the challenges in conflicting social responsibilities and economic demands, which however, they managed to deal with successfully as they stayed to graduate. Notably, the participants under the primary education programme had a challenge of familiarization with timeous submission of assignments apart from the two common challenges, which they also dealt with accordingly. Some participants from the vocational skills training programme were further faced with the challenge of adapting to high risk environment due to the use of dangerous machinery and equipment.

Theme 5: Strategies that support learner achievement of literacy learning goals

This theme relates to research question three of the study which sought to explore the strategies that can be used to support adult learners in their efforts to achieve the literacy learning goals.

Table 6: Strategies to support adult learners achieve the literacy learning goals

Programme	Strategies
Adult Basic Literacy	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Establish income generating projects to assist learners2. Provide psychosocial support to learners3. Establish blended learning support systems
Primary Education	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Establish income generating projects to assist learners2. Provide psychosocial support to learners3. Establish blended learning support systems
Vocational Skills Training	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Establish income generating projects to assist learners2. Provide psychosocial support to learners3. Establish blended learning support systems4. Establish relations with corporate partners

Subtheme 5.1 Strategies to support adult learners achieve the basic literacy learning goals

The findings show that the participants recommended three strategies that could be employed to support adult learners achieve their literacy learning goals: establishment of income generating projects to assist learners with financial challenges, provision of psychosocial support to learners to identify challenges earlier, and establishment of blended learning support systems to assist learners facing conflicting social responsibilities. In addition, participants under the vocational training programme suggested establishment of relations with corporate partners to assist learners gain work experience and secure employment.

Subtheme 5.1.1 Establish income generating projects to assist learners

It emerged that the participants from the adult basic literacy programme suggested the establishment of income generating projects to assist those learners who had financial challenges as revealed earlier. For instance, participant BLL9 had mentioned that he started growing vegetables to raise funds that helped him deal with the economic demands he was faced with. Hence, he suggested that if SNI can establish income generating projects for the

adult learners, and share part of the profits with the participating learners, that could assist those learners deal with financial challenges. Participant BLL9 said,

“SNI can establish income generating projects where learners from the different programmes could participate in to generate income, profits for which could be shared with the learners to enable them to meet their financial needs. This could also empower the learners with business management and marketing skills which they can use in future”

Participant BLL1 had this to say,

“I concur with my participant BLL9. Establishment of income generating projects such as running a tuck shop at the institution that will be managed jointly by the learners and SNI staff could generate income to assist the learners with academic needs such as purchasing advanced learning material, and/or transport fees”

Subtheme 5.1.2 Provide psychosocial support to learners

It emerged also that the participants suggested the provision of psychosocial support to learners to identify challenges they face at an early stage for a solution to be found before learners decide to drop out. Participant BLL7 stated that,

“The institution needs to provide learners with psychosocial support systems to identify challenges faced by struggling learners earlier in the programme for a solution to be found to prevent drop out. For example, some learners have dropped out due to having difficulties adapting to the hardship of learning while under the stress of concentrating on academic and family duties at the same time. Counselling could provide solutions such as employing time management strategies”

Participant BLL1 advanced that,

“Provision of psychosocial support could assist learners deal with challenges related to workload that may disrupt concentration to academic activities. It is no secret that some of us face challenges that become too much for the mind to process like facing family disputes that makes it difficult for one to pay attention to learning. Such challenges normally are solved by receiving counselling on issues such as how to manage stress to free the mind for academic concentration”

Subtheme 5.1.3 Establish blended learning support systems

The findings indicated that the participants further suggested that establishment of blended learning support systems could help learners deal with the challenge of conflicting social responsibilities. Participant BLL2 stated that blended learning could provide adult learners with opportunities to learn while away from class wherein the learner has the leeway to draw a self-regulated time table to ease the stress of having to sacrifice one for the other between academic work and social work. Quoted verbatim, participant BLL2 stated that,

“The institution should establish blended learning support systems wherein the lessons will be delivered both online and via the traditional classroom. This could minimize the burden on learners of having to be in class even when situations do not permit them to. Blended learning can work effectively as most learners have Smart phones with access to the Internet which they can pay for using the money they currently spend on transport and other learning materials”

Participant BLL10 postulated that,

“Blended learning can be a solution to most learners in different ways. Firstly, learners could learn and communicate with their instructors away from the traditional classroom and at any time. Secondly, the performance of learners could improve because of having open platform to access a wide range of information to add to what the learning materials designed by instructors can offer. Thirdly, blended learning could save the learners money for hard copy learning material, food and transport”

Subtheme 5.2 Strategies to support adult learners achieve the primary education learning goals

The study found out also that the primary education learners made suggestions on strategies that could assist adult learners deal with challenges they faced while learning. The strategies suggested are as follows: establishment of income generating projects, provision of psychosocial support systems, and establishment of blended learning support systems.

Subtheme 5.2.1 Establish income generating projects to assist learners

It emerged from the findings that the participants from the primary education programme suggested that income generating projects be established at SNI to assist learners who have challenges catering for their economic demands. This was emphasized by participant PEL13 who shared that she struggled to cater for transport fees to attend classes and ended up starting a confectionery business at home to generate reasonable income.

Participant PEL13 said,

“Establishing income generating projects could help raise funding for the learners as I used the same strategy myself while enrolled at SNI. Through a confectionery business which I operated from home with less expenses incurred, I generated enough profit to cater for family and academic needs”

Participant PEL4 shared that,

“Income generating projects could assist learners with financial challenges if they can either participate in institution managed projects or start their own businesses while undergoing learning. The institution could organize some music concerts where learners can be involved in asking for funding from potential donor companies such as MTN, Eswatini Mobile, etc. Attendees could contribute financially through the purchase of entry tickets to increase generated income”

Subtheme 5.2.2 Provide psychosocial support to learners

Furthermore, the participants suggested that establishing psychosocial support systems is a strategy that could help in counselling learners with challenges to identify those challenges earlier to prevent dropouts. Participant PEL15 advanced that,

“There is need for psychological support systems to ensure that learners with different challenges that could lead to drop out if not dealt with effectively, are counselled properly on strategies they can adopt in dealing with all kinds of challenges. For instance, some learners have dropped out before graduating due to lack of support from their families. Psychological counselling can advise for instance, that there are other means of soliciting help from other families like neighbours or church members beside your family. I trust that adherence to such counselling might promote learner persistence to complete their learning”

Participant PEL11 had this to say,

“I do not doubt that psychological support systems can help struggling learners with effective ways of dealing with challenges. It worked for me when enrolled in the basic literacy programme, as I nearly dropped due to lack of time to do home assignments and study. This was because I had too much work to do at home with less support from my husband who did not like the idea of me spending time on academic work even at home. I approached the community health motivator for counselling as I was beginning to lose it at home. She politely listened to my challenge and asked to have an audience with my husband to reason with him, and she was successful as my husband changed his attitude to allow me space when I got home to do home assignments. My performance improved and my family was happy.”

Subtheme 5.2.3 Establish blended learning support systems

The participants went on to suggest that the institution needs to consider blended learning in all the programmes to improve service delivery from instructors and performance on learners. This was supported by participant PEL12 who said,

“One of the challenges faced by adult learners which results in some having to drop out is failure to deal with conflicting social responsibilities which characterize adult learners. I believe blended learning support systems such as delivery of most of the learning sessions and practical online with less physical interactions can help ease the burden of workload on adult learners. This could improve not only access to learning materials but learner performance as well”

Participant PEL3 stated that,

“Adult learners need blended learning support systems to improve access to learning materials and set up self-administered timetable to suit their social and academic needs. Blended learning support systems will provide online learning platforms as well as traditional classroom interactions. The adult learners get the opportunity to set up a timetable that allocates specific time sessions for academic activities without

interfering with social responsibilities. In that way, conflicting social responsibilities would cease to be a challenge for serious learners”

Subtheme 5.3 Strategies to support adult learners achieve the vocational skills training goals

The findings revealed that participants from the vocational skills training programme suggested the following strategies to support adult learners achieve their learning goals: income generating projects for learners, psychosocial support systems for learners, blended learning support systems, and establishment of relations with corporate partners.

Subtheme 5.3.1 Establish income generating projects to assist learners

It emerged some of the participants from the vocational skills training programme suggested that SNI establish income generating projects to assist learners with financial needs. Noted from the findings is that the participants under the vocational skills training programme advocated for projects that relate to the skills they were trained on. For instance, participant VSL3 revealed that if SNI could allow learners in the carpentry programme to scout for clients who need services like manufacturing of bunk beds, coffee tables, wardrobes, etc. and share the profit with learners, this could ease the stress of learners failing to meet their economic needs.

“As I was undergoing training in carpentry and joinery, I realized that the institution has the potential to provide services to the community and generate income, profits for which could be shared between the institution and the learners. Surely, the rate of drop out due to financial challenges could be a thing of the past as learners could afford to cater for their financial needs.”

Participant VSL29 had this to say,

“I think if the institution can allow learners to do jobs for clients who shall pay for the services, that could assist learners with income shared from the profits. In my case for instance, I was undergoing training in computer literacy, I could therefore, typeset documents such as annual reports, constitution, application letters and curriculum vitae, etc. for clients. Such income generating activities could not only generate income but help learners gain practical experience”

Subtheme 5.3.2 Provide psychosocial support to learners

It emerged that the participants suggested that provision of psychosocial support systems for learners to be counselled on how they can deal with challenges in a way that they will stay to complete learning, could stop dropouts and promote achievement of vocational skills training goals by learners. In emphasizing this suggestion, participant VSL22 said,

“SNI should devise the strategy of providing psychosocial support systems to learners so that learners can be offered counselling on how they should pursue their literacy goals in spite of challenges. This strategy could also reveal challenges faced by learners which are not known by others at the institution yet, they could get help. For instance, it may be hard for some learners with learning challenges to reveal why they are under performing, and end up dropping if failing to deal with the challenge. Yet, counselling could help uncover whatever challenges the learners are facing at an early stage of training to find a solution before the learner decides to drop out”

Participant VSL2 advanced that,

“I suggest the institution employs psychosocial counsellors to help those learners with challenges so that a solution is found before wrong decisions are made that could lead to drop out. Counselling should be done regularly to be effective because some challenges emerge unexpected, and can lead to learner drop out if not tackled soon”

Subtheme 5.3.3 Establish blended learning support systems

Participants further suggested that blended learning support systems can play a role in helping learners achieve their vocational skills training goals, which have to do with acquiring skills for sustainable employment. VSL13 stated that,

“My suggestion is that SNI establish blended learning support systems wherein the learners can access learning materials such as study notes, textbooks, assignments, etc. online to make learning flexible and affordable. This could promote learner persistence and self-directed learning because learners can have more time away from the traditional classroom to attend to social responsibilities and do piece jobs to reinforce mastery of learned skills”

Participant VSL18 shared that,

“The challenge of conflicting social responsibilities which causes some learners to perform poorly in academic work, and perhaps end up dropping out, could be solved by establishing blended learning support systems. This is to mean that, SNI should make available all learning materials online and delivered in self-administered mode to enhance performance of learners. The blended learning strategy should provide more online learning access and less of physical interactions to promote learner self-directedness”

Subtheme 5.3.4 Establish relations with corporate partners

The participants suggested also that there was need for the institution to establish working relations with corporate partners, such as those employers in the industries under which the vocational skills training programmes fall. This strategy according to the participants could help improve the standard of training as the employers can suggest relevant curriculum while donating some learning materials and equipment if working with the institution under a signed memorandum of understanding (MOU). Participant VSL1 advanced that,

“The institution should sign an MOU with potential employers of the graduates to ensure they receive the needed support to help learners achieve their learning goals. Establishment of working relations with corporate partners can be of benefit to the institution, learners and the employers. The institution could get donations from the potential employers to enhance training standards, while employment opportunities could improve for graduates, and employers could employ graduates who possess relevant skills”

Participant VSL20 shared similar sentiments as participant VSL1 by stating that,

“I can suggest that SNI establishes working relations with partners in the corporate world, in particular those employers from the industries related to the programmes we enrol in. This can improve learning standards in the sense that the employers will inform the design and development of relevant curriculum, while donating learning material and equipment that the institution cannot afford to purchase. This strategy can hopefully help learners achieve their learning goals as employment opportunities will be available”

The findings presented in Table 6 show that all the participants from the different programmes suggested three strategies that could help learners achieve their vocational skills training goals. The participants suggested the establishment of income generating projects to assist learners with financial support. They further suggested the provision of psychosocial support systems to identify challenges at an early stage of learning to deal with the challenges before learners can make decisions they might regret later, like dropping out. Moreover, the participants suggested establishment of blended learning support systems to provide open distance learning platforms. This could make life easier for learners faced with a number of challenges such as financial inadequacy, time management, conflicting social responsibilities, etc. Finally, the participants under the vocational skills training programme suggested establishment of working relations with corporate partners to help the institution design and develop relevant curriculum and increase employment opportunities for the graduates.

Section B: Findings from the instructors and facilitators

Interviews were conducted with a total of eight participants, consisting of three SNI instructors and five facilitators. The participants consisted of five females and three males. Six participants held degrees, while two possessed diplomas. Three participants interviewed taught primary and high school programmes, another three taught vocational skills, and the remaining two taught non-formal education. Regarding, their tenure in education and training, four interviewees mentioned that they had been teaching for less than ten years, while the remaining four had

more than ten years of experience. The data collected are hereby presented and analysed addressing the research questions outlined earlier in the chapter.

Theme 1: Motivation for enrolling in the adult learning programme

This theme relates to research question one of the study which sought to find out the factors motivating the participants to enrol in the adult literacy programme.

Table 7: Factors for participants enrolling in a selected programme

Programme	Motivating factors
Adult Basic Literacy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Desire to read and write 2. To enhance business skills 3. Peer pressure
Primary Education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Desire to improve communication skills 2. Desire to enrol in the vocational skills training programme
Vocational Skills Training	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase chances for securing employment 2. Provide in-demand technical services to the community

Subtheme 1.1 Factors for the adult basic literacy programme

The factors that motivated adult learners to enrol in the basic literacy programme were: the desire to learn how to read and write, enhance business skills, improve communication skills and peer pressure.

Subtheme 1.1.1 Desire to learn to read and write

It emerged that the desire to learn how to read and write motivated adult learners to enrol in the basic literacy programme. The facilitators advanced that the adult learners realized the importance of basic literacy as they needed to operate their Smart phones, read important documents such as information pamphlets on health, etc. This was echoed by participant LF2 who shared that,

“When talking to my basic literacy learners, they stress that they enrolled because there is demand for reading and writing skills, such as operating Smart phone and reading important documents such as the Holy Bible or information pamphlets. I agree with them because there are private messages and/or information that require confidential access, and therefore, it requires one to be literate to handle such matters”

Emphasizing participant LF2's submission, participant LF8 had this to say,

“There is need for every citizen to possess basic literacy skills because of digital migration which has hit our country as well. As most activities adults participate in such as personal communication, access to information, and payment of bills are done online, the demand for literate citizens is high. Hence, one of the motivating factors for adult learners to enrol in the basic literacy programme is to be able to read and write without assistance from other people.”

Subtheme 1.1.2 Enhancement of business skills

The findings revealed that some of the adult learners were motivated to enrol in the basic literacy programme to enhance their business skills as they were in employment. Participant LF7 stated that there were those basic literacy learners who were either self-employed or on wage employment, hence, they needed reading and writing skills to be able to handle tasks such as pricing of shop commodities, counting of stock and/or compiling records of business progress.

“Those learners who are in employment were motivated to acquire basic literacy skills so that they can count stock, price commodities, and/or keep records of financial transactions for the business. The purpose, therefore, of some adult learners enrolling in the basic literacy programme was to become functional in their businesses”

Supporting participant LF7's submission, participant LF5 postulated that,

“Some of the employed adult learners were motivated to enrol in the basic literacy programme for the purpose of managing their businesses better in terms of pricing commodities and keeping of records. This applies to those in wage employment like shops where they use the skills to read expiry dates on consumables, mark commodities with correct prices; as well as to those on self-employment as they seek to keep records of financial activities within their businesses”

Subtheme 1.1.3 Peer pressure

The adult learners were also motivated by peer pressure as seeing their peers reading and writing without assistance put pressure on them to seek to do same. Participant LF6 emphasized that most of the basic literacy learners were driven by peer pressure to enrol in the programme.

“Most of the adult literacy learners enrolled due to peer pressure. They see their age mates handling written material and tasks without assistance from others, and feel pressured to learn how to read and write to ease the stress of having to ask for assistance every time they have to read or write. Example of such tasks include reading information pamphlets that provide invaluable information of important issues such as how to breastfeed your child properly as advised by health practitioners”

Participant LF1 advanced that,

“Peer pressure is another factor that motivates adult learners to enrol in the basic literacy programme as they feel humiliated to see their age mates reading and writing without assistance. The driving force behind enrolling in the programme therefore, is

seeking to restore their dignity and pride amongst their peers by matching their basic literacy skills and be able to handle written material and writing tasks without seeking assistance from their children, for instance”

Subtheme 1.2 Factors for the primary education programme

Adult learners who enrolled in the primary education programme were motivated by the following factors: the desire to improve communication skills, and the desire to enrol in the vocational skills training programme.

Subtheme 1.2.1 Desire to improve communication skills

It emerged that the primary education learners were motivated by the desire to improve their communication skills in writing and reading. It was revealed by the facilitators that after graduating from the adult basic literacy programme, the graduates desired to enrol in the formal education to advance their communication skills as the level of writing and reading in SiSwati and English was higher. This was emphasized by participant LF1 who said,

“The graduates from the adult basic literacy programme tend to develop the desire to improve their communication skills in reading, writing and speaking. They, therefore, enrol in the formal primary education programme to acquire advanced knowledge and skills that include advanced vocabulary, mathematics, science, etc. With the knowledge and skills acquired from the primary education, the learners believe their communication skills will improve”

Participant LF3 had this to say,

“The primary education learners were motivated mainly by the desire to improve their communication skills to the extent that they can read and write using advanced English. The improved communication skills include reading, analysing and understanding complex documents such as textbooks on science subjects”

Subtheme 1.2.2 Desire to enrol in vocational skills training programme

The primary education learners were also motivated by the desire to enrol in vocational skills training programmes where they could acquire vocational skills under a trade of their choice, such as carpentry & joinery, or fence making. The purpose for acquiring a skill of their choice was to be able to generate income to cater for family needs. Participant LF4 had this to say,

“The primary education learners were also motivated by the desire to enrol in the vocational skills training programme as they were informed that the primary education certificate qualifies one to enrol in a vocational skills training of their choice. The learners had it in mind that vocational skills enable one to secure employment to earn income which they needed to cater for family and academic needs”

Participant LF5 advanced that,

“One of the requirements for one to qualify to enrol in the vocational skills training programme is the primary education certificate, hence, the learners were motivated to enrol in the primary education programme. The purpose was to obtain the certificate and advance to vocational skills training”

Subtheme 1.3 Factors for the vocational skills training programme

The factors that motivated adult learners to enrol in the vocational skills training programme included: to increase chances to secure employment, and to provide in-demand technical services to the community.

Subtheme 1.3.1 To increase chances of securing employment

It emerged that the vocational skills training learners were motivated by the desire to increase chances of securing employment for the purpose of earning income. Earning income could help ease financial challenges faced by the learners. This was emphasized by participant LF8 who stated that,

“The key motivator for learners to enrol in the vocational skills training programme was the desire to increase chances of securing employment. The learners choose a skill that they feel will help them secure employment as they have financial challenges that require income to cater for their needs”

Participant LF1 shared that,

“The learners enrolled in the vocational skills training programme are mainly motivated by the need for employment to earn a living through income gained from wage or self-employment. There are those who have the basics in the skill they choose but seek to become professionals to secure employment in big companies; while there are also those who have never been trained in any vocational skill but seek to earn a living through self-employment”

Subtheme 1.3.2 Provide in-demand technical services to the community

The findings further show that the driving force behind learners enrolling in vocational skills training was to provide in-demand technical services to the community. Participant LF1 had this to say,

“Most communities where the learners come from are rural and lack certain skills that are essential for the community such as fence making and/or building construction skills. It has motivated adult learners to desire to possess such skills in order to provide such services to the community and save the community from the costs of getting help from distant artisans. For instance, most rural homesteads need modern houses at affordable costs, and if there are builders in the community, the costs become reasonable”

Participant LF6 shared that,

“Apart from the desire to train in a vocational skill to secure employment, the learners were motivated to provide services that are in demand in the community for the purpose of saving the community from the high costs of getting the services from people or companies who reside far away from the local homesteads. Hence, they decided to enrol in vocational skills training programmes that are in demand in the local community”

The findings presented above show that according to the facilitators, the adult basic literacy learners were motivated by the desire to read and write in order to improve their written communication skills, enhance their business skills, and peer pressure. The purpose for which was to become better citizens and be able to independently communicate and access information without having to seek assistance from others. Those under the primary education were motivated by the desire to improve their communication skills, and to enrol in vocational skills training programme using the primary education certificate. Those from the vocational skills training programme were motivated by the desire to increase their chances of securing employment in order to earn income to cater for their needs; as well as to provide services using skills that are in demand to the community for the purpose of saving the community from spending more money seeking services from people who are not residents of the community.

Theme 2: Participants’ expression of satisfactory feeling over acquired skills

Similarly, this theme relates to the first research question of the study, which sought to explore the factors motivating the participants to enrol in the adult learning programme. The findings show that the participants expressed satisfaction about the knowledge and skills acquired from the adult literacy programme due to having achieved their learning goals as outlined in table 7 above. Notably, the learning goals are expressed as factors that motivated the learners to enrol in the literacy programme.

Subtheme 2.1 Expression of satisfactory feeling from the adult basic literacy programme

It emerged from the findings of the study that graduates from the adult basic literacy programme expressed satisfaction in having achieved two learning goals which were: The desire to read and write, and the desire to enhance business skills.

Subtheme 2.1.1 Desire to read and write

The facilitators revealed that graduates from the adult basic literacy programme expressed satisfaction after graduating from the programme because they had achieved their learning goal of reading and writing. This was confirmed by Participant LF1 who shared that,

“The graduates from the adult basic literacy programme have expressed feeling of satisfactory over the knowledge and skills they acquired from the programme. This they say it is because they have achieved the learning goals that had motivated them to enroll in the first place. For instance, some say they had achieved the goal of desiring to read and analyze information on documents such as information pamphlets to understand better and use that information to improve their livelihoods”

Participant LF8 had this to say,

“Those graduates who had desired to achieve their learning goals such as learning how to read and write were happy that they were able to read and write, and perhaps even communicate in writing with others using online platforms such as WhatsApp. This is something they were unable to do on their own before enrolling in the adult basic literacy programme, hence, they were satisfied with acquiring the knowledge and skills they needed”

Subtheme 2.1.2 Enhancement of business skills

It was established from the instructors that after the adult basic literacy acquired the skills they were satisfied that they had achieved their initial learning goal of seeking to use the skills in running their businesses. Participant LF3 shared that one of the graduates was using the reading and writing skills to fill forms at the constituency offices to apply for the rural development fund.

“I know of one graduate from the adult basic literacy programme who expressed satisfaction in having achieved her learning goal in that she was now using the skills to apply for the Rural Development Fund from the constituency using application forms which she fills with the required information. She does this without seeking assistance to fill the forms”

Participant LF5 had this to say,

“The graduates from this programme are satisfied that they have achieved their learning goal of being able to use the skills in their businesses. One of the graduates told me he is running a vegetable farming business where he uses the reading and writing skills to read documents related to the business policies, and those instructional documents which direct him on when and how certain vegetable crops can or cannot be planted as determined of course by the changing weather conditions”

Subtheme 2.2 Expression of satisfactory feeling from the primary education programme

Similarly, it emerged that the graduates from the primary education programme expressed satisfaction in having achieved two learning goals which were: To improve their communication skills, and to enrol in the vocational skills training programme.

Subtheme 2.2.1 Desire to improve communication skills

The facilitators shared that graduates from the primary education programme expressed satisfaction at having achieved their learning goal of improved communication skills after graduating from the programme. This was emphasized by Participant LF7 who stated that,

“The graduates were satisfied with the knowledge and skills gained from the primary education programme as their goal of desiring to improve their communication skills have been achieved. They speak and write in English much better than when they had acquired the adult basic literacy skills. Some of them serve in development committees in their communities where they frequently have to work with potential donors of foreign national who use the English language to communicate, both in speech and in writing”

Participant LF4 advanced that,

“The primary education graduates are happy to have achieved their desired goal of improving their communication skills as they can write proposals to potential donors in English, following advanced templates which were difficult for them to handle before enrolling in the programme. In addition, some graduates participate in community development workshops organized by different organizations such as banks where they are oriented on how to access financial assistance using online platforms. The graduates are able to communicate using online platforms like bank apps because they use the skills gained from the programme”

Subtheme 2.2.2 Desire to enrol in the vocational skills training programme Furthermore, the facilitators revealed that the graduates were happy to have obtained the primary education certificates which qualify them to enrol in any of the vocational skills training programmes of their choice. Participant LF2 shared that one of the graduates had indicated in the application form that her learning goal was to complete the primary education in order to enrol in the ICDL course to start a secretarial services business, and indeed she is now studying the ICDL.

“There is a graduate lady who had spelled out her learning goal of obtaining the primary education certificate in order to enrol in the vocational skills training programme to study ICDL, and she has since enrolled in that programme. This is an indication that she achieved her learning goal upon graduating from the primary education programme”

Participant LF5 postulated that,

“The graduates are satisfied with having achieved their learning goal of having to use the primary education certificate to enrol in the vocational skills training programme. I know of a few who have already enrolled in carpentry & joinery, fence making, and building construction after obtaining the primary education certificate.”

Subtheme 2.3 Expression of satisfactory feeling from the vocational skills training programme

Likewise, it emerged that the graduates from the vocational skills training programme expressed satisfaction in having achieved two learning goals which were: To increase chances for securing employment, and to provide in-demand technical services to the community.

Subtheme 2.3.1 Desire to increase chances for securing employment

The facilitators stated that most graduates from the vocational skills training programme expressed satisfaction at having achieved their learning goal of increasing chances of securing employment. On another note, a few of the graduates mentioned that they were satisfied with the skills they acquired from the programme. Hence, they felt they had achieved their learning goal in spite of not having secured a job yet. Participant LF8 had this to say,

“The graduates expressed satisfaction in having achieved their learning goals by acquiring skills that have enabled them to secure employment. Those who have secured employment are in two-folds as some were on wage employment while others were self-employed. For instance, there is a male graduate who secured a job as a bricklayer and plasterer in a construction company. There is a graduate lady who is running a secretarial business in the local community”

Participant LF6 stated that,

“The main learning goal for the vocational skills training graduates was to increase chances of securing employment. Although not all the graduates have secured employment, they all feel satisfied with the skills they acquired as they feel they can use them to secure employment when opportunities are available”

Subtheme 2.3.2 To provide in-demand technical services to the community

Ultimately, the facilitators noted that the graduates were happy to have graduated from the vocational skills training programme because their goal of providing in-demand services to the community was achieved. According to the facilitators, the graduates had highlighted at the beginning of the programme that they desired to acquire vocational skills that was in demand in the community to be able to provide where needed. Participant LF8 shared that,

“Apart from the goal of desiring to acquired vocational skills to secure employment, the graduates desired also to service the community using the skills that were needed by the community. This goal was achieved because there are evident cases where the graduates have showcased their skills in doing piece jobs for the community at reasonable costs that are lower than those charged by artisans who come from distant communities. For example, most of the rural communities need fence which they used to purchase from the city while paying for transport fees as well. Yet, now that they have one of the graduates running a fence making business, the community does not only purchase fence rolls from the local supplier, but services of putting up the fence as well at reasonable charges”

Participant LF3 advanced that,

“There is evidence to show that the graduates’ goal of desiring to provide services that were in demand to the community was achieved. As an example, the community needs construction services such as renovating their houses, which the graduates can provide using the skills acquired from the vocational skills training programme”

The findings presented above show that the facilitators of the literacy programmes offered at SNI were communicating with graduates after leaving the institution as they have provided information that is in agreement with that given by the learners as presented earlier in Section A of this chapter. The findings have further demonstrated that the factors shown in Table 7 which motivated the adult literacy graduates to enrol in the programme were also expressed as the learning goals that were achieved by the graduates upon completion of the programme.

Theme 3: Enablers of adult literacy learners to stay to completion of the adult literacy programme

This theme relates to research question two of the study which sought to establish the enablers of the adult literacy learners to stay to completion of the adult literacy programme.

Table 8: Enablers of learners to stay to completion of the programme

Programme	Enablers of learners to stay to completion
Adult Basic Literacy	1. Intrinsic motivation 2. Hope for a better future 3. Support from family and the community
Primary Education	1. Intrinsic motivation 2. Hope for a better future 3. Support from family and the community
Vocational Skills Training	1. Intrinsic motivation 2. Hope for a better future 3. Support from family and the community

Subtheme 3.1 Enablers of learners to stay to completion of the programme

The findings show that the factors that enabled the learners to stay to completion of the adult literacy programme, according to the instructors were: Intrinsic motivation, hope for a better future, and support from family and the community.

Subtheme 3.1.1 Intrinsic motivation

The instructors stated that intrinsic motivation is one of those factors which enabled learners from the three adult literacy programmes to stay to completion of the programmes. The following quotations emphasize the statement made by the instructors regarding learners' intrinsic motivation. Participant LF6 had this to say,

“The mere fact that the adult learners enrolled in the literacy programme with learning goals they sought to achieve is clear evidence that the learners were intrinsically motivated to persistently stay to complete the programme. For instance, one of the learning goals was the desire to read and write for the adult basic literacy learners, who were relying on other people for reading written material, such as information pamphlets”

Participant LF2 submitted that,

“Attending literacy learning classes is challenging for adult learners who have to deal with conflicting social responsibilities from time to time. However, our learners have stayed to completion of the programme because they were intrinsically motivated to achieve their learning goals such as the desire to improve communication skills”

Participant LF4 advanced that,

“Learners enrolled in the vocational skills training programme have stayed to complete the programme due to the intrinsic desire to secure employment. Sometimes training becomes challenging for learners who lack financial resources to purchase some tools for practical exercises, resulting in a few dropping out before graduating. Nonetheless, most of the learners stayed to completion of the programme because of intrinsic motivation as they sought to achieve their learning goal”

Subtheme 3.1.2 Hope for a better future

Similarly, it emerged that the instructors noted that the learners stayed to complete the literacy programme because they hoped to have a better future. Participant LF1 emphasized that the adult learners stayed to complete the programme in spite of challenges they faced because they hoped that their livelihoods were going to improve socially, financially and in health. Participant LF1 was quoted saying,

“Lacking literacy skills in reading, writing and vocational made life difficult for the learners as they struggled to satisfy their needs to feed their families, and contribute to

socio-economic growth in their communities. It is for that reason that enrolling in the literacy programme was aimed at acquiring skills that could help improve their livelihoods. Hence, the hope for a better future is another factor that enabled the learners to stay to complete the programme”

Participant LF6 advanced that,

“In addition to intrinsic motivation, the learners are motivated by the hope for a better future. It is no hidden secret that most of our learners they enrol in the programme because they lack certain skills that are essential in improving their lives. For instance, we have seen that those who graduate from the vocational skills training programme improve their livelihoods after starting small businesses that generate income for them to cater for their needs, while also providing services to the community”

Participant LF3 shared that,

“I have noted that a majority of the learners who enrol in the adult basic literacy programme persist to advance to the primary education and the vocational skills training programme. It shows therefore, that they are motivated to stay to completion of the literacy programme because of hoping for a better future with their families and the community. Indeed, we have seen from our graduates over the past years that after graduation, their lives improve in many aspects such as better reading, writing and communication skills, as well as earning income through providing in-demand technical skills to the community.”

Subtheme 3.1.3 Support from family and the community

It emerged also that the adult learners stayed to complete the literacy programme because they received support from their families and the community. It emerged that there were a number of support initiatives received by the learners from their families and the community which enabled them to persist until graduation. The initiatives include financial assistance, encouragement, and ease of conflicting social responsibilities. Participant LF5 submitted that,

“Support from families and the community played a significant role in enabling the learners to stay to complete the programme. Some of those learners who were struggling financially received financial boost from some family members who wished to see them become literate and advance to becoming artisans who will secure employment after completing the vocational skills training programme”

Participant LF8 had this to say,

“The leaners were receiving a lot of support from their families and the community. Some received financial assistance to cater for academic needs such as transport fees. There were also those who received assistance from members of the family or community by standing in for the learners in cases where they had to participate in community development activities while having to attend classes at the same time”

Participant LF7 shared that,

“The community has played a significant role in enabling the learners to stay to complete the literacy programme. The community has always encouraged the youth and adults who missed out on the opportunity to enrol in the formal school programmes to enrol in the literacy programme so that they will be functional in the community while earning income to cater for their needs. The benefits of community encouragement has been witnessed in some communities where our graduates have contributed in the development of the communities using the knowledge and skills gained from the programme. For instance, providing in-demand services to the community to save the community costs of soliciting same services from outside the community”

The findings presented above show that the adult learners stayed to complete the literacy programme due to three main factors: intrinsic motivation, hope for a better future, and support from family and the community. Notably, the support from family and the community was acknowledged by the learners earlier as well.

Theme 4: Challenges faced by learners

Also, this theme relates to the second research question of the study, which sought to establish the enablers of the adult literacy learners to stay to completion of the adult literacy programme. The challenges faced by the adult learners as noted by their instructors are listed in table 9 below.

Table 9: Challenges faced by learners

Programme	Challenges
Adult Basic Literacy	1. Conflicting social responsibilities 2. Learning capability
Primary Education	1. Learning capability 2. Economic demands 3. Late submission of assignments
Vocational Skills Training	1. Conflicting social responsibilities 2. Economic demands 3. Working under high risk environment

Subtheme 4.1 Challenges faced by the adult basic literacy learners

The instructors revealed that the adult basic literacy learners were faced with the following challenges during the course of learning: Conflicting social responsibilities, and learning capabilities.

Subtheme 4.1.1 Conflicting social responsibilities

It emerged from the instructor's submissions that the participants from the adult basic literacy programme encountered the challenge of conflicting social responsibilities. Participant LF5 advanced that some learners miss classes due to social commitments as they have to participate in social activities at home and in the community at the same time they are supposed to attend classes.

“One of the major challenges faced by some adult learners is conflicting social responsibilities. As adults sometimes they have to be absent from class because of family and/or community commitments. For example, there are community development meetings which every member of the community has to attend for information on how to start businesses to generate income and improve livelihoods of residents. Nonetheless, as a responsible instructor, I ensure that those affected by the challenge get notes of what was covered on the day, including spending more time with them during weekends to assist them catch up with the others”

Participant LF1 had this to say,

“Some of the adult learners miss classes due to family commitments. For example, those single mothers who live with her children have to take them to the hospital for medical treatments on the same dates the mother has to attend classes. The facilitator then makes time after lessons to help the learner catch up with what was covered in her absence, including writing tests which are slightly different from the one written by the others”

Subtheme 4.1.2 Learning capabilities

It was found out from the instructors that another challenge faced by learners from the basic literacy programme was learning capabilities. Participant LF7 stated that another challenge faced by some of the learners was struggling to capture what was taught in the adult basic literacy programme as they were slow learners. In dealing with the challenge, however, the instructors exercise patience with those slow learners, and also give them more home assignments which they attempt with the assistance of family members in order to enhance mastery of what is taught.

“Some of the adult basic literacy learners are slow learners. They are slow in capturing what is taught, with a few ending up dropping because they feel their minds were not meant for academic learning. We try to be patient with them and spend more time helping them grasp more information. It has worked for those who have stayed to complete the programme, with a few dropouts”

Participant LF3 had this to say,

“Learning capabilities differ across the adult basic literacy learners, to the extent that a few end up dropping due to struggling to cope. There are those learners who are slow

learners whom we assist by giving them more home assignments to practice at home with the assistance of family members while enhancing mastery of what is taught”

Subtheme 4.2 Challenges faced by the primary education learners

The instructors further revealed that the primary education learners were faced with the following challenges: Learning capabilities, economic demands and late submission of assignments.

Subtheme 4.2.1 Learning capabilities

It emerged from the instructors’ submissions that the learners from the primary education programme faced the challenge of learning capabilities as well. This was emphasized by participant LF4 who shared that,

“The primary education learners are also faced with some learning capabilities, particularly in subjects like Science and mathematics as they require analytical abilities and fresh minds to understand. Otherwise, using our experience in teaching adults, we manage to assist by simplifying the terminologies used and give examples that relate to the lives of adult learners. This has helped in enabling most adult learners to persist to complete the programme.”

Participant LF2 stated that,

“The challenge of learning capabilities faced by the adult basic literacy learners affects the primary education learners as well, although not all of them. Most of them struggle with science and mathematics subjects only, with a few who struggle with all the subjects as slow learners. This challenge has caused a few to drop out in the past. We try hard though as instructors to assist slow learners by simplifying terminology used and by giving them extra work to do even at home to master what we teach”

Subtheme 4.2.2 Economic demands

Similarly, the challenge of economic demand affects some, but not all the learners. The economic demand challenge affects those learners who have to pay for transport fees to attend classes, and purchase some expensive textbooks that are not supplied by the school. Supporting the findings, LF1 revealed that,

“There are learners who do not have enough income to cater for their financial needs such as transport fees and textbooks which the institution does not supply. Although it is difficult to assist learners with finances, we try as instructors to photocopy selected pages of the needed textbooks and give those learners who cannot afford to buy the whole textbook”

Participant LF7 advanced that,

“Learners face the challenge of economic demands which arise as a result of financial needs such as transport fees and textbooks. In helping the learners deal with this

challenge, we prepare notes for them to read and photocopy selected pages in the textbooks of chapters that have been covered. This ensures that no learner will lack the information needed to be covered in the programme”

Subtheme 4.2.3 Late submission of assignments

The instructors further stated that apart from the challenge of learner capabilities, the learners also faced the challenge of late submission of assignments. All academic assignments have specific deadline for submission. Some learners however, struggle to meet the deadline due to failure to cope with workload. This was emphasized by participant LF4 when saying,

“We as instructors experience late submission of assignments from the learners who seem to fail to cope with the workload that comes with enrolling in the primary education programme. We do understand that the number of subjects in this programme outnumbers those in the adult basic literacy programme. We therefore, train them when they get to Grade 5 to draw up a timetable that will help them manage their workload, particularly when it comes to take home assignments”

Participant LF8 shared that,

“The challenge of late submission of assignments begins from Grade 5 where the learners struggle to cope with workload as more work piles up in these grades. The learners are not used to such workload at this stage, until we train them how to plan well for their take home assignments. From then onwards, they struggle less because they get used to the amount of work in the higher grades of the primary education programme”

Subtheme 4.3 Challenges faced by the vocational skills training learners

The instructors went on to reveal that the learners from the vocational skills training programme were faced with the following challenges as they pursued their training: Conflicting social responsibilities, economic demands and working under high-risk environment.

Subtheme 4.3.1 Conflicting social responsibilities

The instructors advanced that the learners from the vocational skills training programme were faced with the challenges of conflicting social responsibilities. Participant LF8 stated that some learners had a challenge having to fulfil social responsibilities at family level and in the community, while having to attend to vocational skills training at SNI at the same time.

“There are learners who face the challenge of having to decide which responsibility to fulfil between attending classes at SNI and attending to family issues such as generating income to cater for family needs. For instance, an adult male learner who has to feed the family by doing piece jobs such as fixing broken wooden doors in some homesteads, ends up missing trainings on certain dates when he goes for the piece jobs. To assist this learner the instructor will make sure he gets the notes of what was learnt

during his absence. The good thing about this arrangement is that the learner gets to practice what they learn when doing the piece jobs”

Participant LF2 had this to say,

“There are also those adult learners who sometimes miss training due to attending to community development activities such as attending development committee meetings where the learner serves as the secretary. In that case, attending the meeting is obviously more important than attending training at SNI. We, as instructors assist in dealing with the challenge by advising them to find a way to get notes from their classmates and communicate the community meeting dates to us in time so that we can set dates for writing tests on dates that do not coincide with the dates for the meetings”

Subtheme 4.3.2 Economic demands

The instructors shared that most of the vocational skills training learners were faced with the challenge of economic demands as the costs of tools that they ought to have are high for learners who have to feed their families as well. Although a few learners share tools, it becomes a challenge when it comes to practical where each learner has to be assessed working alone on a specific project. Participant LF6 had this to say,

“The issue of portable tools like pliers, spirit level, trowel, etc. which the learners must bring for practical becomes a challenge for some learners who are breadwinners for their families. For example, one adult female learner enrolled in the carpentry & joinery programme used to miss practical sessions because she did not have the hand tools. The instructor however, was kind enough to lend her his personal tools for practical assessments until she raised enough money to purchase her own through selling vegetables to the community”

Participant LF4 advanced that,

“Most of the vocational skills training learners were faced with the challenge of lack of funding to purchase the needed hand tools for training. This has been a challenge affecting practical training where each learner has to work on a specific project like making a roll of fence, and/or making a model coffee table. Nonetheless, the instructors have allowed the learners to share hand tools and sometimes allow them to work in pairs on the same project to save time”

Subtheme 4.3.3 Working under high-risk environment

The instructors revealed that the vocational skills training learners doing carpentry & joinery, building construction and fence making were faced with the challenge of working under high risk due to the dangerous machinery they worked with like the table saw in carpentry. This was a challenge that affected training during the first few months in the programme. Otherwise, as the learners got used to the dangerous machinery they began to excel, with of course the assistance of instructors who are always there to encourage and keep them safe from any harm or danger. This was emphasized by participant LF5 who stated that,

“Those learners who had never worked with the industrial machines before faced the challenge of fear of danger working under high risk environment. It was only those few who had used the machinery before, usually in family business. The learners however, stayed to complete the training because instructors were always kind and patient with the learners while ensuring they were there to keep the learners safe”

Participant LF2 shared that,

“The challenge faced with learners working under high risk environment posed danger that can ruin one’s health condition. For instance, we have had rare cases where learners got cut while using the table saw during training in the carpentry & joinery programme. This challenge could lead to dropouts. However, the instructors put up strict rules for the machine workshop, stating that no learner should enter to operate any of those machines unless under the supervision of instructor. This applies to all the high risk environments, and it has been effective as it has been long since we have had any accidents, and learners have stayed to complete the programme working safely”

The findings presented above show that the learners from the different programmes were faced with different challenges, which however, they managed to deal with successfully as they stayed to graduate. Notably, the learners under the primary education programme faced challenges of learning capability and conflicting social responsibilities. The learners under the primary education programme were faced with learning capabilities, economic demands and late submission of assignments. Those learners under the vocational skills training programme were faced with conflicting social responsibilities, economic demands and working under high risk environment. In all the challenges the instructors played a role in assisting learners deal with the challenges in order to stay to complete the programme.

Theme 5: Strategies to support adult learners achieve the literacy learning goals

This theme relates to research question three of the study which sought to explore the strategies that can be used to support adult learners in their efforts to achieve the literacy learning goals.

Table 10: Strategies to support adult learners achieve the literacy learning goals

Programme	Strategies
Adult Basic Literacy	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Provide scholarships to learners2. Provide psychosocial counselling to learners3. Establish blended learning support systems
Primary Education	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Provide scholarships to learners2. Provide psychosocial counselling to learners3. Establish blended learning support systems
Vocational Skills Training	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Establish income generating programme2. Provide psychosocial counselling to learners3. Establish blended learning support systems4. Establish relations with corporate partners

Subtheme 5.1 Strategies to support adult learners achieve the literacy learning goals

The findings show that the instructors recommended three strategies that could be employed to support adult learners achieve their literacy learning goals: Provide government scholarships to learners, provide psychosocial counselling to learners, establish blended learning support systems, establish income generating projects, and establish relations with corporate partners.

Subtheme 5.1.1 Provide government scholarships to learners

It emerged that the instructors suggested that provision of government scholarships to adult basic literacy and primary education learners is a strategy that could assist learners with financial challenges that resulted in a few dropouts. The following quotations show that the instructors believed that government scholarships offered to the learners can ease their financial burden and avoid dropouts. Participant LF8 shared that,

“Providing government scholarships to the learners can assist in dealing with the financial challenge faced by learners as revealed earlier. Even if the scholarships can be subsidized, it can play a role in assisting learners to avoid unnecessary dropouts as it has been seen in the past learners dropping out due to financial challenges”

Participant LF6 had this to say,

“Government should provide financial assistance to those learners who struggle to make ends meet due to lack of financial resources. I suggest that the financial assistance be in a form of scholarships that could be subsidized if government cannot afford full payment. The adult basic literacy and primary education learners need the scholarship more than the vocational skills training learners because those in the vocational skills training programme could use their skills to generate income”

Subtheme 5.1.2 Provide psychosocial support to learners

It emerged also that the instructors suggested the provision of psychosocial counselling to all learners in order to note their challenges throughout the duration of learning with the aim of finding a solution to ensure learners stayed to complete the literacy learning programme.

Participant LF4 stated that,

“The institution should provide psychosocial counselling to the learners so that the challenges they face throughout the duration of the programme can be noted and a solution be found before some learners decide to drop out. I suggest that the institution employs a fulltime psychosocial officer to provide such counselling to the learners as that could allow the officer more time to deal with the challenges faced by learners”

Participant LF2 had this to say,

“I would like to see a situation where the institution hires a psychosocial officer to provide counselling to the learners regarding the challenges they face. Challenges such as lack of financial resources to cater for their needs, and/or poor performance in academic activities often lead to a few dropouts, yet that could be avoided if learners can get professional counselling against giving up”

Subtheme 5.1.3 Establish blended learning support systems

The instructors further suggested the establishment of blended learning support systems to help learners deal with the challenge of conflicting social responsibilities. The following quotations from the instructors show that the instructors had noted that the challenge of conflicting social responsibilities affected learners across the three groups, hence, they felt that blended learning can provide open distance and flexible learning opportunities to learners to minimize absenteeism. Quoted verbatim, participant LF7 shared that,

“Having noted that the challenge of conflicting social responsibilities affected the learners from the adult basic literacy, primary education and vocational skills training programmes, I felt that introducing open flexible distance learning opportunities to the learners can minimize absenteeism cases. I say so because most absenteeism cases are reported to have been caused by learners who have to attend to family and/or community commitments at the same time of attending classes. Blended learning allows

learners to access learning materials and information both online and in hard copy, hence, the learner can participate in learning activities at own time, space and pace”

Participant LF3 advanced that,

“I believe that blended learning can be a lasting solution to the challenge of learners missing scheduled class sessions because they have to attend to family and/or community assignments such as community development meetings, which cannot be missed. Blended learning can provide flexible learning opportunities such as attending online discussions with other learners, and/or accessing learning materials online. This could allow learners to attend to scheduled social demands such as attending parents meeting at school and later attend to academic demands at own time and space”

Subtheme 5.1.4 Establish income generating programme

It emerged from the instructors that establishing an income generating programme can assist learners who have challenges catering for their economic demands. This was emphasized by participant LF5 who shared that establishing an income generating programme that will allow learners to work on jobs brought in by customers who pay for the services, can generate profits that can be shared between the institution and participating learners. Quoted verbatim, participant LF5 shared that,

“The strategy of generating income through jobs done for customers who pay for the services could empower the learners not only with shared profits but with work experience as well. The learners will use the skills acquired from the vocational skills training programme to work on the jobs brought in by customers. The income generating programme could be managed by the institution in partnership with learner council to ensure that the profits are shared equitably among the institution and the participating learners”

Participant LF2 stated that,

“I suggest an income generating programme be established at the institution. I propose that the programme involves projects that are aimed at generating income through jobs done for customers who pay for the services. The profits generated from the projects could be shared among participating learners and the institution. Empowering learners with stable source of income can minimize dropouts as well. I believe also that the learners have the potential to get customers from surrounding communities where they come from”

Subtheme 5.1.5 Establish relations with corporate partners

Finally, the instructors suggested the establishment of relations with corporate partners of SNI. These are companies and/or organizations that offer employment to the graduates under different industries. Establishment of such partnership could serve three purposes: (i) advise SNI on designing market-driven curriculum, (ii) Donate relevant learning materials and

training machinery/equipment, and (iii) offer employment opportunities to the graduates.

Participant LF1 had this to say,

“I suggest that SNI establishes relations with corporate partners, in particular the companies and/or employers who offer employment to our graduates. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) could be signed between employer organizations such as the Federation of Eswatini Business Community (FESBC) and SNI to ensure working relations that will support adult learners in their efforts to achieve the literacy learning goals. This strategy will see companies donating resources to the institution while advising on designing market-driven curriculum to increase chances of employment for the graduates”

Participant LF8 shared that,

“A strategy to establish an MOU between SNI and employers could help in three aspects. First, the MOU could see potential employers assisting the institution in designing and developing market-driven vocational skills training programme. Secondly, the employers can provide funding to purchase relevant training material and equipment/machinery. Thirdly, the MOU can increase chances of employment for our graduates. I believe that sometimes our graduates have failed to secure employment because the employers do not approve of our curriculum, hence, involving the employers can improve chances of employment”

The findings presented above show that there were similarities and differences in suggestions made by the instructors and the learners regarding strategies that can be used to support adult learners in their efforts to achieve the literacy learning goals. Similarities include the provision of psychosocial counselling to learners, establishment of blended learning, as well as establishment of relations with corporate partners. However, they differed in the provision of financial assistance to learners as the learners suggested establishment of income generating projects to the three groups of learners, whereas the instructors suggested government scholarships to the adult basic literacy and primary education learners, and income generating programme to vocational skills training only because they have the skills to work on jobs from customers.

4.2 Chapter summary

This chapter presented comprehensive analysis of factors influencing the persistence of adult learners in a literacy learning program at SNI, capturing qualitative data obtained from the learners and the instructors. The analysis, presented through tables and descriptions, provides insights into the demographic characteristics of the participants, factors that motivate learners to enroll in the literacy programme, enablers of the adult literacy learners to stay to completion of the adult literacy programme, as well as strategies that can be used to support adult learners

in their efforts to achieve the literacy learning goals. Noted from the findings were agreements between the adult learners and the instructors in a number of issues. For instance, they agreed that the vocational skills training learners were motivated to enrol in the programme to provide in-demand technical services to the community. They further agreed that support from family and the community enabled learners to stay to completion of the programme. Five major themes emerged from the findings, namely, Theme 1: Motivation for enrolling in the adult learning programme, Theme 2: Benefits of enrolling in the chosen adult learning programme, Theme 3: Enablers of adult literacy learners to stay to completion of the adult literacy programme, Theme 4: Challenges faced by learners, Theme 5: Strategies to support adult learners achieve the literacy learning goals.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the findings of the study which sought to explore the factors that influence the persistence of adult literacy learners in a literacy learning programme at Sebenta National Institute (SNI) in Mbabane, Eswatini to generate knowledge for strengthening the design and learner participation. The discussion is centered around the findings presented in chapter 4 of this report. The findings are discussed in line with the research objectives outlined below:

- (i) To investigate the motivations of adult learners for enrolling in literacy programs at the Sebenta National Institute, with a focus on how these motivations influence their persistence and inform program design.
- (ii) To identify the enablers that support adult learners in completing the literacy program, including external factors and institutional factors.
- (iii) To explore strategies that can be implemented to support adult learners in achieving their literacy goals.

5.1 Discussion of research findings

5.1.1 Motivation of participants to enrol at SNI

The presentation of findings identified several key motivations that influenced adult learners to enrol in the literacy programme at Sebenta National Institute. Motivations identified by the learners, the instructors and facilitators differed across the three programmes. Those learners enrolled in the Adult Basic Literacy programme identified the following factors that motivated them to enrol: desire to read and write, to enhance business skills, to improve written communication skills, and peer pressure. Learners from the Primary Education programme identified the following: desire to advance basic literacy skills, to obtain a formal school certificate, desire to enrol in the vocational skills training programme. The instructors Learners in the vocational skills training programme identified the following: to acquire market-driven

skills for self-employment, increase chances of getting a job, provide in-demand technical services to the community, and take over running of family business.

Noted from all the factors mentioned by each of the three groups of learners above is that they translate into personal goals which each learner sought to achieve, based on needs. For instance, the desire to read and write by the Adult Basic Literacy learners was based on the need to become literate so that the adult can handle written material without having to ask for assistance. The desire to obtain the primary education certificate was based on the desire to enrol in the vocational skills training programme in order to secure employment.

The issue of adult learners being motivated by personal goals to enrol for literacy programmes is in agreement with Toit-Brits (2019) who advanced that in Malcolm Knowles' view, adults are motivated to acquire knowledge and skills that will help them solve their real-life problems. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory supports Malcolm Knowles' view of need being at the core of learner motivation. According to Maslow, our actions as human beings are motivated in order to achieve certain needs (Mawere, Mubaya, van Reisen & van Stam, 2016). This is also emphasized by the ABC Canada Literacy Foundation (2023) which reported that when adults are motivated to read they are more likely to remain interested and engage with written material, as well as attempt to understand and extract meaning from what they read.

Indeed, this assertion was confirmed by the learners when indicating that they benefitted from the Adult Basic Literacy programme because after graduating they were able to read and analyze information and messages with understanding in order to respond accordingly. The findings show also that the learners from the vocational skills training programme were motivated to enrol in the programme in order to engage in income generating projects that would earn them income to cater for their economic demands. For example, one graduate shared that he benefitted for the carpentry and joinery programme because he managed to open a workshop in the community where he provided potential clients with in-demand technical services such as manufacturing church benches, wooden house doors, coffee tables, etc.

Also, noted from the differing motivation factors is that after graduating from the Adult Basic Literacy programme, the graduates desired to further advance in their learning goals until they graduate from the vocational skill training programme. The findings show that satisfaction of low level need to read and write motivated the graduates to desire to advance to the primary

education certificate so that they can enrol in the vocational skills training programme for employment. This is in agreement with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory which states that needs have a definite hierarchy of importance, hence, as soon as needs on a lower level are fulfilled, the next level will emerge and demand satisfaction (Trivedi & Mehta, 2019). For instance, according to Maslow's theory, satisfaction of esteem needs triggers self-actualization needs.

The findings are also in agreement with Liu (2016) who postulated that human beings' needs produce motivation, and motivation drives and facilitates human beings' behaviour. Based on the findings and literature by Toit-Britis (2019), Maslow (2023), Trivedi & Mehta (2019) and Liu (2016), conclusion can be drawn to the effect that motivation levels of adult literacy learners are determined to greater extent by the extent of the desire to satisfy prevailing needs.

5.1.2 Enablers of adult literacy learners to stay to completion of the adult literacy programme

The findings indicate that adult literacy learners at SNI stayed to completion of the adult literacy programme due to the relevant content to real life, supporting learning environment, and support from family and the community. The instructors shared similar factors such as learner intrinsic motivation, hope for a better future, and support from family and the community.

The findings revealed that the learners noted that the knowledge and skills they acquired from the adult literacy programme enabled them to satisfy their needs including those of family and the community. For instance, those graduates from the Adult Basic Literacy programme advanced that learning how to read and write empowered them with skills to typeset and compile reports for churches and any other organizations they served under in the community. The relevance of content in enabling adult learners to stay to completion of the adult literacy programme is supported by Sogunro (2015) when stating that eight factors were discovered to have enabled adult learners to complete their programmes in Higher Education. These include, quality of instruction, quality of curriculum, relevance and pragmatism, interactive classrooms and effective management practices, progressive assessment and timely feedback, self-directedness, conducive learning environment, and effective academic advising practices. The learners went on to express their satisfaction for choosing the programme.

On the issue of supporting learning environment, the findings show that the learners were content with the learning environment as the instructors were friendly and motivating while providing assistance where needed, and providing user-friendly learning materials. This is supported by Hemmerich (2014) who advanced that support from faculty, family, friends, and classmates were integral to adult learners to stay to graduate from their degree programmes.

Another enabling factor was support received from family and the community. The study indicates that family support was provided financially and socially. For instance, there were times when the learner had to attend to community demands such as attending development committee meetings on same dates and time he had to attend classes at SNI. According to the learners, family members or neighbours were asked to stand in for the learner to attend classes. The community played a role in encouraging adults to enrol in the adult literacy programme in order to be functional in the society, and that enabled them to stay to completion of the programme. These factors were also echoed by Hart (2012) who stated that factors associated with student persistence in an online programme include satisfaction with online learning, a sense of belonging to the learning community, motivation, peer, and family support, time management skills, and increased communication with the instructor.

On another note, the instructors and facilitators stated that the learners stayed to completion of the programme due to intrinsic motivation and hope for a better future. The instructors and facilitators went on to reveal that the mere fact that the adult learners enrolled in the programme to achieve desired learning goals showed that they were intrinsically motivated to stay to complete the programme. In addition, it was noted that due to the situation of high levels of unemployment in communities, the learners had high hopes for a better future where they can use the knowledge and skills acquired to generate income through self or paid employment. Kinyua (2022) postulated that the majority of adults engage in adult education courses in order to improve their lives by learning new things and pursuing their aspirations to become better persons in the future. In Kinyua's view, adult learners who engage in learning programme that will satisfy their aspiration to become better persons in future are likely to persist until completion. The agreement between literature by Hart (2012) and Kinyua (2022) and the findings of the current study leads to the conclusion that intrinsic motivation, relevance of content to learner needs, supporting learning environment, as well as supporting family and the community were enablers of adult literacy learners to stay to completion of the adult literacy programme.

In spite of the enablers of the learners to stay to completion of the adult literacy programme discussed above, the findings show challenges that were faced by the learners and how they dealt with such challenges which resulted in minimal dropouts. One of the notable challenges which affected learner performance in the adult literacy programme was conflicting social responsibilities. According to Baharudin, Murad & Mat (2013), the challenge of multiple social responsibilities is when the learner finds it difficult to prioritize between their family, career and study. The findings show that this challenge was noted by the learners, the instructors and the facilitators. The findings further show that sometimes the adult learner had to miss attending classroom sessions due to inevitable assignment from the community such as attending to matters related to development. However, the learner would catch up with assistance of taking notes that were taken in his/her absence, as well as with the help of the friendly instructors and facilitators who made sure no learner was left behind with information and/or academic activities such as writing of assignments.

Another challenge faced by the Adult Basic Literacy and Primary Education learners was learning capability wherein the instructors and facilitators revealed that some learners were struggling with the amount of information and vocabulary used. It was understandable though because adult learners are known to learn better with more hands-on practical activities and less instructional information. This was emphasized by (Sisselman-Borgia & Torino (2017) who stated that learning activities that offer adult learners the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills gained from a learning programme help improve learner performance. Sisselman-Borgia & Torino (2017) further advanced that to improve retention and mastery of learned skills, adult learners need to engage in practice in order to critically reflect and apply what they have learnt in a real-life workplace situation. Hence, the findings show that the learners enrolled in the vocational skills training programme did not have the same challenge as there is more practical and less theory. Nonetheless, the findings indicate that the instructors and facilitators assisted the learners in dealing with this challenge by being patient and giving extra home assignments to ensure enhancement of retention and mastery of learned information.

The third challenge is economic demands which affected learners across the three adult literacy programmes. The challenge emanated from the fact that most adult learners' socio-economic statuses were poor due to unemployment and lack of funding to start income generating

projects. This challenge was noted by Baharudin, Murad & Mat (2013) as well when advancing that one of the biggest challenge faced by full time adult learners is financial as a majority of learners have to pay the tuition fees by themselves. Further emphasizing lack of finances as a factor that cause adult learner dropout is Kgope (2017) who states that lack of specific and adequate budget allocations in non-formal education institutions like SNI makes it difficult for those learners who do not have stable income to fund themselves. In dealing with this challenge, the findings show that some learners worked on piece jobs in the community such as doing laundry for neighbours at a fee; while others grew vegetables to sell to the community. The facilitators and instructors on the other hand, stated that they photocopied selected chapters from the textbooks to give to those learners who did not afford to purchase the whole book.

The fourth challenge faced by the Primary Education learners was late submission of assignments as a result of struggling to cope with the amount of work involved in this programme, particularly in Grades 5-7. According to the learners, instructors and the facilitators, this challenge was mainly caused by learners' failure to manage their study schedules, particularly with home assignments. The findings were supported by Kinyua (2022) who advanced that financial difficulties, loss of jobs, lack of family support, and juggling family obligations with academic requirements were the main causes of dropouts. In dealing with this challenge, the findings show that the facilitators and instructors taught the learners how to set their study schedule appropriately to balance social responsibilities and academic assignments.

The fifth challenge faced by the vocational skills training learners was working under high risk environment wherein it was revealed that some industrial machines used like in the carpentry & joinery programme were dangerous as cases of injuries were reportedly witnessed before. This challenge was posing a threat to newly enrolled learners, particularly after listening to stories of injuries witnessed before. However, the patience, kindness of the facilitators and instructors, as well as strict ground rules within the machine rooms helped the learners to stay to completion of the programme because in due course they gained the needed experience of working under industrial high risk environments. The facilitators and instructors applied the experiential learning theory as Dernova (2015) postulated that this theory makes possible for students to face unknown situations and problems in a real-world context. Dernova (2015) further pointed out that in the modern society with constant changes the adult learning requires shifting the emphasis from teaching to learning that is from transferring the information to

facilitating the experience accumulation, in order to help adult learners to adapt effectively to high risk and/or complex environments.

The agreement between literature by the different authors presented above and the findings of the current study implies that the major enablers of adult literacy learners to stay to completion of the programmes enrolled in were centered around relevance of content, supporting environment, and support from family and the community.

5.1.3 Strategies to support adult learners achieve the literacy learning goals

The study identified five major strategies that can be used to support adult learners in achieving their literacy learning goals at the institute. Firstly, they suggested that government should provide scholarships to assist learners who struggled to meet their economic demands. The participants in the study noted that there was need for government to assist adult learners with low income by funding the tuition fees through the award of scholarships. The participants held the belief that such assistance could help support the learners achieve their learning goals as a few were seen dropping out due to financial challenges. Secondly, it was suggested that SNI establish income generating projects that can see learners share with the institute income generated from commercial jobs brought in by the public who pay for the services rendered. Mahmud, Nuryatin & Susilowati (2022) stated that income-generating supplemented the budget of a public university in Indonesia, as the proceeds were used to purchase supplies, materials and equipment, and improve facilities needed for instruction, research, extension, training and productive activities. In concurrence, Living & Kaganga (2022) revealed that income generating activities such as shops, stationery, poultry farming, crop farming, horticulture were practised in public secondary schools to aid in the up keeping of school infrastructure and the development of teachers' working conditions.

Thirdly, SNI should provide learners with psychosocial support systems that will give counselling to learners who face challenges during their tenure at the institute to help them deal with the challenges in order to persist to graduation. Through personalized counselling, counselors create a supportive environment that acknowledges and addresses the unique challenges adult learners may face, such as missing learning sessions due to financial challenges (Abidogun & Mumuni, 2024). Providing psychosocial counselling to individual learner has the potential to contribute to enhanced emotional well-being of adult learners to

ensure learner persistence to completion of programme enrolled in. Fourthly, it was suggested that SNI should establish blended learning support systems to help learners learn comfortably in open distance learning platforms such as Emailing. The findings revealed that blended learning can provide opportunities to learners to attend to academic activities more online at their own pace and time, with less physical interaction with their instructors and facilitators. Supporting the strategy is (Severinsen, Kennedy, & Mohamud, 2018) who stated that to increase adult literacy learner persistence, institutions should offer relevant curriculum, address settlement needs of learners, incorporate adult learner life experiences, encourage learner autonomy, promote collaborative learning and build self-efficacy among learners.

Fifthly, it was suggested that SNI should establish relations with corporate partners in the industries that are relevant to the vocational skills training programme, such as the building construction industry. The partnership could help the institution in a number of ways namely, inform programme design on relevant content, assist with training materials, and provide internship and employment to the graduates. By getting direct insight into employer opinions of external partnerships with colleges and universities, institutions have the opportunity to effectively address the needs and preferences of employers (Etter, Fong, Wang & Sullberg, 2024). This of course suggests that establishing partnerships between learning institutions like SNI and employers of the graduates could ensure support from the employers and increase employment opportunities, while supporting learners achieve their literacy learning goals.

The strategies suggested by the adult literacy learners, facilitators and the instructors from SNI were in agreement with literature from the different authors quoted above. Hence, a conclusion can be drawn that the strategies suggested to support adult learners achieve their literacy learning goals were based on the challenges they faced while at SNI.

5.2 Implication of the study/ exploring lesson drown from the findings

The study highlights the multifaceted nature of adult learners' persistence in literacy programs and provides valuable insights for enhancing program design and development. Understanding and aligning educational programs with the personal goals of adult learners can significantly enhance motivation and persistence. The current study sought to determine lived experiences of adult learners so that we create a career decision making, in order to eradicate dropouts by improving programme design and learner participation.

Lesson learned from the study is that adult education programs should focus on developing curricula that are not only relevant but also adaptable to the changing needs of learners. Educators should receive training on how to create supportive learning environments that foster trust and community. By focusing on these enablers, literacy programs can significantly improve adult learners' persistence and success, ultimately contributing to a more educated and skilled workforce. Adult education programs should focus on developing curricula that are not only relevant but also adaptable to the changing needs of learners. By focusing on these enablers, literacy programs can significantly improve adult learners' persistence and success, ultimately contributing to a more educated and skilled workforce. These strategies were tailored to address the specific challenges faced by adult learners. Five strategies emerged: government scholarships, income-generating projects, psychosocial support, blended learning systems, and industry partnerships.

The strategies to support learners was supported by a number of literature. For example, literature by Mahmud, Nuryatin, & Susilowati (2022) supported the strategy to establish income generating activities. Therefore, recognizing these motivations can inform the design of literacy programs by addressing a broader range of motivational factors that cater to diverse learner needs. The strategies to support learners was supported by a number of literature. For example, literature by Mahmud, Nuryatin, & Susilowati (2022) supported the strategy to establish income generating activities. Also Hemmerich (2014) who advanced that support from faculty, family, friends, and classmates were integral to adult learners to stay to graduate from their degree programmes. The next chapter presents the overall conclusion of the study and also make recommendations for areas of further study.

5.3 Chapter summary

The chapter discussed the research findings in line with the objectives of the study, while consideration was made to the five themes that emerged from the findings. Interpretation of the findings suggest that adult learners' persistence in literacy programs is deeply intertwined with their motivations and the support they receive. Noted from all the factors mentioned by each of the three groups of learners above is that they translate into personal goals which each learner sought to achieve, based on needs. The connection the findings to the literature, the

findings of this study resonate with existing literature on adult education and motivation. For instance, Toit-Brits (2019) emphasizes that adults are motivated by the need to solve real-life problems, which aligns with the motivations expressed by learners in this study. The synthesis of findings from the research at SNI illustrates that several interconnected factors enable adult literacy learners to persist and complete their programs.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusion of the study and recommendations drawn from the findings of the study. The research was undertaken to explore the factors that influence the persistence of adult literacy learners in a literacy learning programme at Sebenta National Institute (SNI) in Mbabane, Eswatini to generate knowledge for strengthening the design and learner participation. The chapter ends with recommendation and suggestion for further study.

6.1 Conclusion of the study

The first research question was to investigate if the motivation levels of adult literacy learners prompted their desire to enrol for the adult literacy programme offered at Sebenta National Institute. The study was conducted at Sebenta National Institute, in Mbabane, where data were collected from the adult literacy learners, instructors and facilitators using interviews. The study concluded that motivation levels of adult literacy learners are determined to greater extent by the extent of the desire to satisfy prevailing needs.

The second research question was to establish the enablers of the adult literacy learners to stay to completion of the adult literacy programme. The study concluded that the major enablers of adult literacy learners to stay to completion of the programmes enrolled in were centered around relevance of content, supporting environment, and support from family and the community.

The third research question was to explore the strategies that can be used to support adult learners in their efforts to achieve the literacy learning goals. The study concluded that the strategies suggested to support adult learners achieve their literacy learning goals were based on the challenges they faced while at SNI.

In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of addressing adult learners' unique needs and challenges in literacy programs. By aligning with theories such as Knowles's Andragogy, Tinto's Student Departure, Bandura's Social Learning, and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, the findings emphasize the role of relevant curricula, supportive environments, and flexibility in fostering persistence. It is recommended that institutions prioritize learner-centered program

designs, provide robust social and community support, and ensure flexibility to accommodate adult learners' diverse responsibilities. These strategies will enhance retention rates and empower learners to achieve their educational goals. Through continuous evaluation and adaptation, literacy programs can remain responsive and impactful.

6.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- 6.2.1 SNI should have a platform where the administration and learners can come together to make collective decisions regarding the operations of the institution.
- 6.2.2 Government should provide scholarships for learners who struggle to finance their learning at SNI.
- 6.2.3 The curriculum needs to be reviewed periodically to ensure it is easily understood by adult learners, while meeting market demands. The institution should also consider collaborating with traditional schools to ensure a smooth transition for learners who wish to continue their education beyond the Sebenta National Institute. This can include sharing resources, curriculum alignment, and support for learners transitioning to high school.
- 6.2.4 Since adult learners are persistent to enrol to traditional schools after finishing their primary education, it is recommended that the Sebenta National Institute provide transition support to facilitate a smooth transfer process for adult learners. This could include mentorship programs, counselling services, and academic support to help adult learners adjust to the new learning environment.
- 6.2.5 It is recommended that the Sebenta National Institute consider adding secondary education to their current curriculum. This will allow learners to continue their education beyond primary level and acquire the necessary skills and knowledge for high school.

6.3 Suggestions for further research

Based on the findings and the conclusion of the study, further research can be conducted on the relevance of learner involvement in decision making at Sebenta National Institute.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A. PERMISSION LETTER

Sebenta National Institute
P.O Box 64,
Mbabane H100 Hhohho District ESWATINI

Dear Sir/Madam

23rd June, 2023

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT AN ACADEMIC RESEARCH

With reference to the above captioned matter, my name is Nombukiso Shabangu, Ed 22001393 currently working as HUMAN RESOURCE AND TRAINING OFFICER at His Majesty's Correctional Services. I am pursuing a Master of Education in the School of Education at the University of Zambia in Adult Education. I write to request for your permission to allow me to conduct an academic research project in your institution. This study is in partial fulfilment of an award of Masters in Education degree being pursued in the School of Education at the University of Zambia.

The title of my study is an exploration of factors influencing the current persistence of adult learners in a literacy learning programme to strengthen the design and learner participation. The objectives of the study are to: Investigate the motivation of the participants to enrol for the literacy programme at Sebenta National Institute (SNI), establish the enablers of the adult literacy learners to stay to completion of the adult literacy programme, explore the strategies that can be used to support adult learners in their efforts to achieve the literacy learning goals. The purpose of this study is to explore the factors that influence the persistence of adult literacy learners to stay to completion of the adult literacy learning programme at Sebenta National Institute (SNI) in Mbabane, Eswatini to generate knowledge for strengthening the design and learner participation. The target participants in this study are the facilitators and instructors, as well as the learners at SNI. The facilitators and instructors will participate in interviews, while the learners will participate in the focus group discussions. Each interview process will last for approximately 30 minutes, while each focus group discussion will take approximately 30-60 minutes. All ethical considerations have been considered. For further information, please contact me directly on+ 26876226110

Thank you for considering my request.

Shabangu Nombukiso: 22001393

Appendix B. INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Dear participant,

I am a Master's student at the Department of Adult Education and Extension Studies at the University of Zambia. I would like to invite you to take part in my research project entitled: *Factors influencing the current persistence of adult learners in a literacy learning programme to strengthen the design and learner participation*. The overall aim of this research is to explore the factors that influence the persistence of adult literacy learners to stay to completion of the adult literacy learning programme at Sebenta National Institute (SNI) in Mbabane, Eswatini to generate knowledge for strengthening the design and learner participation.

Study procedures: Focus group discussions will be conducted with four groups of 15 adult literacy learners; while in-depth interviews will be conducted with eight facilitators and instructors from SNI. Notes will be taken during the group discussion and interviews. Moreover, the conversations and discussion will be recorded so as to capture details of the conversations. Each of the four discussion sessions will take 30-60 minutes, while each interview will take 15-30 minutes.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Benefits of partaking in the study: There will be no benefits for participating in the study, however, the information that you are going to provide will contribute towards an understanding of the factors influencing the persistence of adult learners in a literacy learning programme to strengthen the design and learner participation.

Confidentiality: The study does not require you to disclose your name or any name of individual(s). To protect your identity pseudonyms will be used and your name will not be recorded anywhere, not even in the research report. The study does not force you to discuss any personal information that you do not feel comfortable sharing.

The information that will be shared by you will be stored safely and will be shared with my supervisor who is also part of this research. Furthermore, excerpts from the discussion or interview may be included in the final dissertation using the pseudonyms.

Risks: There are no anticipated risks that will be as a result of your participation in this study.

Participation: Participation in the study is purely voluntary and you are under no obligation to participate. If you are unhappy with the way the research is being conducted, you may consult my supervisor, (name)...DR. N. SICHULA..... at (phone no.) or his email address

Please feel free to ask any questions or any aspect of this research that is unclear to you.

Yours sincerely,

Nombukiso Shabangu

APPENDIX C: CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

I, (participant’s name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience and risks of participation.

I have read and understood the provided information and have had the opportunity to ask questions and I am prepared and willing to participate in the study. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without costs. I am aware that the findings of the study will be anonymously processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings. I understand that I will be given a copy of this consent form. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

I agree to the recording of the interview/focus group discussion.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant’s signature: Date:

Researcher’s name:

Researcher’s signature: Date:

APPENDIX D: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION SCHEDULE FOR ADULT LITERACY LEARNERS

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF ADULT EDUCATION AND EXTENSION STUDIES**

RESEARCH TITLE: Exploring the persistence of adult literacy learners at Sebenta National Institute (SNI) in Eswatini

Class of adult literacy learners [] programme

Adult Basic Literacy []

Primary Education []

Vocational Skills Education []

Research question 1: Motivation of participants to enrol at Sebenta National Institute

1. What motivated you to enrol at Sebenta National Institute (SNI)? Please indicate those factors that motivated your decision to enrol at SNI.

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2. Please share with me why you particularly chose to enrol for the programme you were enrolled in.

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3. Please share with me also how you feel about the decision you made to enroll at SNI in terms of benefitting from the programme you chose.

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Research question 2: Enablers of the adult literacy learners to stay to completion of the adult literacy programme.

1. Congratulations for graduating from the programme anyway. Please highlight those factors that enabled you to stay to completion of the programme you were enrolled in.

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2. Can you please explain how the factors you have mentioned helped you persist in the programme until completion.

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3. Did you face any challenges during the course of learning while at SNI. If so, please state those challenges.

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4. Please explain how you dealt with the challenges you have just mentioned

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Research question 3: Strategies to support adult learners achieve the literacy learning goals

5. Although you successfully graduated from the literacy programme you were enrolled in, there are those adult learners who dropped out before completion. In that regard, what strategies can you suggest that can be used to support adult learners in their efforts to achieve the literacy learning goals.

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6. Can you explain how you think the strategies you have suggested can support adult learners' efforts to achieve their literacy learning goals, while motivating them to stay to completion.

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Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to participate this focus group discussion. Your experience and perspective as a graduate of adult the literacy programme at Sebenta National Institute are invaluable in understanding the factors influencing the persistence of adult learners. Your input will contribute to the development of improved strategies, support systems, and programme enhancements.

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR LITERACY FACILITATORS

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF ADULT EDUCATION AND EXTENSION STUDIES**

RESEARCH TITLE: Exploring the persistence of adult literacy learners at Sebenta National Institute (SNI) in Eswatini

Research question 1: Motivation of participants to enrol at Sebenta National Institute

1. Based on your experience as facilitator at SNI, can you share your understanding of what motivates the learners to enrol for the programme(s) you are facilitating.

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2. Do the learners choose specific programmes to enrol in for particular purpose? If so, please share their purpose for choosing specific programmes

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3. At the end of the programme, do the participants express feelings of satisfactory about what they have learned, in terms of having achieved their learning goals? If so, please elaborate

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Research question 2: Enablers of the adult literacy learners to stay to completion of the adult literacy programme.

4. Can you please highlight factors that enabled the graduates to stay to completion of the programme they were enrolled in.

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5. Please explain how the factors you have mentioned helped learners persist in the programme until completion.

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6. Did the learners face any challenges during the course of learning while at SNI. If so, please state those challenges.

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7. Please explain how as the facilitator helped your learners deal with the challenges you have just mentioned

Research question 3: Strategies to support adult learners achieve the literacy learning goals

8. Although a majority of the learners successfully graduated from the literacy programme they were enrolled in, there are those who dropped out before completion. In that regard, what strategies can you suggest that can be used to support adult learners in their efforts to achieve the literacy learning goals.

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9. Can you explain how you think the strategies you have suggested can support adult learners' efforts to achieve their literacy learning goals, while motivating them to stay to completion.

Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to participate this focus group discussion. Your experience and perspective as a graduate of adult the literacy programme at Sebenta National Institute are

invaluable in understanding the factors influencing the persistence of adult learners. Your input will contribute to the development of improved strategies, support systems, and programme enhancements.

APPEDIX F: ETHICAL APPROVAL OF THE STUDY



THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

Great East Road Campus | P.O. Box 32379 | Lusaka10101 | Tel: +260-211-290 258/291 777 Fax: (+260)-211-290 258/253 952 | E-mail: director.dr.gs@unza.zm | Website: www.unza.zm

APPROVAL OF STUDY

IORG No. 0005376
HSSREC IRB No. 00006464
REF NO. HSSREC-2023-DEC-012

15th March, 2024

Ms. Nombukiso L. Shabangu
The University of Zambia
P.O. Box 32379
LUSAKA

Dear Ms. Shabangu

RE: "FACTORS INFLUENCEING THE CURRENT PERSISTENCE OF ADULT LEARNERS IN A LITERACY LEARNING PROGRAMME TO STRENGTHEN THE DESIGN AND LEARNER PARTICIPATION"

Reference is made to your submission of the protocol captioned above. The HSSREC resolved to approve this study and your participation as Principal Investigator for a period of one year.

REVIEW TYPE	ORDINARY REVIEW	APPROVAL NO. HSSREC:- 2023- DEC – 012
Approval and Expiry Date	Approval Date: 15 th March, 2024	Expiry Date: 14 th March, 2025
Protocol Version and Date	Version - Nil.	14 th March, 2025
Information Sheet, Consent Forms and Dates	<input type="checkbox"/> English.	To be provided
Consent form ID and Date	Version - Nil	To be provided
Recruitment Materials	Nil	Nil
Other Study Documents	Questionnaire.	
Number of Participants Approved for Study		

Specific conditions will apply to this approval. As Principal Investigator it is your responsibility to ensure that the contents of this letter are adhered to. If these are not adhered to, the approval may be suspended. Should the study be suspended, study sponsors and other regulatory authorities will be informed.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

- No participant may be involved in any study procedure prior to the study approval or after the expiration date.
- All unanticipated or Serious Adverse Events (SAEs) must be reported to HSSREC within 5 days.
- All protocol modifications must be approved by HSSREC prior to implementation unless they are intended to reduce risk (but must still be reported for approval). Modifications will include any change of investigator/s or site address.
- All protocol deviations must be reported to HSSREC within 5 working days.
- All recruitment materials must be approved by HSSREC prior to being used.
- Principal investigators are responsible for initiating Continuing Review proceedings. HSSREC will only approve a study for a period of 12 months.
- It is the responsibility of the PI to renew his/her ethics approval through a renewal application to HSSREC.
- Where the PI desires to extend the study after expiry of the study period, documents for study extension must be received by HSSREC at least 30 days before the expiry date. This is for the purpose of facilitating the review process. Documents received within 30 days after expiry will be labelled "late submissions" and will incur a penalty fee of K500.00. No study shall be renewed whose documents are submitted for renewal 30 days after expiry of the certificate.
- Every 6 (six) months a progress report form supplied by The University of Zambia Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee as an IRB must be filled in and submitted to us. There is a penalty of K500.00 for failure to submit the report.
- When closing a project, the PI is responsible for notifying, in writing or using the Research Ethics and Management Online (REMO), both HSSREC and the National Health Research Authority (NHRA) when ethics certification is no longer required for a project.
- In order to close an approved study, a Closing Report must be submitted in writing or through the REMO system. A Closing Report should be filed when data collection has ended and the study team will no longer be using human participants or animals or secondary data or have any direct or indirect contact with the research participants or animals for the study.
- Filing a closing report (rather than just letting your approval lapse) is important as it assists HSSREC in efficiently tracking and reporting on projects. Note that some funding agencies and sponsors require a notice of closure from the IRB which had approved the study and can only be generated after the Closing Report has been filed.

- A reprint of this letter shall be done at a fee.
- All protocol modifications must be approved by HSSREC by way of an application for an amendment prior to implementation unless they are intended to reduce risk (but must still be reported for approval). Modifications will include any change of investigator/s or site address or methodology and methods. Many modifications entail minimal risk adjustments to a protocol and/or consent form and can be made on an Expedited basis (via the IRB Chair). Some examples are: format changes, correcting spelling errors, adding key personnel, minor changes to questionnaires, recruiting and changes, and so forth. Other, more substantive changes, especially those that may alter the risk-benefit ratio, may require Full Board review. In all cases, except where noted above regarding subject safety, any changes to any protocol document or procedure must first be approved by HSSREC before they can be implemented.

Should you have any questions regarding anything indicated in this letter, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us at the above indicated address.

On behalf of HSSREC, we would like to wish you all the success as you carry out your study.

Yours faithfully,



DR. J. I. Ziwa
CHAIRPERSON
THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA HUMANITIES AND
SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE - IRB

CC: Director, Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies
Assistant Director (Research), Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies
Assistant Registrar (Research), Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies