Media influence on parental understanding of optimal nutrition for their young children

by

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

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I, Anelize Gucher-Greeff, student number 28042686 hereby declare that this dissertation, "*Media influence on parental understanding of optimal nutrition for their young children*" is submitted in accordance with the requirements for the Magister Educationist degree at the University of Pretoria, is my own original work and has not previously been submitted to any other institution of higher learning. All sources cited or quoted in this research paper are indicated and acknowledged with a comprehensive list of references.

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ABSTRACT

Parents are the primary caretakers of their children and are responsible for providing them with optimal nutrition. This study investigates parents' understanding of the nutritional value of advertised foods which informs their choices of food products as part of their duty to model, inform, encourage and advise their children on healthy eating habits. At the age of three children do not have a cognitive understanding of healthy nutrition; yet optimal nutrition is important, as it has a long-lasting positive effect on a person's cognitive development and health.

The objective of this research is to find out how the media influence parents' understanding through gaining knowledge of their nutritional practices, to determine their views of optimal nutrition for young children and whether parents were aware of their child's nutritional needs and provide them with optimal nutrition. Albert Bandura's social learning theory posits that people learn from one another through observation, imitation and modelling. Children learn by observing people and watching television, where they were exposed to advertisements that influence what food they want to eat, without considering the nutritional value of that food.

The methodological approach taken in this study was a mixed method. Both qualitative and quantitative data were gathered by means of semi-structured interviews and self-administered questionnaires. The results of this study indicated that parents were aware of what a nutritious meal for a child was, but due to time and financial constraints could not always provide their children with an optimal meal. Recommendations for future research were made with regard to parents' understanding of their food choices. New insight from this study indicated that visual media influenced children more than parents. Children asked for products in stores and if finances allowed it, parents would purchase the product no matter the nutritional value of the product.

Key Terms:

Food choices, nutrition, eating behaviour, influence of food advertisements, parents understanding of food choices for their household, advertisements.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND AIM OF THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a general introduction to an outline of the study. It covers the purpose of the study and the research objectives and raises the questions that the study seeks to answer. The methodology followed is also discussed. The reported findings and recommendations in the research is discussed.

A healthy diet can help maintain a child's healthy weight. According to Blythman (2005), factors such as food marketing and irregular eating routines have a negative impact on the child's learning experience in that they affect the child's ability to concentrate. She also states that the choice of diet has a significant effect on school going children's behaviour, concentration, learning ability and mood (Blythman, 2005). Being obese or overweight substantially increases the risk of morbidity from several health conditions, including heart disease, hypertension, type 2 diabetes, stroke, osteoarthritis, sleep apnoea and several types of cancer (Macera, 2010). Unhealthy diets are linked to four of the world's top ten leading risk factors causing death, including high blood pressure, high blood glucose, high cholesterol and obesity (Anon, 2016).

It is also no secret that a large amount of junk food ingested by children will eventually cause a child to become obese. Children with diets that lack the essential nutrition find it difficult to concentrate and perform academically (Yanfeng, QuDai, Jackson, and Zhang, 2008). Feinstein and Sorheindo (2003) confirm this, arguing that there is a complex relationship between children's nutrition, food and education and that a dietary intervention may be necessary to produce a positive effect on the child's scholastic ability.

Several studies have researched the influence that the media have on a child's diet. Such research has reported mainly on obesity, ADHD or concentration. Previous studies on the influence of the media on a child's diet have not dealt with the impact food advertisements have on parents' choice of their children's diet. This study will focus on what influence, if any, the media have on the selection and provision of nutrition in a household. Parents are responsible for providing nutrition to their household and are

therefore also responsible for educating their child on the positive and negative effects of a diet.

Fast food and precooked meals are often easy choices for parents. These meals are less time consuming and easy to prepare for a household in the 21st century, where more women have started working and leave men to buy the groceries for the household (McCluskey, 2015). Parents influence children's eating behaviour and habits through the food they prepare and buy for the family (Brown and Ogde, 2004).

Although families may strive to live a healthy lifestyle, culture, religion, money, time and advertisements play a significant role when it comes to food choices. Some parents do not have the financial means to buy food considered as healthy and nutritious, while others work long hours and have limited time to prepare healthy meals. There are parents that put the time and effort into preparing a well-balanced meal for their families every day. There are also those parents who do not have a choice when considering food choices for their children, as they are dependent on feeding schemes at their schools. This situation is general in South African context.

Children around the age of three do not have a clear cognitive understanding of healthy nutrition, and parents do not always have knowledge of the nutrition their children need. Yet optimal nutrition is important as it has a long-lasting positive effect on a person's cognitive development and health (Nyrandi, Oddy, Hickling, Li and Foster, 2015). Parents are not always aware that the food they choose for their children forms eating habits early in life that influence their long-term habits. Parents need to make sure that their children eat well-balanced meals (see section 2.2.2 in chapter 2).

It has been proven that proper nutrition plays a role in developing a child's academic performance; their food may indeed have a direct impact on their ability to concentrate and learn (Smith and Scholey, 2014). Unhealthy eating decisions associated with emotions such as anxiety, stress, depression and boredom often affect the way in which one consumes food. Most children struggle to concentrate and retain information because of unhealthy eating decisions combined with the effects of junk food and low energy levels (WEBMD, 2015). Junk food consumption by South African children at

schools reveal that 45 % (more than one in five) buy sweets, chocolates and crisps from school tuck shops daily. More than half of these children also drink sweetened cool-drinks (Vitality, 2012: 1). About 28% of the average American consumes fast-food at least once a month (De Cruz, 2004). When children eat a well-balanced breakfast, they are more focused during the school day (Smith and Scholey, 2014).

Research agrees that children follow the “feel good” marketing message. Palmer (2015) noted that certain foods are marketed in such a way that they make children feel happy by means of jingles and visual effects (colour, cartoon characters). The child enjoys watching the story in a visual advertisement and recognises the product in the store. In my opinion, based on my experience as a foundation phase teacher, this aspect contributes to the fact that some children choose less nutritious food, which has a negative effect on their concentration levels. Unhealthy food then creates a flurry of factors preventing concentration and retention in and outside the classroom (WEBMD, 2015).

This study will mainly focus on visual media and the influence on parents’ understanding of food choices. This study further examined the way television communicated with children and adults, which influenced the adults when they went grocery shopping. Visual media such as newspaper advertisements, television advertisements and billboards all influence people daily, even without them even knowing it. Of the visual media, television is the most important means of mass communication to the world today (Asadollahi and Tanha, 2011). Television advertisements account for a valuable part of children’s experience of the outside world and have a huge impact on viewers (i.e. potential buyers) (Asadollahi and Tanha, 2011). Food marketing is used to communicate product information, including health content and contains the necessary minerals and vitamins, to both adults including parents and guardians and children (Shepherd and Raats, 2006). Marketing companies focus many of their advertisements on children, because they know that in most cases children influence the household purchasing decisions (Story and French, 2004).

Parents can only make good choices for their children once they have the knowledge of what optimal nutrition entails. However, some parents might have a vague idea of

what minerals, vitamins and other nutrients a child requires. Parents with dietary awareness are more likely to make healthier food choices for themselves and their children (Roberts, 2006). Parents may have knowledge of what nutrition their children need (Peters et al., 2014). In this study, a look at how parents understand the way media influence their food choices for their household. It is important to note that each parent understanding of media influence on food choices will differ because of culture, finances, knowledge and family influences.

1.2. Rationale

There is a well-known saying “you are what you eat”. I often wonder whether people always understand this term, as research shows most people tend to eat and live by what they have been taught by their parents (Kruger, Puoane, Senekal and Van der Merwe, 2005). In this study, I attempted to determine the effects of the media on a parent’s informed and nutritional choices for their children in order to gain an understanding of the possible outcome. Not all parents are aware what a child’s diet should consist of to provide the necessary optimal nutrition for the child to grow and be healthy.

During the first five years of a child’s life, their parents have a crucial influence on their diets, food choices and forming of eating habits (Peters et al., 2014). This leads to parents having the knowledge and understanding of what the ideal meal for a child should be. Parents may consider the food they buy for their household as healthy and nutritious, but may not have enough information. Everyone needs to ingest the necessary proteins, calories, fat and starch to grow (Feinstein and Sorhaindo, 2006). A meal that is a good balance with protein, vegetables, carbohydrates, oils, fats and dairy to ensure the body gets the necessary vitamins, minerals, nutrients and calcium it requires to function well (Karaagaoglu and Buzgan, 2009).

Marotz (2009: 11) definition of energy “the process people use to take in food and digest, absorb, transport and discharge food substances”. Strain (1999) defined optimal nutrition is the healthy food our body needs to use to work. Optimal nutrition is important for a child’s growth and development as it has a long-lasting positive effect on a person’s cognitive development (Nyrandi et al., 2015). Parents and guardians have a vital

influence on their children's food choices, diets and developing eating habits. Parents and guardians are the primary caretakers and role models of babies through to adolescents (Peters, Parletta, Campbell and Lynch, 2014).

According to Albert Bandura (1977), children learn by observing the actions of adults, parents, and peers and mimicking them. Parents do not always realise that children are watching their actions and form their habits early in life. They are not aware of the influence these eating habits will have on the child in the long term. If a child forms a good or bad habit at an early stage in their lives, it will most likely stay with them through adulthood.

The 21st century media makes huge demands on parents to provide optimal nutrition to their children (Devine, Jastran, Jabs, Wethington, Farrell and Bisogni, 2006: 1). In this modern era, it is unfortunate that both parents often must work, and optimal nutrition is not always available. Modern parents are more eager to keep a child happy, as it simplifies their busy lifestyles. If children demand to eat an advertised product, they may make life difficult for their parents until they get what they demanded (Colby, Johnson and Scheett, 2010).

Children ask their parents for the products they have seen in visual advertisements when they recognise the product in a store (Colby, Johnson and Scheett, 2010). Often parents buy the product for their children to avoid conflict between them and their child (Sunwandinata, Leonhauser and Boland, 2011). Younger children see advertisements as entertainment and remember the image, but they do not have the nutritional facts about a specific advertised product (Livingstone and Helsper, 2006). Therefore, it is important to understand how a visual advertisement influences a parent's choice for a child's optimal nutrition (Ferguson, Contreras and Kilburn, 2013).

The problem addressed in this study is how the media influence parents' perception and choices of optimal nutrition for their child. Parents understanding of nutrition was not as easily influenced as their children. The following factors may influence a parent's choice of food for their children: peer parent groups, family members, culture, environment, nutritional books and understanding of optimal meals for their young child. These above-

mentioned factors influence parents both negatively and positively which will be elaborated on in chapter 2. Several studies have shown that a child may watch more or less three hours of television a day, averaging twenty-four minutes of advertisements (Cassim, 2010). Although it is not my aim to do extensive research on the above-mentioned factors, they must be taken into consideration when designing a study that focuses on optimal nutrition and food choices.

Evidently, television has a substantial influence on our daily lives and eating behaviour. An estimated twenty-five million South African children are obese. Food and drinks are advertised regularly and contribute to obesity among young children. A strong link exists between childhood obesity and unhealthy habitual behaviour (Kruger, et al., 2005; Livingstone and Helsper, 2006). Children are the target market for food advertisements, and this is one possible reason why children are becoming obese (Boyland and Whalen, 2015).

The first objective of this study is to determine the role visual media play on optimal nutrition choices. Advertisements are retained in our subconscious and lead viewers to select a brand they have seen advertised or are familiar with (Livingstone and Helsper, 2006) and influences what we buy next time we go to the store (Roberts, 2006). Advertisements are designed to make people want the product and buy it the next time they see it. Products advertised as being cheaper at a store influence people to buy the product at that specific store. The effect of the visual media on a parent's choices of food for their child is still unclear.

The second objective of this study is to gain a better understanding of the effect food advertisements have on children to influence their parents' perception of an optimal meal. Do parents give in to their children's demands or not? The child is watching their favourite television show, next moment an advertisement comes up, with monkeys and crocodiles playing next to a milky river with chocolate balls floating in it. More likely than not, the child would demand that they want specific breakfast food like porridge. The advertisement states the product contains vitamins, minerals and calcium, which all children need. Parents may give in to this demand and buy the product, as they think it is healthy. But many people do not look at the list of ingredients.

The third objective of this study is to determine parents' prior knowledge of optimal nutrition and implementing an optimal diet in their household. Generally, parents do not receive the necessary education on child nutrition, which may lead to parents and children living an unhealthy lifestyle. Parents usually buy what they know and are familiar with, and food is no exception. Parents make the same food for their household as their parents used to, and children will do likewise or try different brands because their peers use them or they were familiar with the brand because the saw it on social media (Nunes, 2014). Many parents in South Africa do not have the money for nutritional food, leading to children forming unhealthy eating habits. The media have started influencing parents to make unhealthy dietary decisions for their children (Samour and King, 2011), although there are also other reasons for such decisions which will not be the focus of this study. Most people buy the product that they can afford and tend to stay loyal to their preferred brand regardless of the price (Roberts, 2015).

1.3. Concept clarification

Throughout the study, I will refer to the important concepts set out in my title; these are defined in the next section.

1.3.1. Young child

Many different terms are used with reference to a child, for example pupil, child, young child, pre-schooler and kindergartener. A child is defined as "… a person being below the age of puberty" (Appell, 2013: 736). Pre-schoolers or kindergartener refers to a child between four and six years old (Brewer, 2007). Toddlers are children between the ages of one and three (Marotz, 2009). In this study parents of children between two and five years old were used as participants because the children are in a fundamental developmental stage of forming eating habits. Throughout the study, "child" and "children" will refer to a young person between the ages of two and five years and learners will refer to school-going children as this concept is used in the SA context.

1.3.2. Diet

According to Marotz (2009:343-344), “a diet should contain proper proportions of carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins, minerals, and water necessary to maintain good health”. Healthy, adequate, and balanced nutrition is essential for everybody, especially for children, because nutritional habits formed in our early years turn out to be our lifetime habits (Karaagaoglu and Buzgan, 2009). “Brain capacity and school performance are improved by a balanced diet”, according to Rausch (2013: 1). In this study, I will refer to a diet as the proper nutrition our body requires to grow and develop.

1.3.3. Optimal nutrition

Strain (1999: 395) states, “… optimal nutrition is seen as the nutrients our body requires to function healthily.” Nutrients are chemical compounds found in our food that are essential to life. Growth and development are strongly related to various factors such as nutrition, genetic structure, gender, environment, socio-economic position, culture and traditions (Karaagaoglu and Buzgan, 2009). Optimal nutrition, as well as cognitive development, are essential in the first few years of a child’s life. In this study, the definition of optimal nutrition is eating healthy nutrients at the right times from an early age with a view to living a long, healthy life.

1.3.4. Parents

Modern philosophers’ view of childhood is “that children are moral but unformed beings in need of protection and guidance” (Appell, 2013: 736). The term “parents” refers to the guardians and primary caregivers who are responsible for a child’s basic needs and well-being (Peters et al., 2014; Anzman, Rollins and Birch, 2010). Parents’ fundamental responsibility for their children is to provide the kind of supportive nutrition that their children need (Carlson and Berger, 2013). Throughout the study, “parent” will refer to the adult who is responsible to provide nutrition and education to a child.

1.3.5. Media

Recently the main means of communication are television, radio, newspapers, social media and the internet. Wimmer and Dominick (2014) define media as "one of the means or channels of general communication, information, or entertainment in society, newspapers, radio or television. “Media” is defined as “transmitting information about a

business, product or person through many different devices to communicate with the viewers" (Danesi, 2015: 11-12). Advertisements are designed to promote business, people, products and much more. Food advertisements are defined as the promotion of food products and ventures through a variety of media (Harris, Bargh and Brownell, 2009). Throughout the study, "visual media" and "media" will refer to visual advertising, e.g. pictures, billboards, specials on products and television commercials.

1.4. Problem statement

This study contributes to parents' choices of optimal nutrition for a young child and how the media influences parents' understanding or perception of optimal nutrition. Parents do not always realise that their understanding of optimal nutrition is influenced by food advertisements; resulting in them making the incorrect choices. Some parents say that advertisements have no influence on their purchases, while others say that both parents and children are influenced by advertisements (Grunert, 2016). Although parents have prior knowledge of what a healthy, well-balanced diet for a child should be, they do not always apply this knowledge when preparing food for their children, which can have a negative effect on the child's development.

Several studies have investigated the knowledge and use of dietary guidelines and suggest that parents understand quite well what their young children should be eating; but there is a significant lack of understanding how to encourage their children to eat healthy (Van Dillen et al., 2008; Zarnowiecki et al., 2011). Parents' choices are often influenced by their culture, peer pressure, family and even the community. Other parents do not have any idea what optimal nutrition is or what nutrients a young child requires to develop healthy eating habits (Anzman, Rollins and Birch, 2010). This may be because visual media do not present a complete picture of nutrition and what a child should or should not eat in conjunction a lack of parents' understanding of optimal eating habits. This study investigates the way media influence parents' food choices and their understanding of the implementation of healthy diets for their children.

1.5. Research questions

This study will be guided by the following research questions:

1.5.1. Primary question:

How do the media influence parents' understanding of optimal nutrition for their young child?

1.5.2. Secondary questions

In order to answer the primary research question, the study aims to address the following secondary questions:

1.5.2.1. How do parents perceive the visual media's influence on their provision of optimal nutrition for their young children?

1.5.2.2. What factors influence a parent's food choices for their young children?

1.5.2.3. How do the media influence young children's nutritional choices?

1.6. Literature overview

There are a number of advantages to eating a meal as a family or as a group. A survey by Klein (2015) in 2000 concluded that children who ate dinner with their families ate more fruit and vegetables and less soda and fried foods. Their diets also contained more calcium, iron and fibre (Klein, 2015).

A study conducted on healthy food and environments found that homes are the ideal settings for healthy eating, but due to the changing economy and the modern trend of both parents to pursue a career, homes as settings for healthy eating and routines are changing (Story, Kaphingst, Robinson-O'Brien and Glanz, 2008). The result is that some families do not necessarily have a healthy eating environment anymore.

Families watch television while eating a meal and do not sit around a table anymore. However, parents looking at visual media while eating may also influence a choice regarding the next meal. Advertisements encourage children to "nag" their parents to buy them the advertised product (Asadollahi and Tanha, 2011). Parents regard watching television as family time and bonding with their child, which gives them something in common to talk about (Cezar, 2008).

Palmer claims that most parents feel guilty if they do not buy their children the food they desire and specifically points out advertisements such as "happy meal" and soda

advertisements promoting the "feel good" aspect of their brand (Palmer, 2015). When the child is watching a programme with their parents, they will observe their parent's reaction to the programme or advertisement, which reflects on the household culture and norms; therefore, parents must ensure that they pay attention to their own and their children's television viewing (Cezar, 2008). In chapter two I elaborate on the media's influenced on parents understanding of nutrition.

1.7. Overview of data collection and analysis

The methodological approach taken in this study is a mixed method approach; both qualitative and quantitative data gathering techniques were used. The research design adopted in this study is an approach to research that is conducted across two sequential phases. Most of the emphasis is usually placed on an initial quantitative phase, followed by a second qualitative one, although there are examples in the literature of the qualitative element taking priority or both phases being treated equally (Creswell 2003).

In this study I used the following methodology for data collection and analysis:

- Sample: The participants were parents from six different pre-primary schools in the Pretoria East district, where questionnaires were administered, and structured interviews were conducted.
- Primary data collection: This consisted of self-administered questionnaires that were completed by the sample and followed by semi-structured interviews.
- Secondary data collection: This consisted of follow-up semi-structured interviews.
- Data analysis: The quantitative data was analysed, coded and captured using Excel version 2013. The patterns of advertising influence were used to conduct the semi-structured interviews. The qualitative data was analysed by finding patterns of words that recurred in the participants' answers. The research methodology will be discussed in more detail in chapter three of this study.

1.8. Ethical considerations

Ethical principles require research to be designed, reviewed and undertaken to ensure integrity, quality, and transparency (Morrow, 2009). Participants must be well informed about the purpose, methods and intended possible uses of the research, what their participation in the research entails and what risks, if any, are involved. Confidentiality

of information supplied by research participants and the anonymity of respondents must be respected (Morrow, 2009). Only my promoters and I were able to view this information.

In this ethical study participants take part voluntarily and may withdraw from the study at any time. Any harm to participants must be avoided in all instances during a study. Research must be free of any conflicts of interest or partiality and must be explicit. In planning and executing research, ethical aspects such as access, consent and participants protection are fundamental (Punch, 2006: 56). Since a researcher cannot demand access and participant consent, I must rely on the assistance and permission of the participant (Punch, 2006: 56). The important aspect of ethics are rules and norms that protect the participants from any harm. Ethics was discussed in more detail in chapter three of this study.

1.9. Chapter outline

1.9.1. Chapter 1: Introduction and aim of study

This chapter provided a general introduction of the study. It covered the purpose of the study and research objectives, which raises the questions this study seeks to answer. A brief overview of the methodology and ethical principles was also provided.

1.9.2. Chapter 2: Literature on the influence of media on nutrition

This chapter discussed the optimal nutrition of a young child and the broadcasting laws governing advertising both internationally and in South Africa. The focus is on advertising and its influence on children and parents, the role of children in the family's purchasing decisions and the way the media influence household choices when purchasing food and food products.

1.9.3. Chapter 3: Research methodology

The research design followed in this study is discussed. The collection of quantitative and qualitative data by means of questionnaires and interviews are explained in detail. Data was analysed using the thematic process, in which themes emerged from the data.

1.9.4. Chapter 4: Findings

The research results are discussed in this chapter. The analysis and interpretation of results are presented in tables, graphs and quotations to ensure readability and comprehension of the contents. The analysis was structured to flow according to the questions raised in the questionnaire and follow-up interviews. Quantitative and qualitative data were merged and are presented in two themes

1.9.5. Chapter 5: Summary, recommendations and conclusion

This chapter contains the summary and suggestions for future studies as well as conclusions and recommendations. The findings of the research are compared with the existing literature and new insights from the data are highlighted. In this chapter the research questions are answered.

1.10. Conclusion

This chapter presented an overview of the aim of the study and how food advertisements might influence nutritional purchasing decisions by parents for their children. The chapter then described my objectives of the study and listed my objectives in the form of a set of research questions which guided me.

Chapter 2 surveyed literature regarding optimal nutrition

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE ON THE INFLUENCE OF MEDIA ON UNDERSTANDING NUTRITION

2.1. Introduction

The previous chapter provided a general introduction to and overview of this study. This chapter discusses the influence of food advertisements on parents' purchasing decisions and what constitutes optimal nutrition for their young children as well as children's food choices. For the past years, the advertising industry has increasingly targeted children or adolescents as children have a purchasing influence and are the future consumers.

Companies start brand building with young children by using various techniques in order to influence product purchasing behaviour (Story and French, 2004). The primary goal of such advertising is to increase sales (Niazi, Siddiqui, Shah, Hunjra, 2012), not to ensure optimal nutrition, which is the ideal meal one must eat to ensure a properly functioning, healthy body (Strain, 1999).

The literature regarding media influence and parents' knowledge regarding optimal nutrition will be outlined in the next section of this chapter. An outline will be given on optimal child nutrition as well as the way the media influences parents and their children.

2.2. Literature on the influence of media on nutrition choices for young children

It is a known fact that South Africa is a diverse country with equally diverse beliefs about food, traditions and cultures. Traditionally, in certain cultures it was believed that a father must work while mothers look after the children and clean the house. However, this has changed over the past 20 years (Cassim, 2010). In our modern era, women are more independent and contribute to economic change; woman's traditional role as mother and caretaker has changed into a working mother and caretaker (Palmer, 2015). Labrecque and Ricard (2001: 174) state that "families have undergone some changes since the early 80's, and some of these changes include smaller families, working woman and single parents. These changes in households over the past decade have influenced nutrition understanding and food decisions a household makes.

These changes brought about a dynamic shift in family decision making. Parents listen more to their children and give in to a child's demands more easily than they used to. According to Labrecque and Ricard (2011), parents today make more sacrifices for their children than their parents did for them. Work pressures on both parents and guardians have become so overwhelming that they exercise less control over their children and spend less time with them (Guryan, Hurst, Kearney, 2008). However, educated mothers spend more time with their children than fathers do (Guryan, Hurst and Kearney, 2008). All the literature that has been reviewed, cited and consulted in this section, books, dissertations, scholarly articles only touched the surface of the possible effects of advertising on every parent's purchasing of food items.

Although it is not my aim to do extensive research on these aspects, they must be taken into consideration when designing a study that focuses on optimal nutrition and food choices. These factors may influence a parent's choice of food for their child, which is why they are briefly discussed here as a topic. The influence of the media on a parent's food choices should not be underestimated. Children are the main market for advertising companies, as children have an influence on household decision-making (Bleakley, Jordan and Hennessy, 2013).

2.2.1. Factors influencing food choices

Food choices are influenced by, among others, advertisements, finances, culture, health and needs at one point or another (Rozin, 2015). According to Rozin (2015: 1), "these four factors influence a person's food choices namely, biological, social, cultural and psychological". In addition, cultural factors such as social customs, availability of food, language, gender differences and place of residence can determine a food preference. Social factors including socio-economic and finances, while psychological factors like food security influence nutrition choices. People may eat or avoid certain foods because of religious beliefs, gender, ethnicity and status (Meyer-Rochow, 2009).

According to Steyn, Steyn, Fourie and Temple (2006), there is a significant rift in income distribution in South Africa. There is a financial gap between low-income households and high-income households (Steyn et al., 2006); which implies that certain households have better access to nutritious food, while other households might have to cut back on

food that is nutritious and rather buy what they can afford (Mead, Gittelsohn,Roache and Sharma, 2010). Not all parents have the finances to provide their household with healthy, nutritious food. Many simply buy what they can afford. In 2011, the World Health Organization (WHO) conducted studies to determine whether there was a food security crisis in South Africa (Folaranmi, 2012). The study found that food insecurity did exist in South Africa which was due to high inflation and low family income. Nutritious foods were sometimes available only to families with a higher income (Folaranmi, 2012).

A family's economic status is considered an important social factor when considering a child's nutrition. In South Africa it seems that healthy food is available, but for various reasons not accessible to all households. It boils down to the affordability of food. Healthy food such as fresh fruit and vegetables tends to be more expensive than pre-packaged food (Cassim, 2010). While this study does not focus on the economic status of South African families, it must be taken into account when considering the influence media have on parents' understating of what is meant with optimal nutrition, as it directly influences the complete development of a child. They see food being advertised and it makes families with financial problems unsure whether they will get food (Food Security Network, 2013).

Food security is also an umbrella term to specify the availability of food that is nutritious and safe and the ability to produce and obtain food of good quality in a socially acceptable way. Food insecurity may influence a young person's psychological well-being (Melchior, Chastang, Falissard, Galéra, Tremblay, Côté, Boivin, 2012). According to Labadarios, Mchiza, Steyn, Gericke, Maunder, Davids and Parker (2011: 1-2), "food security defines whether a society has enough food for an active and nutritious lifestyle".

Many South Africans did not readily access healthy and nutritious food (Food Security Network, 2013). This was more apparent in rural areas, where families cannot afford proper meals and groceries (Steyn et al., 2006). According to research Folaranmi (2012) many of the above-mentioned people only eat one meal a day and to many it is all they can afford. Food Security means that; "all people at all times, have physical and economic access to adequate amounts of nutritious, safe, and culturally appropriate foods, which are produced in an environmentally sustainable and socially just manner,

and that people are able to make informed decisions about their food choices" (Food Security Network, 2013).

Another factor that influences food choices is culture. Families have their own special way of spending time and eating a meal together (WEBMD, 2015). These special ways are based on religious and other reasons – time, tradition and respect for important family figures. In South Africa, we see this in the way our diverse cultures consume food that has a particular meaning to them. Their eating routines may also differ. Parents work and live in a society where people are busy and rarely have time to prepare nutritious meals.

Different visual media attract the attention of different cultures. Parents' food preferences may be linked to their culture to some degree and ultimately influence a child's food choices (Wright, Nancarrow and Kwok, 2001). The food parents buy and the decisions they make about what food to eat are often influenced by their culture (Vabo and Hansen, 2014). Parents form their child's flavour preferences early in life by the food that they provide for the household (Wright, Nancarrow and Kwok, 2001). Each culture and ethnic group has their own unique preferences to food. Different vegetables, spices and meats are just some of the foods that form a part of each culture. Some prefer rice with every meal like the Asian culture. Some do not eat meat because of religious beliefs (Vabo and Hansen, 2014).

The place of residence falls under the cultural factor when considering food choices. Parents control children's environment and experience of food throughout their childhood (Scaglioni et al., 2011). A child's environment is defined as the people that live around them, such as their family, peer groups, schools and childcare facilities (Vabo and Hansen, 2014). Children are influenced by their environment (Anzman, Rollins and Birch, 2010). Children's social environments will have an influence on their likes and dislikes, as will the social environment in which children grow up and their food habits as they observe the people in their environment (Vabo and Hansen, 2014).

First-world countries have a different environment than second-world countries (Rozin, 2015). This will influence a child's long-term development and their health: eating habits

start forming from birth and will continue to change through life (Scaglioni, Scaglioni, Arrizza, Vecchi, Tedeschi, 2011). Children's dietary habits form by the age of five and are difficult to change after the age of seventeen (Schwartz, Scholten, Lalanne, Weenen, Nickaluas, 2011). Food preferences related to the environment are also dependent on availability, and this will have an impact on their attitude towards eating and food (Boyland and Whalen, 2015). Children eat food that they prefer, with the media's influence, where as parents by the foods their child prefers (Brown and Ogde, 2004).

Food choices can also be influenced by different religions. According to the Quran, the only foods explicitly forbidden are meat from animals that have died of natural causes, blood, the meat of swine and animals dedicated to something other than God (Willsher, 2007). This example shows the powerful role that religion plays in food. Children grow up with certain tastes and food that aid in the preferred choices they make with regards to nutritious foods. If parents do not expose their children to different food early in life, they will not discover new tastes and flavours and will not eat foods they are not familiar with (Wright, Nancarrow and Kwok, 2001). The term "old habits die hard" might be applicable in this instance: not only will it take time for someone's eating habits to become more balanced and to develop optimal concentration, it will also take time to educate families on this matter.

2.2.2. Parents' take care of nutrition

This section examines food preferences and how such preferences are exercised. Ingesting food represents a basic locus of identity, of conformity and of resistance. "Even those who appear otherwise powerless exercise choices in food preparation and consumption…" (Smith, 2006: 480). Conner and Armitage (2002: 13) argue that beyond cultural and social factors "research on the social level will provide the best explanation of food choice".

For example, breakfasts during the week are influenced by your work schedule and are therefore more a matter of habit than breakfasts on weekends. Breakfast is known to be the most important meal of the day; it "breaks the fast" and gives people energy and nutrients which enables them to kick-start the day and their brain function (Nyrandi et

al., 2015). Thus, a healthy breakfast must be well balanced and high in fiber to contain the required micronutrition. Literature indicates that skipping breakfast can lead to a deficiency in daily minerals and vitamins (Place and Turner, 2008). Thus, parents need to ensure their child eats breakfast every day. The body and brain need energy to function, some of which is obtained from carbohydrates and natural sugars (Mergenthaler, Lindauer, Dienel and Meisel, 2013). The body takes in food and transforms it into energy. Everyone needs certain essential nutrients to grow. Nutrition consists of chemical compounds that are essential to life (Marotz, 2009).

Literature indicated that the body gets a third of its nutrients from breakfast (Place and Turner, 2008). Both the body and brain of children and adults need optimal nutrition to develop fully, and it has been shown that people's food intake can result in changes of behavior (McCulloch, 2014). Healthy eating not only supports growth, it is fundamental to brain development and has been linked to learning and school readiness (WEBMD, 2015). In the first five years, children start developing cognitive, social, emotional and motor skills, speech and their own personality (Keenan, Evans and Crowley, 2016). Children develop different skills at different stages in life and they need to master a specific skill before they are able to move on to the next skill.

Scaglioni et al. (2011) states that a parent's or guardian's primary function is to take care of their children's basic needs, as they depend on their parents to provide them with food (Anzman, Rollins and Birch, 2010). The first five years are considered as formative years of a child's life (Peters et al., 2014). Parents start making nutritional decisions for their child from birth to more or less adolescence. In the early years parents decide if they breastfeed or bottle-feed their child; later parents introduce solid food (Anzman, Rollins and Birch, 2010). However, parents have their own food and taste preferences, which will influence what they will introduce to their child (Anzman, Rollins and Birch, 2010). According to Anzman, Rollins and Birch (2010), many children will reject vegetables at first, but after regular exposure children will start to eat them. Although there are some children that love vegetables.

Taking care of children includes parents providing nutrition, a safe environment, setting rules and teaching children their cultural rituals. Parents should expose their children to

different food textures more than once, because of the reason mentioned above. Children need to experience different textures and tastes by eating different foods more than once, even if they reject new food the first few times (Schwartz et al., 2011). By the age of two, all children should be able to eat solid food (Anzman, Rollins and Birch, 2010). Parents need to keep exposing their child to different foods to enable them to discover the food they prefer to eat later in life (Scaglioni, et al., 2011). Most parents are not aware of the fact that they need to introduce the food repeatedly to their child (Schwartz et al., 2011). According to Marotz (2009), children who are poorly nourished tend to be quiet and withdrawn or disruptive and hyperactive during class sessions, while children who are well nourished tend to be more alert and attentive during class sessions.

Parents need to have sufficient knowledge to make educated choices with regards to their child's eating habits. Parents and children need to receive nutritional education, because children who have been educated make better nutritional choices that follow them into adulthood (Baskale and Bahar, 2011). Food knowledge is defined as "general perceptions of what foods are 'good' and 'bad' to eat, perceptions and understanding of what constitutes a balanced diet, perceptions and knowledge of the nutritional value of different food products, ability to understand the composition of processed foods, and understanding of nutritional concepts" (Hastings, Stead, McDermott, Forsyth, MacKintosh, Rayner, Godfrey, Carah, 2003: 49). Parents should understand that a young child's dietary habits are important to their health, as nutrition has an impact on a child's development (Stutts, Zank, Smith, Williams, 2011).

Lifestyle habits that help promote exercise and a healthy diet also reduce the risk of diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure and certain cancers (Uauy and Solomons, 2005). All parents have their own eating habits and behaviour, and these influence the food available in their households. In general, people prefer the sweet natural taste and normally dislike bitter food, which influences what food they choose to eat (Rozin, 2015). Food likes and dislikes play an important role in making food choices for a household, especially for children (Scaglioni et al., 2011).

Parents should take care of a child's diet by ensuring that their diet has a high nutritional value with moderate energy and sugary food (Schwartz, Scholten, Lalanne, Weenen and Nicklaus, 2011). Too much sugar may have a negative effect on children, such as lack of concentration or hyperactivity. Sugar is common in our lives, and everyone believes it is an attractive substance (Yudkin, 2012). Visual media advertisements aimed at children often promote unhealthy food that is high in sugar, fat and salt as the ideal food choice (Samour and King, 2011). It is important to introduce a well-balanced diet early in life, as food provides energy and energy helps a child to develop cognitively and physically. It also has a positive effect on their dietary habits later in life (Scaglioni et al., 2011).

Obesity among children has tripled over the past 30 years (Reilly and Kelly, 2011). Just about 45 million South-African children are obese. In a shocking revelation given by Discovery Vitality, about 1.55 million South-African children are overweight (Vitality, 2012: 1). In 2016, it was estimated that globally over 41 million children under the age of 5 were overweight (World Health Organization , 2017). A quarter of overweight children under 5 lived in Africa, while, a shocking half of all overweight children lived in Asia. Statistics showed that 91% of American children have poor dietary habits, which leads to children being overweight (Reilly and Kelly, 2011).

Too many children today have a reduced life expectancy and a narrow overall quality of life due to being overweight. Healthy food is not high in fat and sugar; children who eat food that is high in fat and sugar are at risk for obesity, diabetes or high cholesterol. Childhood obesity can lead to certain cardiovascular risk factors such as hypertension, high cholesterol and abnormal glucose intolerance or diabetes (Reilly and Kelly, 2011). While restricting calories dramatically is effective for losing weight in the short term, calorie restriction can stunt normal growth and development in children and adolescents, as essential nutrients from food will be restricted (Uauy and Solomons, 2005). Furthermore, being overweight is usually a symptom of a poor dietary habit that calorie restriction alone will not address. Instead, children and adults can simply switch to a healthier diet, (including vegetables), consisting of less unhealthy food (Reilly and Kelly, 2011).

Most parents want their children to eat a healthy well-balanced meal to ensure that they get the nutrition they need. Parents do not always have the prior knowledge of a healthy meal for a child, but information on optimal diets for their child are available in books or on the internet. However, some parents understand what an optimal nutritional diet for a young child is or follow a specific diet. “There is a trend to prove which type of diet may be considered the most effective and appropriate for a healthy balanced lifestyle among young children” (Birch, Savage and Ventura, 2007: 3).

Literature was important to my study as I wanted to find out what parents understand of an optimal diet for a child and parents’ knowledge on meals can influence their decisions for buying food for their households. The information on nutrient-dense food was one example of available information on optimal meals. An ideal-diet meal according to Marotz (2009) should consist of a protein, two vegetables, a grain, while a small amount of dairy and fruit is considered a health snack. According to (Marotz, 2009: 428-436) children and adults should consider the following nutrient-dense foods for meals:

- Protein - Choose seafood, lean meat, poultry, eggs, beans, peas, soy products and unsalted nuts and seeds.
- Fruit - Encourage your child to eat a variety of fresh, canned, frozen or dried fruits rather than fruit juice. If your child drinks juice, make sure it is 100 percent juice and limit the servings.
- Vegetables - Serve a variety of fresh, canned or frozen vegetables, especially dark-green, red and orange vegetables, beans and peas.
- Grains - Choose whole grains, such as whole-wheat bread, oatmeal, popcorn, quinoa or brown or wild rice.
- Dairy - Encourage your child to eat and drink dairy products, such as milk, yogurt, cheese or fortified soy beverages.

2.2.3. Nutrition, development and health

Nutritional habits influence a child’s growth, development and health; therefore, it is important to understand what nutrition a child needs to grow and develop optimally. Optimal nutrition has an enduring, positive effect on a child’s growth and development (Nyrandi et al., 2015). Development is defined as “the patterns of change that occur

over time, which begin at the prenatal period and continue throughout your life" (Chaleswort, 2014: 295).

The child starts developing their motor skills, eating habits and social skills from birth to the age of three (Marotz, 2009). The different stages of development are briefly discussed to determine the importance of optimal nutrition and what effect nutrition has on development. A child starts developing biologically, socially, emotionally and cognitively from birth up to adulthood (Keenan, Evans and Crowley, 2016). The child brain development and physiological development takes place with in the first few years of a child's life. The following development stages; biological, social, cognitive and emotional, applies to all human development life cycles.

Firstly, biological development refers to the child's appearance and the way they change over their lifespan (Keenan, Evans and Crowley, 2016). In the first three years of a child's life, their biological appearance and physical skills – from sitting to crawling, from walking to running – change rapidly. After the child has mastered the basic physical skills, normally between the ages of three to four years, they then start to jump, climb stairs, ride a tricycle, dress themselves, catch a ball and start to hold a crayon for colouring (Keenan, Evans and Crowley, 2016). A child needs to master one skill before they can move on to the next skill, as these skills are linked to each other. These skills help children to develop optimally, because if a child struggles with one of the physical aspects, it indicates they have a development problem. These physical development skills are important, as each skill forms different connections in the brain and goes hand in hand with their motor skills (Chaleswort, 2014). Thus, biological development relies on food in order to give the body energy to develop the different skills.

Secondly, social development refers to the child's social skills and social relationships that help them communicate with other people around them (Keenan, Evans and Crowley, 2016). The child starts observing their parents from birth until adulthood (Chaleswort, 2014). A child's optimal nutritional knowledge and their eating habits are similar to those of their parents. Children observe their peers and parents in order to gather knowledge from them. Vygotsky believed that "children gain knowledge within their own social context" (Brewer, 2007: 109). Children start by responding to people,

although they cannot share their response or play well with others in the first three years. Later they become more aware of themselves and of gender differences and will start interacting more with other children. Piaget states that “children gain their knowledge through interacting with others in their environment” (Brewer, 2007: 109). Children start playing in larger groups between the ages of three and four years. Therefore, social development has an influence on a child’s eating habits as they often copy their peers and parents’ habits.

Thirdly, emotional development means that the child starts to understand different emotions and can express their feelings with the help of their emotions (Keenan, Evans and Crowley, 2016). A child’s emotional development from birth to three years starts with crying a lot at first, with a tendency to get frustrated easily (Brewer, 2007). According to Brewer (2007), children want a routine and security; before the age of three they struggle to control their own emotions, from the age of four they start to develop control over their own emotions. A sense of humour starts to develop when they start laughing and finding things funny. At more or less three years, they start to fear the dark and being alone. Children older than three become less frustrated with themselves and their emotions. Emotions can influence a person’s eating habits, as negative emotions may increase or decrease a person’s consuming of food (Macht, 2008).

Lastly, cognitive development refers to the thought processes that start to develop and change over your lifespan (Chaleswort, 2014). Eating habits have a long-lasting effect on a person’s cognitive development. Research shows that nutrition has an effect on the concentration levels of learners, especially of learners with learning disabilities such as attention deficit disorder, dyspraxia and dyslexia (Feinstein and Sorhaindo, 2006). Children start developing cognitive skills from birth and further develop as they investigate their environment. Concepts develop rapidly, language starts to develop, and they can use some numbers and colour, but do not yet understand the object. Proper development needs proper nutrition. A child will form their dietary decisions in the first two years of his/her life, and these will persist into adulthood (Marotz, 2009; Brown and Ogde, 2004). Children eat mostly what is given to them by their parents, which limits their choice. These developmental stages help form an adult, as the skills are taught during childhood affect adulthood and the decisions that adults make.

Feinstein and Sorhaindo (2006) argue that nutrition has an impact on behaviour, such as concentration and activity levels during class sessions. The consumption of unhealthy food does have an effect on concentration during class sessions. It affects the child's behaviour and academic performance. Rausch (2013) argues that the consumption of junk food such as oily fast food decreases academic performance. When considering academic performance, I refer especially to concentration and the possible effect of nutrition on concentration.

Parents should take care to limit a child's calorie intake from solid fats and added sugar, such as butter, cake and carbonated drinks. Carbohydrates and natural sugars contain energy derived from fruit and vegetables, and children must be motivated and encouraged to eat more fruit and vegetables (Schwartz et al., 2011). "Look for ways to replace solid fats with vegetable and nut oils, which provide essential fatty acids and vitamin E" (Marotz, 2009: 428-436). Oils are naturally present in olives, nuts, avocados and seafood. It is never too early to adopt a healthy diet or engage in an active lifestyle. The meals one eats have an impact on one's health. Parents generally have one of two sets of rules regarding food: either they should ask before taking a snack, or they may help themselves to snacks (Roberts, 2006). All children need fun physical activity and nutrition, regardless of age or body size (Marotz, 2009).

2.2.4. Media influence on children and adults

Advertisements can be a powerful teacher. "We underestimate the powerful influence of the millions of televised images registered by children every day" (De Cruz, 2004: 6). We no longer fear the dangers of idolatry; we have forgotten the power of images to confine our thoughts to the merely finite dimension of what can be seen. According to the Canadian Paediatric Society (CPS), social media and the internet have become a new way for people to communicate with each other (CPS, 2003; Stenger et al., 2013). Media are used to inform parents of health and food safety for children and indicate how food should be handled and stored (Stutts et al., 2011). Children are taught the basic facts, such as washing one's hands before touching food and rinsing certain foods before eating them.

"Television has the potential to generate both positive and negative effects; many studies have looked at the impact of television on society, particularly on children and adults." (CPS, 2003: 301; Harris, Bargh and Brownell, 2009). Advertisements can have positive effects on children's behaviour (Asadollahi and Tanha, 2011). Pre-schoolers can learn lessons about culture, working together, kindness, simple mathmatics and the alphabet through educational television programmes (CPS, 2003). Sesame Street for instance, an educational television programme for children that teaches positive life lessons (Strasburger, Donnerstein and Bushman, 2014). But advertisements can also have negative effects on children: cigarette candy sold to children who then pretend to smoke makes them more likely to smoke during adulthood (Palmer, 2015). Childhood behaviour such as eating and physical activities are influenced negatively by television advertisements. Television viewing has an influence on obesity; some advertisements promote unhealthy dietary habits, besides leaving less time for playing outside and exercising (Samour and King, 2011). Parents need to control their behaviour and emotions.

Television influence family members and they influence their household's dietary habits. A young child can influence their parents' opinion of a diet; in many households, the diet is negotiated by what members want to eat for dinner and by talk about food in their daily life (Young, 2003). Children ask parents for food and even throw a tantrum or negotiate to get the product. Children notice, at more or less the age of three, that a tantrum is an effective way of getting something that they want (Watson, Cole and Gebhardt, 2010). Watson et al. (2010) define a tantrum as what a child does – screaming, falling on the floor and/or stamping their feet or clinging to an object because they want attention or want to vent their anger. Borzekowski and Robinson (2001) state that children who watch many hours of television requested the following snacks from their parents: ice-cream, soft drinks, hamburgers, pizza and other snack foods.

The average child watches approximately 14 hours of television per week (Boyland and Whalen, 2015). The average American child spends three hours or more in front of the television a day, causing them to eat unhealthy snacks (Stutts et al., 2011). Studies have shown that children who watch more television will be more likely to ask their parents for the product they have seen on television (Borzekowski and Robinson, 2001).

Often children request snacks because of visual advertising, although nowadays more fast food outlets are being advertised than candy and cereal (Stutts et al., 2011).

Banth and Nanglu's (2011) study determined whether people were more likely to eat while watching general television programmes. Levels of viewing time were split into "heavy viewing" and "light viewing". They found that people spending hours in front of the television had a greater tendency to eat foods advertised on television. Such people also ate food based on its sensory appeal and were influenced by social motivation much more than people spending fewer hours watching television.

Children requesting snacks is the reason why food and beverages are mainly advertised on prime-time television. If a child is given the choice between watching television and doing a physical activity, they will choose to watch television. Children generally do not play outside as much as they used to, but will rather sit in front of the television, iPad or computer. Due to busy lifestyles, television influence most families' diets today that often consist of fast food or pre-cooked meals and energy drinks (Armstrong and Kotler, 2015). This can have a severe impact on their future health levels and obesity. Advertisments can be watched on a varaity of devices including the internet : television, YouTube, computer, cellephones and iPads. Thus, when television is mentioned in this study it will include: television, YouTube, computer, cellephones and iPads.

As mentioned before, children and parents have different views of the foods purchased. According to Emerson (2004), children have a major influence on their parent's purchasing decisions. Children's decisions are mostly based on the expected immediate gratification, while parents' purchase decisions are based on the potential long-term benefits to the children and household (Oyewole, Peng and Choudhury, 2010). Therefore, marketers use televisions and other media to appeal to both sides to get the greatest benefits out of parent-child interactions (Sunwandinata, Leonhauser and Boland, 2011). Parents and children's television times are closely linked, due to factors such as easy access to television for children and the parent's rules about television viewing (Cresswell, 2003).

Television is the first medium that exposes children to advertisements (Boyland and Whalen, 2015). Children spend an enormous amount of time watching television, and it will be one of the media missed most by young children and adolescents when outside. Research suggests that the more television a child watches, the more toys a child is likely to want and ask for (Ferguson, Contreras and Kilburn, 2013).

Stores attract many customers because the “store image is simply the consumer’s perception of the store; it is usually assumed to be multidimensional, with quality and variety of merchandise, price level, service, atmosphere and convenience being typical dimensions” and can therefore be “used as a positioning device by retailers” (Grunert, 2006: 173). A joint report by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) showed “consistent strong relationships between television viewing and obesity in children” (Reisch et al., 2013: 3; Grunert, 2006: 232) that “may relate to the food advertising to which they are exposed” (Story and French, 2004: 2).

Food marketing affects adults differently to children (Adams et al., 2012). Parents are influenced more by nutritional factors of a product because they want to provide their children with the best possible nutrition. The information on the product labels is normally unreadable for parents, as it uses unfamiliar words (Dixon, Scully, Wakefield, Kelly, Chapman, 2011); this leads to parents being unsure of what the product contains and buying the product because they think it is high in vitamins and minerals and has a high nutritional value (Dixon et al., 2011). However, parents who have nutritional knowledge make healthier food choices, as they understand the nutritional content and read the nutrition information label on the product (Stutts et al., 2011).

Parents have a better understanding of and are more skeptical about visual advertisements (Niazi et al., 2012); yet even adults often want things they see in an advertisement, even if they do not need or cannot really afford them (Pettigrew Tarabashkina, Roberts, Quester, Chapman, Miller, 2013). Children between the ages of three and six can identify an advertisement and distinguish it from a programme, Young (2013) disagrees on this point, but does not understand that ads are trying to sell something (Pettigrew et al., 2013). Even children under the age of ten do not fully

understand the purpose of an advertisement (Oyewole, Peng and Choudhury, 2010). Children tend to think of advertisements as being entertaining or helpful announcements, but they will not generally be critical of the claims advertisers are making (Pettigrew et al., 2013). They see both as entertainment; they cannot clearly understand the purpose or objective of visual media.

Marketing companies advertise products with collectibles, as children like collecting things and usually want to collect the whole set (Story and French, 2004). In addition, children might take more notice of advertisements when they watch television alone. As mentioned above, children do not know what the main purpose of an advertisement is and see it as entertainment. Parents must teach their child to understand and deal with advertisements. This will help in the longer term, but it will not necessarily stop them from pestering their parents. No matter how well you as a parent teach your child, they will still ask for things you do not want them to have (Pettigrew et al., 2013). Advertising companies have shifted to advertising to children because the companies know that children have an influence on household's food purchasing decisions (Sunwandinata, Leonhauser and Boland, 2011). Children should be taught that not all food advertised are healthy and that the products are made to look attractive and draw the viewers' attention so that they will buy the product. Children look at the message in the advertisement, the positive image, rather than understand the nutritional value of the food.

In the attempt to reach the children's market, advertising companies need to plan beyond their traditional way of doing business (Hawkes, 2007). Children are encouraged through advertisements to coax their parents to purchase the product that they saw on television (Baron, 2000). Studies have found that even a brief exposure to television advertisements influences young children (Borzekowski and Robinson, 2000; Reisch et al., 2013). Food knowledge and preferences are also affected by children's exposure to television advertisements, as mentioned before (Reisch et al., 2013). The role of a parent, as the main decision-maker in families, has changed even in traditional society (Oyewole, Peng and Choudhury, 2010). Parents should stop feeling obligated to run themselves down for their children to get them to sport, music and extra lessons.

Parents put more capital (both emotional and literal) in their children than ever before (Oyewole, Peng and Choudhury, 2010)

Food advertisements shown during children's viewing time tend to promote food with a low nutritional value and high in fat, sugar and salt, such as chocolates, confectionery, fast foods and sugary breakfast cereals, which is the largest category of food advertisements (Lewis and Hill, 1998). The advertisement elicits an emotional or environmental response from the viewers to prompt the consumer to buy the product and form an emotional relationship with the product (Niazi et al., 2012). The visual media also shape food preferences and to some extent the relative knowledge and attitude of a child (Reisch et al., 2013).

2.2.5. Advertising guidelines for marketing food products

Grunert (2006: 162) discusses four marketing guidelines, namely product, cost, location and marketing, which influence shoppers purchasing the product. Shoppers decide to buy a product by comparing quality versus cost: the shopper wants the product to be affordable and still have the quality they desire from the product (Grunert, 2006). Thus, products are designed to be attractive to the shopper and convince them that it is a quality product.

Companies make sure their products are attractive, funny and colorful so that children will ask their parents to purchase the products for them (Cezar, 2008; Livingstone & Helsper, 2006). They often make the advertisement appealing for children by adding a mascot, showing young children playing, jumping or having fun. Brand mascots are sometimes used to encourage an emotional bond between the child and the brand, hoping that the loyalty will persist into adulthood. However, many of these edible products are high in added sugars, salt, and fat. This results in poor diet quality and unhealthy weight gain (Seaton and Smith, 2014) .

Brand mascots are used to create product identity as well as promote the brand. Brand preferences begin before purchasing behaviour does. Brands are defined as "the name, character, slogan or symbol used to recognise the product" (Boyland and Whalen, 2015: 335). A positive experience of a product – liking the slogan or logo of a product – can

be seen as a positive brand preference (Story and French, 2004). When products are packaged, the company will ensure that the outside is colorful and attractive to children (Livingstone and Helsper, 2006). The product is also often marketed with a free item inside (Cezar, 2008) as a further inducement to persuade their parents to buy the product.

Caraher and Landon (2006) argue that society is faced with too many advertisements for junk food. This avalanche of advertisements often promotes unhealthy eating practices, and there have been calls for controlling and even banning them. As discussed before, research has found that food marketing has an influence on child obesity (Seaton and Smith, 2014) due to more and more fast food advertisements on television (Boyland and Whalen, 2015), some claiming the product contains (all) the necessary minerals and vitamins. People today do not bother to read the fine print or the information label on the back of the product stating what exactly the product contains as the print is too small (Boyland and Whalen, 2015).

Through television, advertisers can reach and manipulate the minds of a whole spectrum of shoppers (Amaleena, 2013). “Advertising companies thrive on our susceptibility to be swayed through images and soon came to prey upon the heightened vulnerability of children, who are even more sensitive to such visual cues” (De Cruz, 2004: 9).

Every country in the world has its own rules and regulations when it comes to food commercials. Countries have adopted various approaches regarding food advertisement to strengthen food marketing and promote adult’s self-regulation (Oyewole, Peng and Choudhury, 2010). According to Escalante de Cruz (2004: 5), “self-regulation is the process whereby commercial food marketers participate in and are responsible for their own regulation.” According to Cruz (2004) and Oyewole, Peng and Choudhury (2010), countries say their citizens need to regulate themselves, as they cannot prevent marketing from advertising all products.

Businesses are spending billions of dollars on marketing and merchandising via licensing, packaging and advertising and child shopper research (Story and French,

2004). To market “diet” meals and food items, the companies advertise their products using thin, attractive models to give shoppers a false perception that they, too, will be thin if they buy the product. Although, most of these products have fewer calories, fat, and carbohydrates than most other products, the portions are also much smaller and less satisfying than a non-diet version of the product. Marketing must understand what the consumer likes and dislikes in addition to what information they should provide to the consumer to persuade them to buy their product (Story and French, 2004). Advertising companies will only supply the information in the advertisement that the shopper wants to hear to sell more products and put the additional information in the fine print on the product. Developing countries are the target market of such advertising strategies; governments have set up sufficient protective legislation to safeguard children from manipulation (Story and French, 2004).

A prime example is the International Code of Advertising Practice, issued by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) (De Cruz, 2004: 5-6). The guidelines mention, firstly, the vulnerability of children; if there is any likelihood of advertisements being confused with a television programme, advertisements should be clearly labelled “advertisement” or identified in an equally effective manner. Secondly, advertisements should not undermine social values, for instance suggest the use of this product alone will give the child a physical, social or psychological advantage over other children of the same age, or that non-possession of this product would have the opposite effect. Thirdly, advertisements should not undermine the authority, responsibility, judgment of parents, considering the current social values. Fourthly, advertisements should not include any direct appeal to children to persuade others to buy the advertised product for them, and the price indication should not be such as to lead children to an unrealistic perception of the true value of the product, for instance by using the word “only”. Lastly, no advertisement should imply that the advertised product is immediately within reach of every family budget.

Children are exposed to an immense quantity of advertising because of the volume of television they watch. Many of these guidelines have been adopted in national guidelines across Asia, parts of Europe and Scandinavia, but children in these countries are still hounded by advertisements. Advertising during children’s programmes is not

allowed in Norway, Austria and the Flemish part of Belgium (Mueller, 2011). Advertisements may be broadcast five minutes before or after a programme (Pardun, 2014). Brown and Lake (2006: 7) mention a case in New Zealand where an advertisement was found to have caused unhealthy decisions, which led to new regulations on food advertisements. Hawkes (2007) states that Russia also reduced food advertising to twelve minutes per hour during the week. Preschool children's programmes in Australia are not allowed to show advertisements during programmes (Pardun, 2014).

Sweden has taken a negative view of certain foods, labelling them as "bad food". According to Young (2003), there are no bad foods, just poor diets. In the United States, food advertisements are limited to twelve minutes per hour during children's programs. "The European Union Television with Frontiers Directive sets maximum limits on advertising time, which cannot exceed fifteen per cent of daily transmission time, with a limit of twelve minutes in any hour" (Hastings et al., 2003). Asia still has slight regulation controlling on ratio of the programme-to-advertising, especially during children's programs (Kim et al., 2012). While channels may abide by "general rules", often the amount of advertisements per programme is mainly dependent on the popularity of the show (Hastings et al., 2003).

Adults and children need to learn the basic skills of self-control (Oyewole, Peng and Choudhury, 2010), which can only happen if they have nutritional knowledge. If a parent comes from an impoverished environment, they might not have much nutritional knowledge; therefore, they will not know that some food has little nutritional value, or how to handle food (Baskale and Bahar, 2011).

Today's children have greater exposure to advertising across variety of media platforms, for example brand packaging, different sales techniques and promotional offers (Story et al., 2008). This makes children aware of the products, which leads them to ask for the product. Every parent agrees that a child requires some degree of protection from society; however, many people feel that children need protection from commercials and advertisements (Story and French, 2004).

Arnas (2006: 140) states that “the most important effect of television on children is not the effect that it will cause, but the things that it will prohibit”. Arnas implies that television takes away children’s playtime, prevents creativity, social development and decreases a child’s communication skills (Arnas, 2006).

The Code of Advertising Practice of the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) of South Africa introduced its own regulations to address this much talked-about issue. The ASA is a self-regulatory core that consist of marketing and advertising industries and media owners. This Code of Advertising Practice sets out principles to which all advertisements, whether it be on television, radio, the internet or any other media must adhere to (Thompson, 2007). It is based on the International Code of Advertising Practice prepared by the International Chamber of Commerce and is internationally accepted as the basis for domestic systems of self-regulation (ASASA., 2010).

2.2.6. Advertising in the South African and international context

Cassim (2010: 183) states that “sixty-six percent of South Africans live in poverty, and it is mainly due to a low income or lack of jobs.” The media advertise breakfast as the most important meal of the day. A breakfast must include food from all food groups if it is to be beneficial for normal growth and development of the brain. Many schools in South Africa have feeding programmes because the local families do not have sufficient money for three meals a day. Some children experience hunger pains and are more likely to wonder when they will have food again than want to learn how to read. This is the reason why many schools have started feeding programmes that provide at least one meal a day to children that suffer from an unhealthy or an insufficient diet.

In Seaton and Smith’s (2014) study, teachers expressed concern about children who had no breakfast in the morning. They felt that these children concentrated less in the class than the child who had had breakfast. In the same study, teachers claimed that the children that took part in the feeding scheme were more focused, which helped substantially to lower noise levels in class, as the pupils were more interested in school and concentrated better on their work (Seaton and Smith, 2014). In some schools, the breakfast programme produced remarkable improvements in the children’s concentration levels. The literacy rate of some of the students on the scheme increased

from thirty-nine per cent to seventy per cent after one year (Seaton and Smith, 2014). Occasionally, some children may fall asleep after a good scheme meal, or they can be very alert and pay full attention to schoolwork (Seaton and Smith, 2014).

Prior to 2007, South Africa had no specific restrictions or limitations on the type of products or services which could be advertised to children (with the exception of alcohol and tobacco) or the type of advertising that could be used. In response to the growing concern about childhood obesity, the South African government, in 2007, published proposed regulations to the Foodstuffs, Cosmetics & Disinfectants Act 39 of 2007 which came into effect in March 27th, 2009. The regulations aimed that certain foods, categorised as "non-essential to a healthy lifestyle", should be forbidden from being advertised to children in any manner. Further they proposed that no cartoon characters, animation, or gifts should be used in the promotion or advertisement to any child younger than 16 years of age. A total banning of the words "health" and "healthy", "wholesome" and "nutritious" anywhere on a product was suggested (Thompson, 2007).

South Africa has limited regulations applicable to food advertisements aimed at children. Only the Broadcasting Complaints Commission has a say in what is being advertised (Cassim, 2010). In June 2009, initiated by the Consumer Goods Council of South Africa, a group of South African food, beverage, and restaurant companies, including all IFBA member companies with business in South Africa, signed The South Africa Pledge on Marketing to children. This is not as strict as similar prescripts in Europe or other first-world countries. Specific regulations have been put in place in Europe to limit marketing to children, although not all European countries have the same set of food marketing rules and laws (Livingstone and Helsper, 2006). Different marketing techniques are used to exploit the inexperience of young children. Since food marketing has been increasing across the world, countries like New Zealand, the United States of America, Europe, Sweden and the United Kingdom have put regulations in place over the last two years to restrict food advertisements (Adams, Tyrrell, Adamson, White, 2012).

2.3. Theoretical framework of the study

Albert Bandura's (1977) social learning theory states that "learning is a cognitive process." His social cognitive theory (SCT) describes behaviour via a reciprocal model

in which personal factors, environmental influences and behaviour continually interact. It is an approach that emphasises the role of social modelling, where people learn not only through their own experiences but also by observing the actions of others and the results of those actions. According to SCT, human motivation and performance are extensively regulated by future planning (Bandura, 1986).

A number of key constructs are important for understanding food choice behaviour, including personal characteristics. For example: demographics, personality, emotional arousal, behavioural knowledge and skills, self-efficacy (an individual's confidence in his or her ability to perform a behaviour in various situations), expectations of the outcome of a behaviour, self-regulation, observational learning and reinforcement consequences that affect the probability a behaviour will be tried again (Redding et al., 2000). Reciprocal determinism constitutes a principle of SCT. This means that a person can be both an agent for change and a responder to change. In other words, the environment shapes, maintains and constrains behaviour.

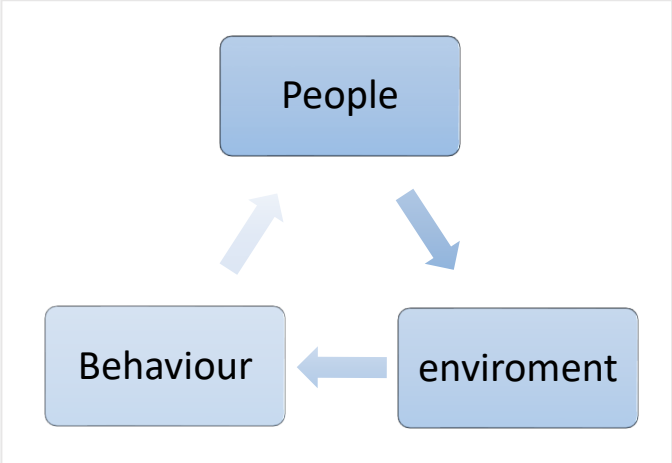

Figure 2.1: Schematic presentation of the social cognitive theory *(Bandura, 1986)*

Bandura's theory states that people learn from one another via observation, imitation and modelling and explains human behaviour in terms of continuous reciprocal interaction between cognitive behaviour and environmental factors (Bandura, 1977; Parke, 1972). Social cognitive learning (Bandura, 1977) is based on the idea that people can learn through observation, imitation and reinforcement. It has been influential in the literature on behavioural change and brings social context into the equation.

Social marketing, on the other hand, attempts to apply marketing principles and techniques as a way of encouraging attitudinal and behavioural change through carefully targeted advertising, education and persuasion (Kotler and Lee, 2008). Despite its widespread appeal, the failure of social marketing to recognise the influence of socialisation and the social embeddedness of everyday lifestyle choices is concerning. Indeed, attempting to market human behaviour or lifestyles as though they were a brand, like any other material object, seems wholly inappropriate when dealing with human beings (Robinson, 2009), who behave in unpredictable ways depending on circumstances and their interactions in the world.

Learning takes place in a social context and can occur through observation or direct instruction, even in the absence of motor reproduction. When determining human behaviour, people need to take cognitive, environmental and behavioural factors into consideration (Parke, 1972). Cognitive factors are the knowledge, expectations and attitude that people already have and build on when they receive new information. While behavioural factors are self-efficient, skills are what you have and need to practice regularly. Lastly, environmental factors are a person's social norm, communication access and the way the behaviour influences people around us. All three factors combined are used in monitoring a person's behaviour. Each person has a different response to a specific behaviour, due to different environments. In the beginning, children can identify themselves with the different behaviour, but do not know how to copy it (Grusec and Hastings, 2015).

Children observe their family, peers and television characters from birth until adulthood, analysing the behaviour of others and the reaction of others to their behaviour (Grusec and Hastings, 2015), determining whether or not they want to copy the action if the response to the action was positive. Children are exposed to different role models, such as teachers, parents, peers and television characters. Therefore, we cannot say that children only rely on their parent's behaviour. Although parents teach their children cultural and traditional morals, their environment also influences them (Parke, 1972). Young children learn different behaviours and acquire information from watching those around them. Therefore, children observe the people around them and copy that behavior; for instance eating habits.

They measure their identification with others through feelings or action, self-response and comparing themselves with others (Grusec and Hastings, 2015). Children observe the behaviour of characters in the media and copy that behaviour. Thus, the media do indeed influence our behaviour; we learn new behaviour through observing in a social environment. Parents observe their children's behaviour as well. They then need to focus on their own behaviour and setting a good example for their child. A parent's facial expression in reaction to certain foods or media will influence the way the child feels about it.

This study supports the social learning theory, as children and parents learn in a social environment by observing what other people in their households do. Families shape and teach their members morals, languages, family customs, culture, education, social skills and political views. Parents have an influence on children's behaviour and food choices, according to the social learning theory. This theory will be used to support the argument that the media influence parents' understanding of their children's food choices. Children learn new information by observing, meaning that when they watch television, they will also learn new information from advertisements, which influence what food they want to eat without considering the nutritional value of that food.

2.4. Conclusion

People believe that the media have a greater influence on other people than on themselves (Strasburger, Donnerstein and Bushman, 2014). Children of the 21st century are growing up in such a technologically advanced era that many of them are beginning to stay indoors, watching television, playing video games and living an overall sedentary lifestyle rather than playing outdoors, the way most of their parents grew up. The overload of television watching exposes the younger generation to a very high number of commercials. Advertisements make use of formats and tools specifically designed to appeal to the viewer (Colby, Johnson and Scheett, 2010). Animation, pace, fantasy and free gifts are common in food advertisements for children (Kraak and Story, 2015). Brand competition between the different franchises is intense (Story and French, 2004). In Chapter 2 the literature was briefly discussed. In the next chapter the research design was discussed.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1. Introduction

The previous chapter reviewed the literature related to media influence and the theoretical framework of the study. These contributions influenced the knowledge claims of the research and guided its conduct. In this chapter, the design and method are outlined. This involves setting out the underlying assumptions, guiding the research process and detailing what was done and the reason for using the research design. This was done in three ways. First the key elements of the research process that was followed are outlined, on which a pragmatic methodological framework was based. Then the specific research design choices made are detailed, and lastly the data collection and analysis are discussed.

3.2. Research design

A research design is the plan and structure of an investigation conceived so as to obtain answers to research questions. A research design is the overall plan for connecting conceptual research problems to the pertinent empirical research (Creswell, 2013). The research design specifies data required, data gathering, and which analysis methods will be used and how all of these processes are going to answer the research question.

Research is a process of collecting, analysing and interpreting information in order to answer the research question (Kumar, 2010). Dahlberg and McCaig (2010: 30) describes a research design as “can be seen as an overarching strategy for unearthing useful answers to problems.” Logic links a primary question or problem to the methods of data collection and analysis, therefore, also to the conclusions drawn. Maree (2013) describes a research design as a plan or strategy. The underlying philosophical assumptions specify the selection of respondents, the data gathering techniques to be used and the data analysis to be done. Maree (2013) also believes that the choice of design is based on my assumptions, skills and practices and influences the way in which she or he collects data.

The methodological approach is a sequential mixed method. The term “mixed method” refers to “the research paradigm that encourages the use of both qualitative and

quantitative research elements to answer the question" (Creswell, 2003: 70-77; Greence, 2007). According to Creswell and Plano (2006), the purpose of sequential explanatory design is that qualitative data is used to enrich, explain or elaborate upon results gained with quantitative approaches. Therefore, in this study, the research made use of both a qualitative and a quantitative data gathering techniques.

The mixed method has two phases. Phase one involves the collection and analysis of quantitative data. Phase two employs qualitative methods to elaborate on the results from the quantitative phase. This design elaborates the findings of one method by testing the theory, followed by a detailed exploration and provides in-depth, contextualised and natural answers (Creswell, 2013). Other important reasons for using the sequential mixed method is to complement one group of results with another, to expand a group of results or to discover something that would have been missed if only a quantitative or a qualitative approach had been used. The aim of the sequential explanatory design is to collect and analyse quantitative data in order to provide a general understanding of the research problem.

The strengths and weaknesses of this design are broadly in line with those of any sequential design. The advantages of using a sequential mixed method design are fairly straightforward, as it has clear, distinct stages and is easier to describe than concurrent strategies (Creswell, 2003). It is also the simplest and most straightforward to implement (Creswel, 2013; Creswell and Plano, 2007). Nevertheless, this design does have some inherent difficulties. The first concerns the separation of the two phases (Creswell, 2003).

A further advantage of sequential mixed methods research is its potential to overcome at least some of the problems associated with conventional research methods (Creswell and Plano-Clark, 2007). These include quantitative methods dehumanising the subject matter or qualitative methods failing to move from the specific to the general. By rejecting the incompatibility of different data types and analysis techniques, I am able to exploit the entire available toolkit, rather than being restricted by ontological or epistemological boundaries (Creswell, 2003: 70-77). By treating each phase as

separate and performing them sequentially, this design requires allocating extra time and resources that is not always available for small-scale, time-limited research.

Its weakness is that it is very time consuming, especially when both phases are given equal consideration and priority (Creswell, 2014). A second weakness is that phase two usually cannot be planned until the initial phase has been completed (Creswell and Plano, 2007). This was addressed in the design of this research through early planning and proactively responding to the quantitative findings as they emerged; considering what they might mean for the implementation of the semi-structured interview, since the results of the questionnaire would influence the interview questions and the selection of the participants.

The sequential mixed method was chosen because it produced a fuller view and understanding of the data gathered. Quantitative data was gathered in the form of self-administered questionnaires, because these conveniently allowed the participants to complete the questions at home. Questions arising from unclear responses to a questionnaire can be answered in a subsequent semi-structured interview, during which I could also get the participants to elaborate on questions and provide reasons for their answers. The primary data consists of quantitative data, due to availability of parents.

When different approaches are used to focus on the same phenomenon and they provide the same results, you have corroboration. Corroboration is important because it supports the claim, which means you have superior evidence for the result (Greene, 2006). The philosophical reason for combining qualitative and quantitative design into a single study is pragmatism. Simply put, pragmatism is the practice of doing what works best to achieve the desired result. As an underlying philosophy for enquiry, pragmatism supports researchers in choosing between different research designs of enquiry, as research questions being addressed intrinsically determine which methods are best suited (Morgan, 2007).

The proposed research followed the pragmatic paradigm, which centers on the consequences of actions and is problem centered. Creswell (2013: 6) says that in pragmatism “action, situation and consequences are the focus of the problem.” The

term paradigm is a difficult concept to define, so commentators have suggested it is perhaps better to think in terms of worldview (Creswell and Plano, 2007).

In the acquisition of social scientific knowledge, two worldviews have usually dominated – post-positivism and constructivism. This study made use of a post-positivist and constructivist research design. These approaches to understanding the social world and the problems it faces are usually deemed irreconcilable because of disagreement over truth claims and how we can acquire knowledge of those truths.

This paradigm also allows researchers to use their own knowledge and claims brought to the phenomenon (Greene, 2006). Therefore, I had the freedom to choose which quantitative and qualitative method, data gathering and analysing techniques to use in order to provide a broad understanding of the problem. In this study, I chose the quantitative data gathering technique in the form of a self- administered questionnaire and a qualitative data gathering technique in a semi-structured interview. By using the two techniques together, I can better understand the problem and arrive at findings, which can then be supported or qualified by the qualitative data.

3.2.1. Selection of participants

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011), sampling is a process of selecting one or more participants from the population to determine the characteristics of the random variables in the study. Convenience sampling includes participants who are readily available and agree to participate in a study (Teddlie and Yu, 2007). This study made use of convenience sampling, which is a common non-probability sampling method. Non-probability sampling methods have two potential advantages, namely convenience and lower cost (Farrokhi and Mahmoudi-Hamidabad, 2012). The main disadvantage is that non-probability sampling methods do not allow the researcher to estimate the extent to which sample statistics are likely to differ from population parameters (Teddlie and Yu, 2007).

Convenience sampling is when the researcher selects the required elements. The participants are either close to the researcher, easily accessible or at the right place at

the right time. These schools have children from different cultures and have different traditions and economic status. Maree (2013) states that convenience sampling refers to a population that is easily available; it made sense to select schools in this area, as I am based in Pretoria East. Parents took part on a voluntary basis.

The sample consisted of parents of two to five-year-old children. The Tshwane City District has a population of 2 921 488 people. The Tshwane East region has approximately 250 pre-primary schools and crèches with a total of 12 500 parents of two to five-year olds. Questionnaires were given to 200 parents in the Pretoria East region; as this is less than 10 per cent of the Tshwane East parents meeting the criterion, the results cannot be generalised. The parents were selected from the six pre-primary schools in the Pretoria East District that were the easiest to access. Each school received thirty-three or thirty-four self-administered questionnaires and parents were given two weeks to complete the self-administered questionnaires. I collected the questionnaires from the schools to start coding and analysis. Eighty-two of the 200 self-administered questionnaires were returned and used in this study.

The study endeavoured to select a population representing a diversity of parents, such as a school attended by children from different economic, cultural, religious and social backgrounds. Boyd (2015: 3) describes a sample as “the participant” in a particular study. In order to choose the sample of the study, a sampling method must be used. The sampling process consists of a number of aspects – the population, sampling method and sample size (Boyd, 2015: 3). The parents were selected to represent the diversity of cultures, religions and economic status. A young child aged between two to five years should have mastered speech, social and emotional skills and fine and gross motor skills. Two to five is an important age for children, because by the age of four a child should already have formed their eating behaviour and routine (Scaglioni et al., 2011).

3.2.2. Data collection methods

I explored the parent’s beliefs and knowledge regarding nutritional information by starting with questionnaires, followed up by interviews with a few individuals who had participated in the questionnaire in order to learn more details about their responses.

Gathering data in more than one way helps provide an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon (Onwuegbuzie and Combs, 2011).

The two approaches followed gathered two types of data. In the first phase, quantitative data was collected through a self-administered questionnaire to identify what parents thought of advertisements and how they influenced their food choices for their children. The quantitative data collected in this phase was analysed prior to the collection and thematic analysis of phase two. The results of this initial phase were then used to inform the second phase, in which supporting qualitative data was collected from parents through semi-structured interviews and analysed to refine, explain or refute the statistical findings. Full integration of the findings was done after both phases had been completed.

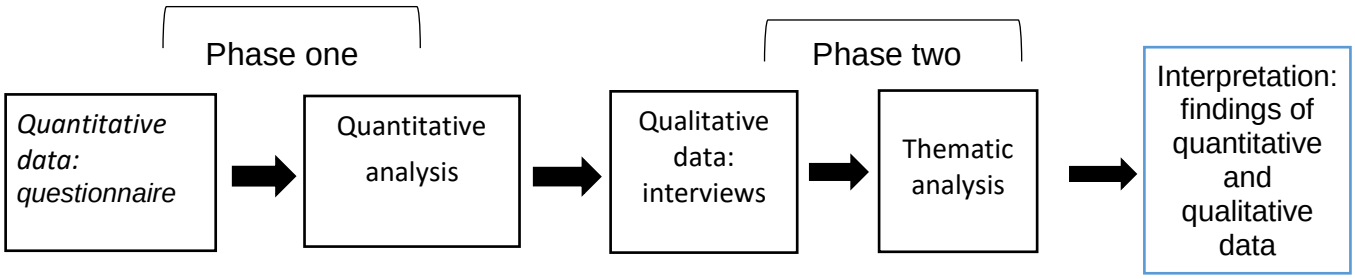

Figure 3.1: Implementation of the research design: phase one and two

Quantitative data is usually subjected to statistical procedures such as calculating the mean or an average number of times a behaviour occurs (Onwuegbuzie and Combs, 2011). “These operations, because numbers are hard data and not interpretation, can give definitive, or nearly definitive, answers to different questions” (Teddlie and Yu, 2007). Statistics helps the researcher turn quantitative data into useful information to help with decision-making. Statistics is used to summarise data and to describe patterns, relationships and connections (Onwuegbuzie and Combs, 2011).

Quantitative data was collected in the form of self-administered questionnaires that consisted of twenty-two questions. Quantitative data includes close-ended information found in measuring attitude, behaviour and performance of the instrument (Cresswell, 2003). In this study, the questionnaires contained one open-ended and twenty-one close-ended questions. The open-ended question allowed the participants to elaborate

on their answer; the closed-end questions guided the participants and made answering the questionnaire easier. The second phase comprised semi-structured interviews based on the response to the questionnaire.

3.2.2.1. Phase 1: Questionnaires

A questionnaire is defined as “mainly made up of a list of questions, but should also include clear instructions and space for answers or administrative details” (Maree, 2013: 156). Questionnaires should always have a definite purpose that is related to the objectives of the research, and it needs to be clear from the outset how the findings will be used (Dahlberg and McCaig, 2010). Participants need to be made aware of the purpose of the research wherever possible and should be told how and when they will receive feedback on the findings (Creswell, 2014). In this study, feedback is given in chapter 4. Structured questionnaires are usually associated with quantitative research (Maree, 2013). The questionnaire is easy on the eye and easy to follow. Where any personal information was required, the relevance of such information was explained.

This study made use of a questionnaire consisting of twenty-two questions: two open questions, three dichotomous questions, one scaling question and sixteen multiple-choice questions. A close-ended question is one for which a researcher provides a suitable list of responses (yes/no) and produces mainly quantitative data (Patton, 2002). The questionnaire had only two dichotomous questions. Dichotomous questions offer the respondent two options, ‘yes’ or ‘no’, to choose from and is the easiest form of the questionnaire for the respondent. No reason for the participant's answer is required. Therefore, dichotomous questions were followed by multiple-choice questions for clarification.

In multiple-choice questions, respondents are offered a set of answers they have to choose from. The downside of a questionnaire with multiple choice questions is that if there are too many answers to choose from, it makes the questionnaire confusing and boring and discourages the respondent from answering the questionnaire. Multiple-choice questions guide the parents, but some parents became confused and provided more than one answer.

An open-ended question is a question where the researcher does not provide the respondent with a set answer to choose from. The respondent is asked to answer "in their own words" (Onwuegbuzie and Combs, 2011). Open questions may produce unexpected results, which can make the research more original and valuable. However, participants seldom elaborate on their answers and they may be difficult to categorise and to analyse.

The main purpose of the questionnaire was to identify parents to be interviewed. The questionnaires targeted parents of children between the ages of two and five years old and reached a variety of parents from different religions, cultures and social backgrounds. The first few questions related to the respondents' biographic details and background of the participant. The responses were analysed using quantitative analysis, which employs statistical analysis of scores collected on instruments, such as questionnaires, to answer the research question (Onwuegbuzie and Combs, 2011).

The statistical data was analysed with Microsoft Excel version 2013. The raw data was coded by using a numbering system for each question. Coding makes data processing easier, particularly where the analysis involves the use of a computer. Codes are written on each questionnaire next to the responses. Each question was analysed and coded individually on its own spreadsheet. I developed a coded list and gave the same code to common responses, irrespective of the question, in order to minimise mistakes. After all the data had been entered into the computer, a verification was done to correct errors and omissions made in the process.

The frequency of the number was calculated to see how often it recurred in the participants' answers. The data was then calculated to the percentage of participants that answered that question. The results were shown in bar graphs, pie charts and content tables. Some questions were combined after analysis, as they followed on one another. The last question was analysed by combining the reasons that were similar to see which reasons were the most frequently used.

The responses were analysed statistically to determine parents' behaviour as regards optimal nutrition and the influence of the media on food choices. Another influencing factor was the way they understand how visual media influences their decisions.

Table 3.1: Schools that participated and questionnaires returned

Name of school	Questionnaires handed out	Questionnaires returned
Pretoria Chinese School	33	13
Bonthuis Crèche	34	19
Japsnoetjies	33	16
Moreleta Park Crèche	34	18
Aapstertjies	33	5
Humpty Dumpty Crèche	33	11
TOTAL	200	82

3.2.2.2 Phase 2: Interviews

The questionnaire helped select parents for interviews and develop interview questions. Parents were selected for the interview because their child was between two and five.

Information obtained from the questionnaires was used to build interview questions. Some of the questionnaire questions were asked again and participants were asked to explain their answer. The questions were asked for a second time to see if the participant's answer was similar to the response to the questionnaire. The questions were explained to the participants. New questions were also asked in the interview to support the questionnaire.

Qualitative information was collected by means of open-ended questions the researcher used to gather information and explore the 'many truths' (Patton, 2002). Qualitative data was also gathered by means of interviews lasting at most 30 minutes. The researcher took notes during the interview and recorded the answers with the permission of the interviewees. The one-on-one interviews with the parents and dieticians improved the understanding of the different perspectives.

The second phase of the research design – semi-structured interviews – was more labour intensive than the first. Interviews are one of the most commonly used modes of collecting data or information (De Vos, Strydom and Delport, 2005). Interviews have also been used to collect stories from people and are regarded as a way of knowing and essentially a meaning-making process (De Vos, Strydom and Delport, 2005). Interviews can provide insights that are not available to researchers working with large questionnaire samples and are known to be the most suitable approach when seeking rich data illuminating individuals' experiences and attitudes.

Phase two had two main aims: to explore the significant and non-significant results from phase one; as well as add an interpretive dimension that cannot be provided by statistical analysis alone. The main data collection tool used in this phase of the research was semi-structured interviews; these explored parents' understanding of how the media influence their choices of food for young children. A parent from each school was selected, but due to parent's unavailability for interview lead to participants who were able to come to an interview section. Therefore, only four participants were interviewed.

Parents from each of the six schools were selected for the interview until the data was saturated. The "interview schedule specifies key questions, but the order of questions is not fixed and can be changed" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011: 409). The interviews were conducted in a flexible manner, where questions could be asked in different orders and where the participants could engage in open-ended or in-depth responses (Gay, Geoffrey and Airasian, 2006). In this way, even though there was a set of predetermined questions, these guided the interview questions rather than being dictated by them (De Vos et al. 2005).

The information sent out included the questionnaire and letters to parents followed by interviews (see addendum C). The questions were designed to determine how advertisements influenced their food choices. During the interviews it was important not to restrain the participants, but to give them time to talk about how they understood and described their experience of food advertisements and how they thought

advertisements influenced them. This was particularly important, as privacy is such an elusive concept that can be perceived differently by different people.

Verbatim transcriptions of audio recordings were made using Microsoft Word version 2013. Transcription captured both the interviewer's and interviewee's whole statements, but not insignificant utterances, such as "ums," "well," etc. Transcribed data was prepared for analysis by using Microsoft Excel version 2013.

I developed semi-structured interview schedules to guide interactions with participants (see addendum D). I created interview schedules that were specific to the individual being interviewed. The questions fell into the following general categories:

- Optimal meal for a child.
- Influence of advertisements on a person.
- Influence of advertisements on behaviour and choices.

Semi-structured interviews have strengths as well as weaknesses. Strengths include that I will be able to obtain large amounts of data quickly and effectively acquire depth in data (De Vos et al. 2005; Flick, 2006). Limitations of interviews could be that they involve personal interaction, which makes cooperation essential. Participants may be unwilling to share, as I may ask questions that they do not want to respond to. Responses could also be misconstrued or even untruthful (De Vos et al. 2005; Flick, 2006).

3.2.3. Data analysis and interpretation of phase 1 (questionnaires) and 2 (interviews)

Data analysis is basically a means of reducing volumes of collected data, selecting significant data, identifying patterns and producing findings from the essence of what the data has revealed (De Vos et el. 2005). According to Henning (2004: 10), data analysis requires "analytical craftsmanship and the ability to capture understanding of the data being analysed."

Before the analysis can be done, I must tidy up the data. Whatever the format, the data must be coherently organised so that all materials have a similar format and that raw

data material can be identified with unique serial numbers or codes for reference purposes (Maree, 2013). The researcher must also return to the original research questions, aims, methodologies and theoretical underpinnings.

Firstly, I examine all the data collected to get an overall sense or feel of the data. This involves taking notes, active reading and highlighting or annotating transcripts – "Immersing oneself" in the data. (Wellington, 2000). Secondly, reflection must take place by standing back from the data and reflecting on it. (Wellington, 2000). Thirdly, I must take apart/analyse the data. This is the informal process of selecting or filtering out data that will be used, then categorising, itemising and reorganising it. Fourthly, data is organised into clusters to facilitate the search for patterns and similarities as well as to create new knowledge constructs. This process is referred to as recombining and synthesising data and requires continuous refinement, as I must de-contextualise and re-contextualise data (Wellington, 2000). Fifthly, I must now relate and locate data from other people's research that will position their findings in the research holistically and in line with the research questions and aims (Wellington, 2000).

It is essential for me to compare and contrast the data in the last stage of the data analysis. This will serve to position the research by reflecting on it and making sense of it. Data can be compared and contrasted according to certain categories, methods and themes. Themes surfaced during data analysis when participants gave similar answers.

After the interview process parents' responses during interviews were analysed qualitatively. Onwuegbuzie and Combs (2011: 10) state that "the first thing you need to do is to familiarise yourself with your data." This involves reading and re-reading data in its entirety and making notes of thoughts that spring to mind and write summaries of each transcript or piece of data to be analysed (Maree, 2013). All of this information was then condensed into key themes and topics relevant to the research question and then analysed using a thematic approach. Interviews were recorded for reference (Onwuegbuzie and Combs, 2011). Each response was compared with other participants' answers.

Qualitative data analysis takes an exploratory perspective, encouraging the researcher to consider and code all data, allowing new impressions to share the researchers' interpretation in different and unexpected directions (Maree, 2013). Qualitative data analysis typically revolves around the impressions and interpretations of key researchers (Creswell, 2003). However, through facilitation, study participants can also take an active role in identifying key themes emerging from the data. Qualitative analysis relies on a researcher's impressions; it is vital for qualitative analysis to be systematic and for researchers to report on their impression in a structured and transparent form (Teddlie and Yu, 2007). According to Patton (2002: 40-41), "qualitative data analysis ought to pay attention to the spoken word, context, consistency and contradictions of views, frequency and intensity of comments, their specificity as well as emerging themes and trends."

Thematic analysis is similar to trend analysis (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011) in that I looked for broad themes rather than identifying more specific trends that may emerge from the text (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). An advantage of thematic analysis is its relative flexibility; most researchers find it easy to use (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Especially when working with different data collection methods, researchers can employ thematic analysis for easier summarisation of themes from the selected data sources (Braun, 2006). A negative aspect of thematic analysis is that it may be difficult to separate correlating themes from various methods of data collected. During this study, I concentrated on achieving a systematic approach to make it easier to work with a range of data. I also found it easier to document identified themes in table format, which makes it easier to add themes across the selected data.

The thematic analysis consists of six stages. The first step, was to familiarise myself with phase 1 and 2 data by reading and re-reading each question answer in both the questionnaire and semi-structured interview question. In step two, I organised the quantitative and qualitative data and give each answer a specific code in both phase 1 and 2 answers. In step 3, I search for themes in the long list of code which lead me to start identifying potential themes. In step 4, I received the themes and came up with a few potential main themes. In step five, I reduced the themes to two main themes as discussed in chapter 4. The quantitative and qualitative data were then discussed under

the themes in chapter 2. I transcribed the interview and identified the themes in the responses to connect the interview and questionnaire together in the end.

3.3. The role of the researcher

As a high school teacher, I noticed children's behaviour in a store and when asking their parents for a product. The young child would start to cry or throw a tantrum and would most of the time get the product they wanted. This made me wonder why children behave this way and whether advertisements influenced household decisions of parents. I needed to make the interviewing of parents interesting, as parents did not see themselves as being influenced by advertisements. Talking to parents about specials and collectables of fast food made findings of the data interesting.

In this study, my role was that of the collector, analyst and interpreter of the data. With the permission of the principals, the questionnaires were handed out to the participants and collected by me. The data was then coded, analysed and interpreted by me. I then adopted the role of interviewer. As a researcher, I must be objective and create a safe environment for the participant. The participants seemed calm and positive during the interviews. I followed University of Pretoria's ethical principles.

3.4. Quality assurance and sequential explanatory mixed method

Triangulation is the process of using multiple methods, data collection strategies and data sources to obtain a more complete picture of what is being studied and to cross-check information (Creswell, 2014). "The advantages of a mixed method approach in social research are manifold" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011: 195). The strength of qualitative research lies in collecting information in various ways, rather than relying solely on one, and often two or more methods can be used in such a way that the weakness of one is compensated by the strength of another. Triangulation was used in this study by using different methods on the same participant to see if the answers were similar.

3.5. Ethical aspects and the sequential explanatory mixed method

The following ethical considerations that should be considered during a mixed study have been taken from Wellington (2000: 54-57), Punch (2006: 56-57) and Henning (2004: 73).

- Informed consent has a central place in the ethics literature and refers to the voluntary agreement by the individuals to participate in research. No participant should be involved without their prior knowledge or permission and informed consent. Informed consent can also include ensuring that participants know exactly what they are letting themselves in for and where the findings might be published.
- Confidentiality and anonymity should be maintained at every stage, especially in publication or dissemination, bearing in mind the extent to which the data can be reported back and research reports can be used by policy makers and in educational practice.
- Participants' privacy must not be invaded and the occupation of their time must be limited.
- No attempt should be made to force people to participate, to do anything unsafe or do something unwillingly, for example, have their voice tape-recorded during an interview without their consent.
- Honesty must be a top priority in that no attempt should be made to deceive participants. Relevant information about the nature and purpose of the research must be expressed clearly and explicitly.
- All participants should be treated fairly, with due consideration, with respect, and with honesty.
- Vulnerable populations include people who are often exploited, such as HIV/AIDS and children. These populations must not be exploited.

For the purpose of this study, the dominant ethical considerations were:

- Informed consent: I obtained permission from the Gauteng Education Department to conduct the research. Ethical clearance from the Faculty of Education of the University of Pretoria was obtained. The governing body or the principal of the pre-primary school selected also gave consent. A letter requesting permission was handed to the school after a meeting. Parents also consented to participate in this research and their responses being tape-recorded during the research process.

- Confidentiality and anonymity were fundamental in every stage of the research process to avoid putting the participant in any form of danger. The participant was not revealed to anyone except to my supervisors.
- I did not exercise power over participants or force participants to participate in the research. Participants were made aware that they were allowed to withdraw from the research at any time.

These ethical considerations ensured that the research process was conducted in a professional and respectful manner and did not to infringe on or violate the participants' rights in anyway.

3.6. Quality assurance

It is important to note that validity and reliability are not one and the same: "a valid test that measures what it purports to measure will do so consistently over time. A reliable test may consistently measure the wrong thing" (Gay *et al.*, 2006: 407). Reliability is the "consistency of the results obtained when using a measure in research" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011: 199). Validity is used to "judge whether the research accurately describes the phenomenon which it is intended to describe (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011: 179).

It should also be noted that, as Gay et al. (2006: 407) state, the term "reliability' does not only refer to instruments and tests in quantitative research. Rather, "instead of evaluating a test or an instrument for its reliability, qualitative researchers consider the reliability of the techniques they are using to gather data" (Gay, et al, 2006: 407). Interviews might be seen as more difficult to prove to be reliable because of the "deliberate strategy of treating each participant as a potentially unique respondent" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011: 204). Reliability in questionnaires is when participants taking part in a questionnaire do so honestly, accurately and correctly (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011).

3.7. Conclusion

Building on the earlier methodological discussion, the research design section focused on the main features of the sequential explanatory design, which was adapted to meet the needs of this dissertation. This involved examining the data collection and analysis

techniques employed across two phases, which were integrated after both phases had been completed. The next chapter looks at the results of this study.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the research design. In this chapter the data collection and analysis processes will be discussed, followed by the research findings. The findings of this research project are related to the research questions that guided this study. The data was analysed to identify the themes that emerged.

The aim of this chapter was to formulate the findings of the raw data in such a way that the findings could be reported easily. Reporting findings, according to Burlew (2005: 180), can be defined as "providing a formal record of the research and its data." Reporting on the findings communicates the important themes that emerged and provides a foundation for future research (Burlew, 2005). In this chapter the significant themes that emerged during the analysis of the data collected in phases 1 and 2 will be discussed.

4.2. Analysis process

Quantitative data was obtained from self-administered questionnaires completed by 82 parents (n = 82) as mentioned in chapter 3. Some parents were single parents, but the majority of the parents in this study were married. Most questionnaires (83%) were answered by mothers. The questionnaires were analysed individually to determine the aspects that needed in-depth investigation in interviews.

The questionnaire consisted of twenty-two questions: seventeen were multiple-choice questions, two were dichotomous and two were open-ended. In this chapter, the results are presented as pie charts, tables, bar graphs and participant quotes. Parents' answers were scrutinised for patterns and relations to the research questions and were linked to the themes. Quantitative data was analysed with descriptive statistics to identify frequencies and percentages. The data was analysed with Microsoft Excel version 2013 and then entered on an Excel spreadsheet.

Qualitative data was obtained from semi-structured interviews of about twenty minutes. Three of the four participants interviewed were married; the other one was a single

parent. These participants were chosen according to their children's ages, their response to question 16 (in addendum F) and their availability.

The interviews were based on a list of questions, of which I and the interviewees had a copy. I read the questions to the participants and they had to write their responses on their copy. This ensured that the respondents' intentions were reflected correctly or that the right option was recorded.

There were fourteen questions that revolved around the topic of the study. The answers informed me how these parents bought food for their children and whether they were influenced by advertisements. The interviews were analysed individually in order to interpret the patterns and relationships between themes that emerged from the data. Patterns and themes were explored to answer the research questions. Each theme that emerged was colour coded to make it easier to separate them from each other. I enrich my discussions by including direct quotations from the participants.

4.3. Participant profiles

The first three questions in the questionnaire were intended to collect demographic variables of the sample and to assess their influence on the research findings. These variables were both the parents' and children's age, gender and the area they live in. The participants' (n = 82) average age in this study was between 30 and 35 years, and their children's average age was 4 years.

In this study, eighty-nine per cent of participants lived in an urban area called Pretoria East where the schools are located. This will help determine whether time and finances influence a parent's decisions regarding food choices for their household, as argued by Caswell and Yaktine, (2013). Thus, rural areas need to develop communities to work together to create opportunities to increase family farming and reduce family food insecurity. The quantitative data showed that participants who took part in the study consisted of 17% males and 83% females. The total number of female respondents was higher than the number of males because more mothers completed the questionnaires.

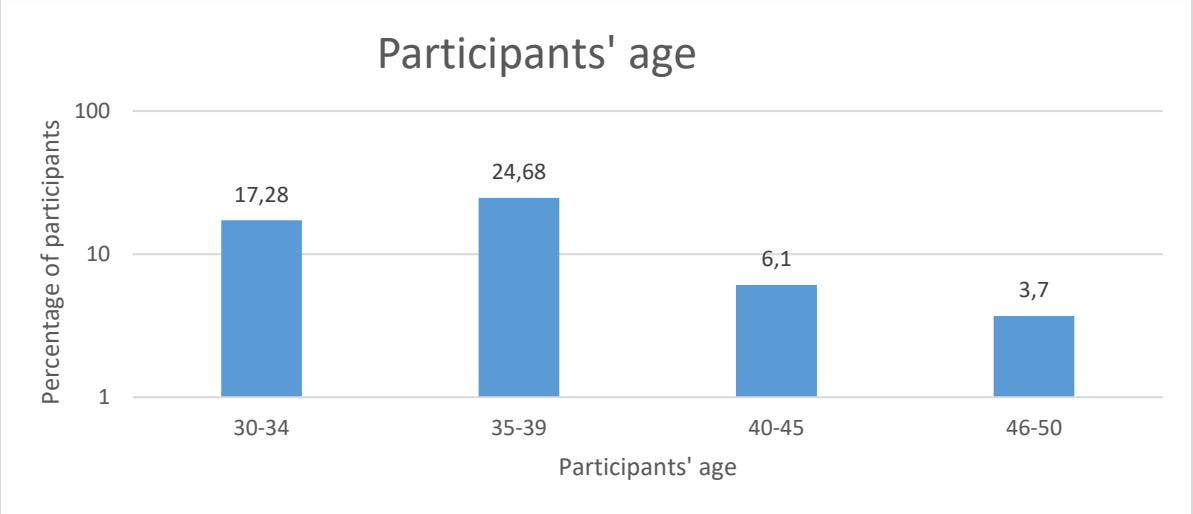

Figure 4.1. Average age of the participants

4.4. Quantitative and qualitative findings

The qualitative data was captured in an Excel spreadsheet and the frequency of a number was calculated as a percentage. If the number occurred often, it indicated that parents agreed and increased the percentage. Questions from the quantitative data were used to collect qualitative data such as, what parents saw as a healthy snack, how advertising influenced parents and parents' thoughts on how advertisements influenced their children. Four participants, who each had a child between two and five, were available for interviews in this study. Three participants preferred being interviewed in Afrikaans and the other preferred English. This indicated that language might have been an issue in answering the questionnaire, which was only in English.

The main and sub-themes which emerged from the quantitative (phase 1) and qualitative data (phase 2) are given in table 4.1. In the thematic analysis, two main themes and their sub-themes emerged from phases 1 and 2. Thematic analysis can be defined as "identifying, analysing and reporting patterns or themes within data" (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 79). According to Braun and Clarke (2006), a thematic analysis consists of six stages. The first stage was to familiarise myself with the data collected in phases 1 and 2. In stage two I organised the data by giving each answer a specific code. In stage three I searched for themes in a long list of codes, which led me to start identifying patterns (potential themes). In stage four I revised the themes, as the preliminary data had produced 6 main themes. In stage five I reduced the themes to

two main themes. I was guided through the process of data analysis by my research questions relating to the influence of media on parents' choices of optimal nutrition for their young children. The themes also related to children's requests, which indirectly influence parental food choices.

Table 4.1: Overview of themes and sub-themes

Theme 1	Theme 2
The influence of media on parents' choice of optimal nutrition for their young children[1]	Advertisements and children's food requests influence parents' food choices
Sub-themes	**Sub-themes**
1.1. Parents' perception of optimal nutrition 1.2. Parents' prior knowledge of of optimal nutrition 1.3. The influence of familiar advertising jingles on parents' and children's choices with regard to optimal nutrition	2.1. Influence of advertising on parents' choice of food purchases for children 2.2. Children's request for products in store after viewing advertisements 2.3. Television advertising influences both children's and parents' food purchase choices 2.4. Parents and children recognise advertised/visual media products in store

4.5. Themes and sub-themes

In the following section I deal with each theme and sub-theme separately. I merged my quantitative and qualitative data in order to present the data under the same themes. The data from the quantitative and qualitative sections provided information about the participants' understanding of visual media influence on household food purchasing decisions. The results of the quantitative study are presented in percentages under two themes. The qualitative results are presented in quotation marks and in colour, under the same themes as the quantitative data

[1] Children refers to parents having more than one child

Theme 1 deals with the influence of media on parents' food choices for their children. Theme 1 has three sub-themes, which deal with parents' understanding of optimal nutrition as well as the influence of advertisements on parent's knowledge of optimal nutrition and the way advertising jingles draw attention to an advertisement. This theme focuses on what parents viewed as an optimal meal for their children for breakfast and dinner, followed by parents' thoughts on what aspect of an advertisement attracted the child's or parents' attention during the advertisement.

Theme 2 deals with the child's food requests and the influence of advertising on household food choices. Theme 2 has four sub-themes, which focus on the influence of advertising on children and parents as well as the recognition of a product in a store. The focus of this theme was whether advertisements influence parents and children equally or differently, according to the parents' point of view, and whether both parents and children recognise the advertised product in the shop.

4.6. Theme1: The influence of media on parents' choice of optimal nutrition for their young children

Theme 1 describes the parents' understanding of optimal child nutrition. The data that emerged from the qualitative and quantitative questions listed in table 4.2 below indicates the relationship between how visual media influenced parents' choices and how commercials drew participants' attention (see addendum E for the interview and F for the questionnaire). Three sub-themes that emerged from the main theme are discussed below.

Table 4.2: Overview of questions related to theme 1

1. Qualitative findings	**2. Quantitative findings**
Interview question number	*Questionnaire question number*
Question 1 Question 2 Question 3 Question 4 Question 5 Question 6	Question 2 Question 3 Question 7 a Question 7 b Question 9

1. Qualitative findings	2. Quantitative findings
Question 7 Question 9	Question 12 Question 14 b

4.6.1. Sub-theme 1: Parents' perception of optimal nutrition

This sub-theme describes the optimal nutritional meals for a child. Participants were informed that the purpose of the study was to determine the extent of media influence on the food choices of their children. The majority of participants who responded to this open-ended question felt that an ideal meal for a child should consist of meat, vegetables and carbohydrates. Question 7a in the questionnaire elicited multiple answers. Question 7b was an open-ended question in which participants gave multiple answers that led to numerous items having a high percentage. Data obtained from the questionnaire indicated that 76% of participants provided both meat and potatoes for dinner (as indicated by table 4.3 below).

Table 4.3: Overview of different dinner combinations

Dinner children in this study preferred					
Meat		**Vegetables**		**Starch**	
Chicken	74%	Pumpkin	44%	Potatoes	59%
Mince	42%	carrots	30%	Rice	57%
Fish	41%	All vegetables	22%	Pasta	40%
Beef	25%	Broccoli	21%	Pap	15%
Pork	12%	Peas	16%		
Lamb	17%	Corn	16%		
Sausage	17%	Spinach	14%		
Fish fingers	2%	Beans	9%		

The quantitative data also indicates that 10% of participants in this study did not eat vegetables. The ideal meal, as perceived by parents, therefore consisted of meat, vegetables and carbohydrates. Participant 1 in the qualitative part of this study stated during the interview: *"I make sure that they have meat, vegetable (green or yellow) and rice or potatoes for dinner"*, while participant 4 in the qualitative part of this study said: *"I would say vegetables and some carbohydrates are nutritional for my child."* This confirms the quantitative data obtained, namely that parents have prior knowledge of

what constitutes a healthy meal for a child. Half of the participants in the quantitative part of this study indicated that the vegetables a child ate were pumpkin, cauliflower, broccoli and carrots (see table 4.3). This shows that parents know what constitutes a healthy meal for their children.

The majority of participants in the quantitative part of this study indicated that they had a different breakfast on weekends (see table 4.4. below). The qualitative data indicates that 93% of the participant's children had a cereal for breakfast in the morning during the week. The main reason indicated was time. Participant 3 in the qualitative part of this study said during the interview: *"The children mostly eat Weetbix or oats during weekday's morning and bacon and eggs on weekends because of time."* Participant 2 in the qualitative part of this study said: *"We eat cereal during the week because it is faster and eggs and toast on weekends as I have more time"*, which confirmed the quantitative data indicating that children have a breakfast during the week that is less time consuming for the parent and not necessarily healthy.

Table 4.4: Type of breakfast children eat

Breakfast child normally eats in the morning	
Cereal	93%
Bacon and eggs	12%
Toast	11%
Oats	6%
Muffin	4%
Porridge	4%
Eggs	1%

4.6.2. Sub-theme 2: Parents' prior knowledge of optimal nutrition

Sub-theme two describes parents' knowledge of products advertised on television. In the qualitative questions, participants indicated that they did not read what the product contains before they purchased the item. During the interview, participant 4 in the qualitative part of this study said: "I would buy the product that I saw on TV if I see it in store. If my child has a bad reaction or behaviour change on the product, I will check the ingredient", while participant 3 in the qualitative part of this study 2 said: "I will always

read the label to make sure the product is as nutritional as advertised.", indicating that some parents might not read the ingredients label on a product until their child's behaviour was influenced. They may only go by what was advertised about the product.

Participants gave multiple answers to questions 9 and 14 in the questionnaire. Thus, there was more than one product (according to the participant) that a child asked for. The quantitative data revealed that 62% of participants indicated that their children asked for yoghurt (seen in figure 4.2. below) and parents indicated in the qualitative data that they would purchase yoghurt, as they saw yoghurt as a healthy snack. All the parents in the qualitative researched agreed that yoghurt was healthy and a good way to get calcium. A comparison of the qualitative and quantitative results shows that children loved yoghurt. With reference to above, participant 4 said during the interview: *"He does not like all vegetables but loves corn, cheese and yoghurt, which is healthy."* Participant 4 said: *"She loves cereal, yoghurt and Purity squeeze."*

Dairy products such as yoghurt (with no added sugar or flavouring) are healthy, as indicated in chapter 2. Participant 3 said: *"I would say that my son's favourite meal is definitely spaghetti Bolognese and he would always ask for seconds",* while participant 3 said*: "She does not love food or is just naughty. I have followed her to get her to eat something"* and participant 2 *said: "My daughter loves mince, lasagne and chicken, rice and tomato sauce."* This indicates the type of food children love and would ask for in the interviewee's household. Thus, the results show that parents have prior knowledge of healthy food, but advertising can influence them.

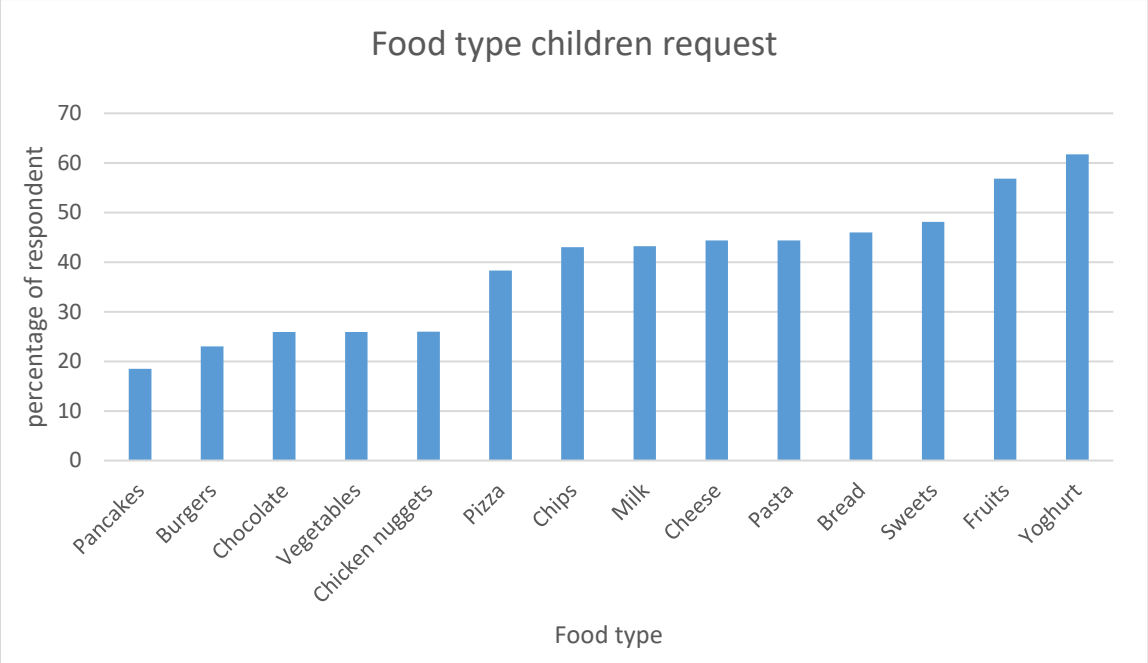

Figure 4.2: Products children asked for in store. This figure is based on a combination of the answers to questions 9 and 14

My research shows that parents know what makes an optimal meal for a child; all the participants in both the qualitative and the quantitative study indicated what an optimal meal consists of. Half of the participants in the qualitative study admitted that because of time constraints, they did not always provide their children with optimal meals.

4.6.3. Sub-theme 3: The influence of advertisement jingles on parents' and children choices about optimal nutrition

Sub-theme 3 describes the main techniques, such as jingles and colour, television advertisements used in this study to draw a viewer's attention to the product. The graph below (see figure 4.3) from phase 1 reveals that 57% of participants in the quantitative part of this study were attracted by the songs, while 32% of participants in the quantitative part of this study were attracted to the colour and the rest to the punchline, photography or characters.

A common view among interviewees was that music attracted their attention. Participant 4 said: *"I think it must be the music that gets her attention to an advertisement."* Participant 3 said: *"My child does not really watch a lot of television, but a song attracts my attention and then I will recognise it in store or when I hear the song again",* while

participant 2 said: *"My children love music and music programmes."* This data indicates that visual and audio had been used effectively in advertisements to attract the participants' attention.

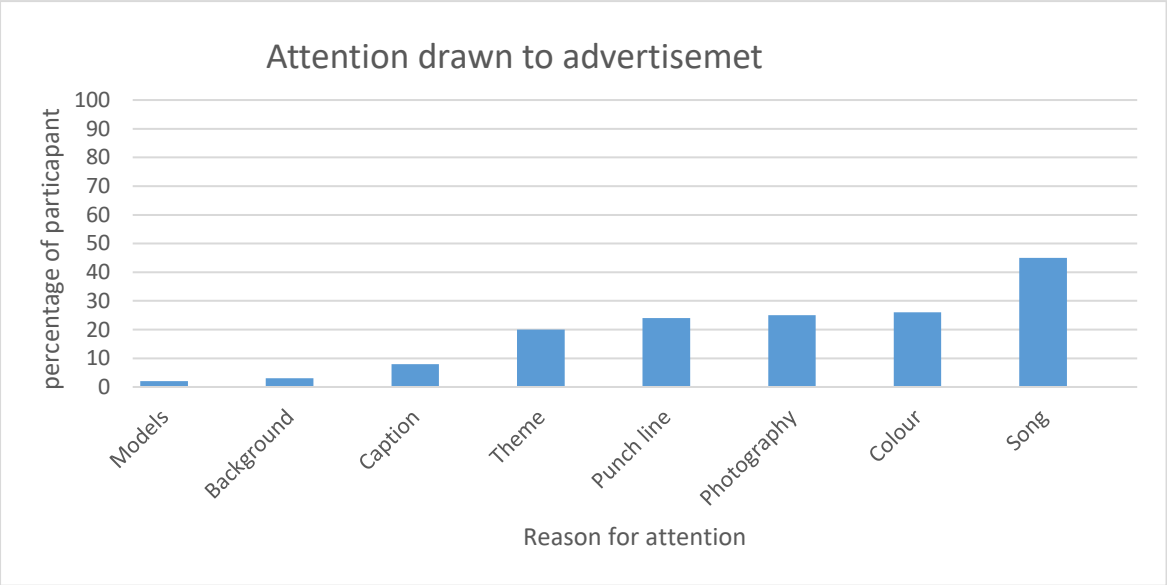

Figure 4.3: Means used to draw viewers' attention to advertisements

My research indicates that jingles and media have an influence on both parents and children; they attracted the participants' and their children's attention to an advertisement. All the parents indicated that they would want to try the new product advertised and purchase it in store the next time because of the advertisement.

4.7. Theme 2: Advertisements and children's food requests influence parents' food choices

Theme 2 describes what motivates parents' choices, what factors influence parents' choices (see table 4.5) and who is influenced most to buy a product that they saw advertised on television. Media influences both adults and children, as stated in the literature reviewed in chapter 2. The number of hours a child and an adult spend watching television or an electronic device influences what they recognise in store. Participants stated that their children did not watch more than two hours of television a day. The data from the qualitative and quantitative questions listed in table 4.5 below indicates the relationship between how television influenced parents' choices and how

commercials attracted participants' attention (see addendum E for the interview and F for the questionnaire). Four sub-themes emerged from the main theme and are discussed below.

Table 4.5: Overview of questions related to theme 2

1. Qualitative findings	**2. Quantitative findings**
Interview question number	*Questionnaire question number*
Question 8 Question 10 Question 11 Question 13 Question 12 Question 14	Question 4 Question 5 Question 6 Question 8 Question 10 Question 13 Question 14a Question 16

4.7.1. Sub-theme 1: Influence of advertising on parents' choice of food purchases for children

This sub-theme discusses the way media influence participants to buy products or eat at a brand store. In the final part of the questionnaire participants were asked whether they saw a link between food choices and media. Surprisingly, 56% of participants in the quantitative part of this study did not see a link between media and buying a product. Also surprising in the quantitative data was that 11% of participants would eat at Spur, Wimpy or McDonald because the child asked to eat at the specific place to collect the toy or play outside, which shows that parents were influenced by factors other than nutrition.

Participants were asked to choose from the following reasons for buying food: health, affordability, family demand and a combination of all three. Further analysis showed that 41% of participants in the quantitative data considered health and 43% need before buying a product (see table 4.6). As regards the ideal meal (as perceived by parents), participant 3 stated during the interview: *"Advertisements influence me as adult foodwise. Especially the Dettol hand wash advertisement. It shows the children the*

importance to wash hands and the germs that accumulate on our hands. I buy the product to ensure that my children can wash their hands", while participant 2 in the quantitative part of the study said: *"We only watch Netflix, therefore I do not know what advertisements are on television. However, I listen to the radio and look through the newspaper and found that if a new product was advertised I would want to buy it the next time I'm in a store."* This shows that adults were also influenced by visual media, which correlates with the literature in chapter 2.

Table 4.6: Reasons why parents buy products other than seeing the product in an advertisement

Reason for purchasing product other than seeing it on advertisement	Percentage
Product is affordable	37.04
Product fulfils a need	43.21
Product is healthy	40.74
Product quality	38
Familiar with product	32.1
Best value for the price	28.4
Child nagging	15
Product has a lower price	14
Product tastes better than the competitors' products	11
Name brand	9.9
Product looks cool	4.9
Purchased because your friends want you to	1.23

52% of the participants in the quantitative part of this study made purchases because of an advertisement 48% made purchases for reasons in table 4.6. During the interview (the quantitative part of this study), participant 3 stated that they bought the product the child asked for: *"My son loves these Smurff O's porridge … think it is because of the Smurf cartoon character on the box. I purchase it for him as he loves this breakfast cereal at the moment"* while participant 1 was influenced by the advertisements of new products they saw on television: *"If it is a new product being advertised, I would maybe buy it the next time I go to the store to try it."* Therefore, advertisement can have an indirect influence on parents' choices.

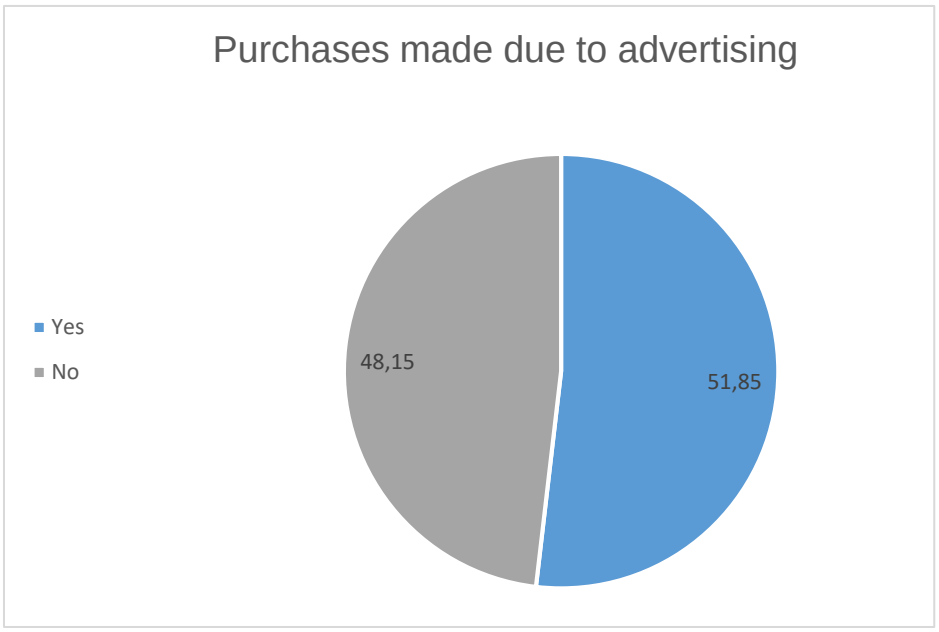

Figure 4.4: Was a purchase made due to an advertisement?

My research shows that a child's health cannot be affected by his or her diet alone. All the participants mentioned that factors such as sleep, learning disabilities and affordability, the home environment, parents, advertisements and of course dietary preferences have a significant impact on a household's food purchases as well.

4.7.2. Sub-theme 2: Children's request for products in store after viewing advertisement

This sub-theme deals with a child asking for[2] or demanding[3] a product in a store. Participants in the quantitative part of this study wrote a side note in the questionnaire stating if the child demanded something, they would not purchase the item for them. However, if they asked politely, the participant would be more likely to purchase the product. According to the data obtained, 58% of the participants in the quantitative part of the study indicated that their child did ask for a product in a store. A total of 35% of participants stated that their children asked for a product in a store, but they as parents would not always buy the product for them. As regards the qualitative data, participant 3 stated: *"My son will not always get what he asked for in a store."* All four participants

[2] Say something to someone that they want them to do or to give something
[3] Asking politely for something

in the qualitative part of this study indicated that they did not always buy the product their children asked for.

The participants in the quantitative part of the study were asked in the questionnaire to select multiple products that their child might ask for in a store (see figure 4.5). Data obtained from the quantitative questionnaires indicates that 86% of the participants' children requested specific food in stores. It is apparent from figure 4.5 that according to the participants 47% of children asked participants in store for Kinder Joy eggs, while 43% of children asked participants in store for toys.

Figure 4.5: Breakdown of products children asked for in store

Data obtained from the quantitative part of this study indicated that parents (see in figure 4.6) would purchase 41% of products seen on television by children, while 27% of participants would purchase products because parents saw it on television and 16% of participants would purchase a product that the viewer saw on a programme. One participant added on the questionnaire that grandparents would purchase a product for her child because they saw it in an advertisement. As participant 2 from the qualitative part of the study put it: *"When I see a new product being advertised for children being healthy, I would look at the ingredients and then buy the product for my child."* A common reason mentioned by the interviewees was that they purchased a product at a

store because it was on special. Participant 3 said during the interview: *"I would go buy the product at a specific store if it is on special, like Stork margarine is now on special… I would go buy it as I use a lot of it",* while participant 2 said: *"… mom enjoys collecting cards and mini shop and playing with them just as much as her daughter."* A common view among the interviewees was that they loved to collect the collectable toys from the store.

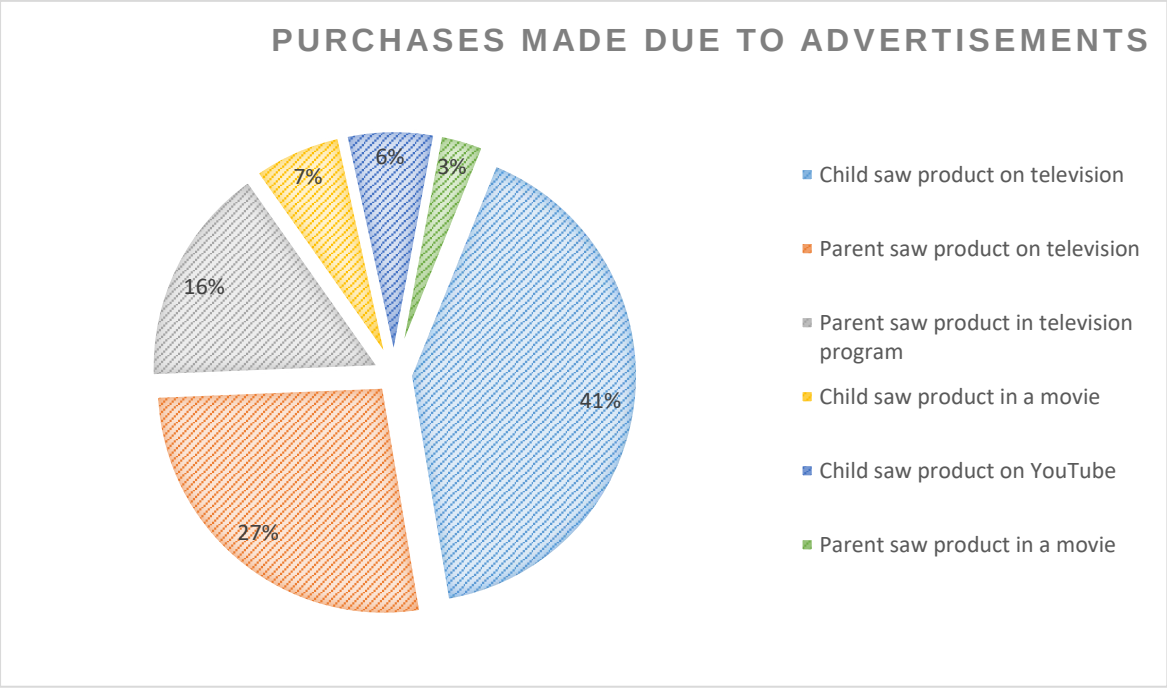

Figure 4.3: Influence of different media on purchasing decisions

Data obtained from quantitative questions indicated that participants bought products for their children because 28% of them wanted to spoil them and 23% wanted to buy the product as a reward.

All interviewees indicated that advertisements definitely influenced their children's behaviour. Participant 2 said during the interview: *"Advertisements definitely have an influence on her behaviour, as she asks: 'Can I have this or that?'" Not that it is always nice to say it is not necessary"*, while participant 3 said: *"Advertisements have an influence on his behaviour."* Therefore, my results indicate that parents purchased items their children asked for in a store.

4.7.3. Sub-theme 3: Television advertising influences both children and parents' food purchase choices

Sub-theme 3 describes the influence of advertisements on the food choices of parents and children. Almost two thirds of participants who completed the questionnaire (65%) indicated that advertisements influenced both parents and children (see figure 4.6), while 19.23% and 15.38% respectively believed that only adults were influenced by advertisements.

Referring to the above, participant 2 commented during the interview: *"I would go look at the product that I saw advertised and read the label. If the label looks as advertised, I buy the product to try it out and see if I like it",* while participant 4 said: *"I would say that advertisements influence my behaviour and my child's behaviour."* During the interview the common view among participants was that both parents and children were influenced by advertisements.

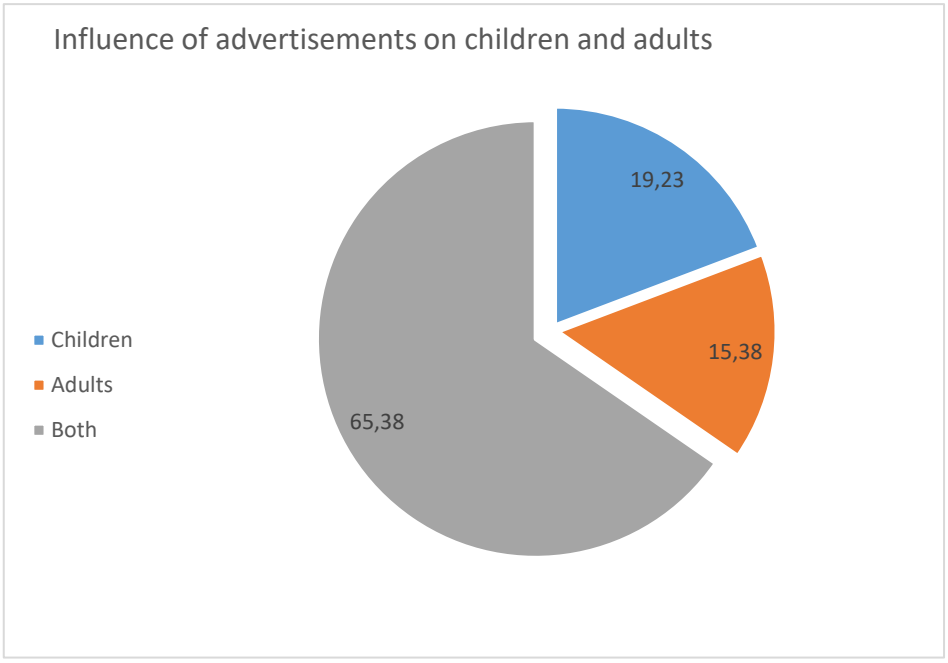

Figure 4.4: Participants mostly influenced by advertisements

Although advertisements influenced parents' purchasing decisions, three of the four participants in the qualitative study indicated that affordability influenced the purchasing choices more. In sub-theme 3: Influence of advertising on parental choice of food (table 4.6), participants indicated that they would buy at the store where the products were the

most affordable. For example, participant 3 said: *"I buy where the specials are … Weetbix, coffee and those items that are not the cheapest product, but I buy where I find it for the best price."*

4.7.4. Sub theme 4: Parents and children recognise advertised/visual media products in store

This sub-theme discusses why parents and children would buy a product they recognised as an advertised product. Data obtained from the questionnaire about the hours a parent watched television indicated that 40% of parents did not watch more than an hour of prime-time television[4] a week. While respondents said their children watched no more than six hours of television, it emerged from the quantitative research that 24% of the children in this study watched between 4 and 6 hours of television a week. The results suggest that parents did not answer this question honestly. Parents may not have regarded watching YouTube videos as part of watching television, or may have given the answer they thought the researcher wanted.

With reference to the qualitative data, participant 2 said: *"The television is always on in our house. My children will watch a bit of television and then go play outside or in their room. So, I would say my children watch about two hours of television."* Participant 4 said: *"She only watches television when she hears an advertisement is on. Then she is fixed on the television till the end of the advertisement."* According to this qualitative result, all parents believed that children spent more hours watching television or YouTube than their parents and were therefore more likely to recognise a product in store. According to participants, 30% of children would recognised advertised products in a store.

[4] Prime-time television in this study is between 4 pm and 9 pm

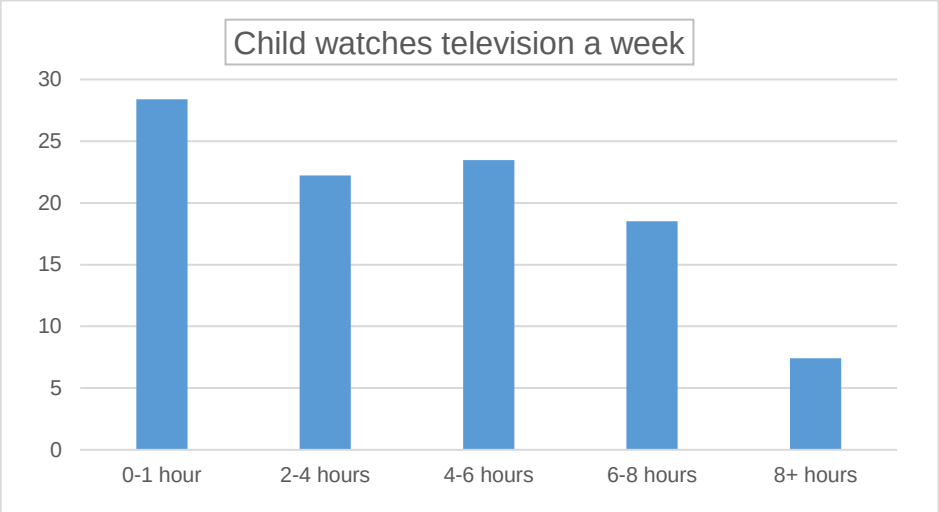

Figure 4 5. Hours children watch television in a week

4.8. Interpreted summary of quantitative and qualitative data

The quantitative and qualitative findings which emerged from the data are discussed in this section. The purpose of a mixed method is to build upon the combined strength of quantitative and qualitative methods. Therefore, one could argue that data analysis requires some sort of logic applied to research. In this regard, Best and Khan (2006: 354) clearly state that “the analysis and interpretation of data represent the application of deductive and inductive logic to the research”. Some researchers rely on their own experience of particular settings to be able to read the information provided by the participants in the study.

Qualitative and quantitative analyses are similar in some ways. The first similarity is that both forms of analysis involve the identification of patterns or aspects that are similar or different and strive to avoid errors, false conclusions and misleading inferences (Kreuger and Neuman, 2006: 434-435). According to Kreuger and Neuman (2006: 434-435), the main difference between qualitative and quantitative data analysis is that qualitative data analysis has a diversity of approaches to qualitative research matched by approaches to data analysis, while quantitative researchers choose from a specific set of data analysis techniques. I extended my analysis by raising questions about what optimal nutrition is and how media influence food choices. I then contextualised my findings in this study and interpreted my data to answer the research questions.

In my research I found that parents know what constitutes an optimal meal, but will not always provide their family with healthy, well-balanced meals because of time, socio-economics or finances. I also found that children spend more hours in front of the television than parents, just as the literature in chapter 2 had indicated, which leads to children being influenced more by the media regarding their food choices. Bandura (1977) indicated that we learn through a social environment, which includes visual media. However, the majority of parents in the quantitative study indicated that both they and their children were influenced by the media to purchase products. Therefore, media influence parents' perception of nutrition and food choices.

4.9. Conclusion

In this chapter, I reported on the results obtained through statistical (quantitative) and thematic (qualitative) analysis in terms of interpretation and identified themes and sub-themes. The main themes and sub-themes were presented, explained and supported by means of direct quotations, graphs and tables. The next chapter presents the conclusions, limitations and recommendations of this study.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1. Introduction

In chapter 4 the research findings were discussed. Chapter 5 was a summary of the findings of study. The research questions were answered by combining the literature in chapter 2 with the research findings reported in chapter 4. The research questions are answered and the limitations of and contributions made by this study are presented, as well as the recommendations for future research and training.

5.2. Quantitative and qualitative research linked to literature

The quantitative and qualitative findings were compared with the existing literature. The table below shows how existing literature and findings from the data correlate with or contradict each other. The themes from chapter 4 present both quantitative and qualitative data. New findings from the data are also presented.

Table 5.1: Existing literature and findings found in theme 1

Theme 1: The influence of media on parents' choice of optimal nutrition for their young children		
Sub-theme	**Literature**	**Findings**
1.1. Parents' perception of optimal nutrition	The literature correlates with quantitative results: breakfast should be eaten for a healthy lifestyle (Birch, Savage and Ventura, 2007); a well-balanced diet should contain two vegetables, starch and meat (Marotz, 2009; Young, 2003). Children's diet and eating habits are important for their health; therefore, parents need to be aware of the nutrition they give their children (Schwartz et al., 2011). All people must eat a healthy, well-balanced meal (Dixon et al., 2011).	Quantitative data showed that 93% had cereal for breakfast during the week while 76% of participants agreed that a healthy meal consists of meat, vegetables and a starch. All the participants in the qualitative data agreed that breakfast was important. Qualitative findings showed parents' perception of optimal nutrition was that their children should have dinner that contained vegetables, starch and a meat. However, for breakfast children had

Theme 1: The influence of media on parents' choice of optimal nutrition for their young children		
Sub-theme	**Literature**	**Findings**
		cereal because it was less time consuming. This indicates that children did not eat a healthy, balanced breakfast; most cereals do not contain the necessary vitamins, minerals, calcium and iron a child needs. All of the participants in the quantitative study agreed that children should eat a well-balanced meal, but they did not always have the time to prepare it.
1.2. Parents' prior knowledge of optimal nutrition	The literature contradicts the quantitative results because parents in this study had the knowledge of what an optimal meal is. However, literature indicated that parents knew what their child was supposed to eat (Van Dillen et al., 2008).	Quantitative data showed that 36% of participants ate take-out or precooked meals twice a week because of visual media. The qualitative data indicated that participants knew their children should follow an optimal diet. Both quantitative and qualitative data indicated that parents had the knowledge of an optimal nutritious meal, but they did not implement their knowledge for every meal.
1.3. The influence of familiar advertising jingles on parents' and children's choices with regard to optimal nutrition	The literature contradicts this study's quantitative results that only jingles attract the viewers' attention. The literature confirms that advertisements use both colour and songs to attract viewers' attention (Cezar, 2008; Livingstone and Helsper, 2006)	According to the quantitative data, 57% of participants in this study were attracted by songs and would recognise the product the next time they heard the jingle. Qualitative data indicated that the song and colour drew people's attention to an advertised product, and if they saw the advertised product in a store and they could

Theme 1: The influence of media on parents' choice of optimal nutrition for their young children		
Sub-theme	**Literature**	**Findings**
		afford it, they would purchase it.

Table 5.2: Existing literature and findings found in theme 2

Theme 2: Advertisement and children's food requests influence parents' food choices		
Sub-theme	**Literature**	**Findings**
2.1. Influence of advertising on parents' choice of food purchases for children	The literature contradicts the quantitative data that media influence parents' purchasing decision; however, the participants in this study indicate that they were influenced in a different way than research tell us e.g. health and affordability influence their choices (Emerson, 2004). The literature indicates that advertising influences children more than adults (Sunwandinata, Leonhauser and Boland, 2011).	Quantitative data showed that 52% of parents bought food for their household due to the influence of advertising. However, the participants in the quantitative study indicated that health (41%) and affordability (37%) were more significant when purchasing food for their children. Quantitative data indicates that three of the four participants (parents) were more influenced by affordability than by advertising. One individual in the qualitative data indicated that she would purchase products when they were on special (cheaper).
2.2. Children's requests for products in store after viewing an advertisement	The literature correlates with quantitative results that parents purchase an item that they (and their children?) saw on television and their child asks for in store? (Colby, Johnson and Scheett, 2010; Ferguson, Contreras and Kilburn, 2013; Lewis and Hill, 1998).	Quantitative data showed that 62% of participants' children asked for yoghurt with cartoon characters on it while 47% of children asked for Kinder Joy eggs. Qualitative data indicated that children would ask for products in store that they had seen on television or

Theme 2: Advertisement and children's food requests influence parents' food choices		
Sub-theme	**Literature**	**Findings**
		their iPad. Qualitative data also indicates that children are more likely to ask for products with their favourite cartoon character on it.
2.3. Television advertising influences both children and parents' food purchase choices	The literature contradicts quantitative results. Products seen in media can have a negative influence on people because they may want the product but cannot afford it (Colby, Johnson and Scheett, 2010; Pettigrew et al., 2013). The lliterature indicates that marketing companies target children more than parents (Adams et al., 2012; Ferguson, Contreras and Kilburn, 2013).	Quantitative data showed that 32% of participants bought products they had seen on visual media. Not all people could afford the products they saw on television, and therefore they did not purchase the product. In the qualitative data three quarters of the participants indicated that according to their knowledge they and their children were both influenced by advertisements, which led them to purchase the product.
2.4. Parents and children recognise advertised/visual media products in store	The literature correlates with quantitative data in that people buy products mainly because the brand is familiar, and they know the product (Story and French, 2004; Watson, Cole and Gebhardt, 2010).	Quantitative data showed that 43% of the products were bought because they fulfilled a need. The qualitative data also indicated that the participants would purchase the product that they were familiar with and not because of an advertisement. All the participants in the qualitative data indicated that the media influenced them. However, finances and socio-economics influenced them more than advertisements.

5.2.1. Summary of quantitative and qualitative data

The aim of this study was to determine the effect of visual media on parents' decisions about their optimal nutiton choices. This prompted a look at participants' backgrounds.

The literature study in chapter two examined the research already conducted on factors that influenced food choices. These factors were affordability, health, culture and media. One of the purposes of the study was to determine how media influence parents' purchasing choices of food for their children. Both quantitative and qualitative data indicated that parents know what constitutes a healthy, well-balanced diet for their children. Nevertheless, due to due to time or financial constraints they do not always provide their children with an optimal meal every day. Qualitative data indicated that participants saw yoghurt and fruit as a healthy snack and therefore were more likely to purchase these items. Two participants in the qualitative study indicated that if their child asked for yoghurt or cereal with their favourite cartoon character on it, they would purchase this for the child.

In the quantitative study, 45% of the participants indicated that visual media influenced both them and their children to purchase products seen on visual media such as iPads, television and social media. Quantitative data indicated that 21% of participants would purchase a product in store because they had seen the item in an advertisement. According to the participants in the quantitative data, 32% of them would purchase a product in store that their child had seen in a television advertisement. Therefore, the participants in both the qualitative and quantitative study indicated that their children were influenced more by visual media than they as parents were. However, 19.23% of parents' children were influenced by advertisements in this study. Three participants in the qualitative data indicated that advertisements influenced them to purchase products that they had seen on visual media. One individual indicated she would purchase a product advertised at a certain store because the product was cheaper at that specific store. Therefore, media influenced the participant's purchasing choices for their children to some extent.

5.3. Addressing the research questions

In this section, I revisit the secondary research questions by answering them before addressing the primary research question, namely: How do the media influence parents' understanding and provision of optimal nutrition for their young child?

5.3.1 Secondary question 1: How do parents perceive the visual media's influence on their provision of optimal nutrition for their young children?

Three quarters of the parents in the qualitative part of this study see optimal nutritious meals as the ideal for their children. Other studies that investigated the understanding of dietary guidelines suggest that parents understand quite well what food they should be providing for their young children (Van Dillen et al., 2008; Zarnowiecki et al., 2011). Both qualitative and quantitative data indicated that parents knew what an optimal diet for their children was, but did not always provide it for their children. More than half of the participants in the qualitative study knew what growing children need. Due to time constraints, a third of the participants in the qualitative study could not always provide their children with a well-balanced meal.

The literature indicated that a healthy meal that consists of a meat, vegetables, starch, dairy and a small amount of oil has a positive effect on lifestyle (Marotz, 2009). The qualitative data in this study indicated that 74% of the participants agreed that an optimal meal consists of meat, two vegetables and a carbohydrate. According to the participants in the qualitative data, the majority of children in this study had cereal for breakfast during the week, as it was easier and less time consuming for their parents. The literature indicates that not all cereals contain the necessary minerals, vitamins, iron and calcium and that they may be high in sugar or taken with sugar (Shepherd and Raats, 2006). According to the participants in the quantitative study, 93% of children had cereal for breakfast during the week, and parents saw breakfast as one of the most important meals of the day. One can argue from the qualitative data that time influenced their choice of cereal, which is normally a less healthy breakfast.

According to 52% of the participants in the qualitative part of the study, their children would ask for products that they had seen advertised on visual media (e.g. iPad, television and YouTube) when they saw the product in a store. Three participants in the

qualitative part of the study indicated that they would purchase the product without reading the ingredient label and would only read that label if the product had a negative effect on their child's behaviour. One participant in the qualitative part of the study indicated that her child asked for a product because he saw it in an advertisement.

According to Bandura (1977), your social environment influences your choices. People learn by observing the people around them and imitate their behaviour. In the quantitative study, 32.10% of participants indicated that their children asked for products in store that they had seen in an advertisement. When children saw their friends with a product, they would ask their parents for the product too. One participant in the qualitative part of this study indicated that the Dettol advertisement influenced her to purchase the product to motivate her children to wash the germs from their hands. People also learn from each other in a social environment through interaction (Bandura, 1977). Half of the participants in the qualitative part of this study indicated that they would purchase a product if another parent spoke about how well the product worked for them. This indicated that parents were aware that they were indirectly influenced by their social network.

5.3.2 Secondary question 2: What factors influence a parent's food choices for their young children?

There were several factors that influenced the nutritional choices made by the parents in this study. The top four were: finances (socio-economics), environment, health and familiarity with the brand or product. South Africa is a third-world country, with about 26% of the population being unemployed (Ferreira, 2017). Some areas do not have running water or electricity (Terrascope, 2017). However, all the participants in the qualitative part of this study lived in an urban area, and according to the literature people in urban areas can generally eat better than those living in a rural area (Food Security Network, 2013). The environment that we live in influences our choices (Bandura, 1986). According to the literature, children whose parents cannot afford three meals a day may suffer from food insecurity, and this influences the child's concentration at school (Food Security Network, 2013). Indeed, participants in the qualitative part of this study indicated that affordability (see table 4.4) influenced what products they purchased for their children.

The literature indicates that healthy food tends to be more expensive, which leads to parents not buying the healthiest foods for their children (Cassim, 2010). Of the participants in the qualitative part of this study, 37% bought food that they could afford or was on special. Three quarters of the participants in quantitative part of this study tried to provide their children with healthy meals. Both quantitative and qualitative data in this study indicate that participants tended to shop for some items by affordability or because items were familiar to them. All the participants in quantitative part of this study indicated that they bought certain products because they were familiar with them and had prior knowledge of the product quality. The literature states that products are advertised to young children so that they can become familiar with the product and purchase it when they are older (Ferguson et al., 2013; Nunes, 2014). Participants in the qualitative part of this study indicated that product knowledge and trust induced them to buy at stores were such products where cheaper.

Parents in the qualitative part of this study also purchased products because they were advertised as healthy and nutritious. Half of the participants in the qualitative part of this study stated that they did not always read the label on the box to see if the advertised product was nutritious. If the advertised product does not contain the necessary vitamins, minerals, calcium and iron, it might influence the young child's development. It was noted that several parents in the qualitative part of this study bought products deemed healthy if their child asked for it in stores. Three quarters of the parents in qualitative part of this study said their children asked for products that contained cartoon characters or mascots. Most parents in the qualitative part of this study did not read the labels or list of ingredients, which, as the literature points out, are illegible for some parents (Colby, Johnson and Scheett, 2010). Products come with toys or cartoon characters to make them more attractive to children, and children ask for the product in order to collect the toys (Ferguson, Contreras and Kilburn, 2013).

Parents' and children's environments also influence their choice of food and its preparation (Bandura, 1986). While all the factors above influenced the participants' food choices, advertised products aroused their curiosity, and half the participants in the qualitative part of this study would try out a new product. The other half of the

participants in the quantitative part of this study preferred to stick to the product that they were familiar with. An important factor that also influenced household decision-making was affordability. The data in this study indicated that certain products were bought because the buyers were familiar with the brand and preferred certain products to others, but as for other products, they would simply buy the cheapest product.

5.3.3 Secondary question 3: How do the media influence young children's nutritional choices?

Our choices are influenced by the media in one way or another. The media influence each of us differently, although we may think that this is not the case. The literature indicated that visual media use cartoon characters, celebrities and branding to get children's attention and get their parents to purchase products (Thompson, 2007). Other literature indicated that food advertisements during children's programmes tend to promote food with a low nutritional value and high fat, sugar and salt contents, such as chocolates, confectionery, fast foods and sugary breakfast cereals (Colby, Johnson and Scheett, 2010; Lewis and Hill, 1998). Familiar characters are often linked in television advertisements to promote the product. Twenty-three per cent of participants' children in the quantitative part of the study (acording to the parent) asked for breakfast cereal or yoghurt because of cartoon characters on the box or in the advertisement.

The literature indicated that children are the primary targets of advertisements because advertising companies advertise products with colour, cartoons, music, collectables and/or characters in order to get the young child's attention (Cezar, 2008). Livingstone and Helsper (2006) indicated that a child recognises the product in store by the character on the box and ask their parents for that product (Bandura, 1977). It is believed that young children are more vulnerable to media influence than their parents (Ferguson, Contreras and Kilburn, 2013), which is why parents should choose what a child should eat.

The literature also states that children may make their parents' life difficult in order to get what they ask for by negotiating, nagging or throwing a tantrum in store (Watson, Cole and Gebhardt, 2010). Bandura (1986) indicated that children would mimic behaviour that parents would respond to, which corresponds to Bandura's theory

regarding people's behaviour. Of the participants in the quantitative part of this study, 47% indicated that their children would ask for a Kinder Joy egg in store that was advertised on television. All the participants in the qualitative part of the study indicated that their children would nag for a product in store.

Bandura's theory postulates that people learn from their social network. Media and social networks also constitute social networks that communicate through advertisements. According to the literature, products advertised on television always have catchy jingles that stick in the viewers' memory (Palmer, 2015). The next time they hear the jingle, they associate the tune with the specific advertisement (WEBMD, 2015). The jingles and characters are bright and colourful. Half of the participants in the qualitative part of this study rated colour and jingles as the top two items that attracted their attention to an advertisement. Forty-five per cent of the participants in the quantitative part of this study indicated that colour attracted their attention to an advertisement. One participant in the qualitative part of this study indicated that her child loved advertisements, especially the song and colour of the advertisement.

The literature mentioned that young children cannot yet determine the difference between a cartoon and an advertisement; therefore, using cartoon characters is an effective way to advertise products (Oyewole, Peng and Choudhury, 2010). Seeing the product in an advertisement and in a store with their favourite cartoon character might lead them to ask for the product, according to half of the participants in the qualitative part of this study.

The quantitative and qualitative data analysed in my study indicated that children asked for products in store, but parents would only purchase the product if they could afford it or the child liked the product. According to one respondent in the qualitative data, if another product had exactly the same nutritional value, but not the cartoon characters, children would prefer the product with the characters.

Throughout the past few decades, the literature has indicated that parents and children often interact through advertisements (Sunwandinata, Leonhauser and Boland, 2011). Studies of the influence of advertising on children have yielded varying results, with

some claiming that advertisements have minimal impact and others that the impact was significant. My findings, as reported in chapter 4, indicate that advertisements to some extent do influence children and often lead them to influence the parents' nutritional decisions.

5.3.4 Primary research question: How do the media influence parents' understanding of optimal nutrition for their young child?

All the participants in the quantitative study (83% female and 17% male) knew what an optimal nutritious meal for their young children should contain. The quantitative data indicated that an optimal dinner should contain meat, vegetables and starch. Nevertheless, according to the quantitative data they do not necessarily apply this knowledge because of time constraints and affordability (Van Dillen et al., 2008).

The qualitative data indicates that half of the participants (parents) would purchase new products when seen in store. The literature states that generation after generation makes the same food choices for their households as their parents and that children are likely to follow suit (Bandura, 1986; Nunes, 2014). Other authors indicate that children will try different brands because their peers buy them or they are familiar with the brand because they have seen them on television or social media. Bandura's (1977) theory pointed out that children observed the behaviour of the people in their social environment, further supporting the fact that social groups influence people.

Some authors point out that advertisements for children and adults influence the two groups differently (Adams et al., 2012). Fifteen per cent of participants in the quantitative study (from the parents' perspective) indicated that their children were influenced by advertisements. The literature states that advertising companies target children in order to influence adults (Sunwandinata, Leonhauser and Boland, 2011). Other authors claim that psychological factors, such as colourful images, jingles and cartoon characters, attract children to advertisements (WEBMD, 2015). Of the participants in the quantitative data, 45% indicated that jingles drew their and their children's attention. Two of the participants in the qualitative data indicated that their children were influenced by cartoon characters in advertisements and were also more vulnerable and open to advertisements than adults. Children's eating behaviour and habits can

be influenced by their parents through the food choices they make for the family. All parents in this study stated that while advertisements influenced their choice of food for their children, affordability, health and the child's preferences also played a part.

The main research question was answered with the help of the secondary research questions. Both quantitative and qualitative data indicate that media have a direct and indirect influence on parents' knowledge and choices of optimal meals for their young children. Parents understand a healthy diet, but a parent's choices build a healthy diet for their child. Although they had an understanding of a diet, parents choices were easily influenced.

5.4 Limitations of the study

This study consisted of parent's opinions and the information they supplied. The quantitative part of this study made use of convenience sample of a small group (the questionnaires being distributed to schools close to me), which has the limitation that the researcher is not able to claim with confidence that the selected participants are representative of a population (Brynamn, 2004; Hay, 2005).

Not all the questionnaires were returned; if they had been, it would have strengthened the findings. The questionnaires had many questions, which were the answered more clearly in the qualitative part of the study.

The quantitative part of this study made use of convenience sampling of a small group, with the questionnaires being distributed to schools close to me. The study may therefore not be representative of any particular population. Media in the 21st century is diverting such as Netflix, social media, YouTube and all of the different media forms influence a household's decision making. All of these influence a household's decision making, and this study only looked at television advertisements and iPads. However, I knew all of the different media form has an influence on a household's choices, this study only looked at television advertisements and iPads.

A qualitative study is often subject to the risk of researcher bias. Since I relied on personal interpretations of the selected data in this study, the data could have been

open to the deficiencies of subjectivity and potentially biased interpretations rooted in personal ideas and beliefs. However, approaching this study from a subjective viewpoint opened up possibilities for embracing the essence of qualitative research, which I endeavoured to do in a balanced and thoughtful manner. Even though a researcher can never truly be free from the influence of bias, I attempted to counter such influence through reflexivity. I made notes where I reflected on my own feelings.

The questionnaires were not all returned and could have led to a more positive result on media influence on parents purchasing choices. The questionnaires had a lot of questions that the participants gave multiple answers to, which were answered more clearly in the qualitative part of the study.

5.5 Recommendations and suggestions for future studies

Having assessed the themes and statistical data that emerged, I recommend possible areas for further research and practice.

- Ways in which parents can convince their children to eat healthier meals.
- Effective ways in which parents can apply their knowledge of optimal nutrition more effectively.

- A law that limits food advertising during children's programmes in South Africa.
- The way advertisements indirectly influence parents of young children
- The way one generation influences the next generation's food choices.
- The influence different visual media like iPads, YouTube, Netflix, Facebook and television have on household food choices.

5.6. New insights from the study

This study revealed an important deficiency in the understanding of the way media influence parent's selection of nutrition for their children. There is little literature dealing with this issue in South Africa, while relevant literature on this subject from the USA and Europe is readily available.

New insights included:

- Parents know what an optimal meal consists of, but do not always apply this knowledge when preparing a meal for their children.
- Breakfast during the week differs from breakfast on a weekend due to time constraints.
- Parents are not always aware that they are being influenced by the media in many different ways.
- Parents would purchase the products that they thought were healthy.
- Parents would purchase items with children's favourite cartoon characters on them because children were more likely to eat such food.

5.7. Concluding remarks

Television advertisements and fast-food purchasing have increased in the past few years. Many factors, such as colour, jingles, affordability, healthy living and eating, the influence of parents and peers, precooked meals, culture, the effects of the media, have increased the impact of advertisements. Consequently, the eating habits of children have changed over the past few decades. Advertising has both positive and negative effects. The positive effects are job creation, entertainment, familiarity with products, economic growth; the (potential) negative effect is a general availability of less-than-optimal products and a decline in general health.

This study found that parents and their children can influence their households' food purchasing. Parents purchase products that they can afford and that children prefer to eat or ask for. Parents also influence what children prefer to eat by the food that is purchased. Household purchases are influenced by multiple factors, including brand familiarity, affordability, health, advertising, convenience and household demands. Given this background, advertising plays a role in parents' purchasing decisions. In my study I found that advertisements influenced parents' and children's choices differently. Both groups were influenced through visual media and would try a product when seen in a store, and some parents enjoyed collecting all the collectables with their children, but it was quite significant how affordability would influence a parent's purchasing decisions as well. My new contribution is that visual media influenced children more directly than adults; parents were indirectly influenced by the media through their children, without the parents being aware of it.

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ADDENDA

Addendum A: Letter to DBE (Department of Basic Education)

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Education
University of Pretoria
Cnr Lynnwood Road and Roper Street
Hatfield
South Africa
Tel: 012 420 3111 Fax: 012 420 4555
24 March 2017

Dear Sir/Madam,

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOLS

I am a registered Master's student at the University of Pretoria in the Faculty of Education. My supervisors are Prof JC Joubert and Mrs. MC Moen. I hereby wish to apply for permission to conduct research in Tshwane West District at 10 Pre-primary School. My research project will involve parents of three and four year-olds.

The proposed topic of my research is: **"The role of the media in parents' understanding of optimal nutrition for their young child".** The objectives of the study are:

(a) To determine the role visual media plays on optimal nutrition choices;
(b) To better understand the effect food advertisements have on parents' food choices for their child;
(c) To find out how the media influences parents' knowledge and choice of nutrition and to determine optimal nutrition for young children.

I am hereby seeking your consent to conduct research at your school. To assist you in reaching a decision, I have attached to this letter:

(a) A copy of an ethical clearance letter issued by the University
(b) A copy of research instruments which I intend using in my research

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor. My contact details are as follows:

Addendum B: Letter to School

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Education
University of Pretoria
Cnr Lynnwood Road and Roper Street
Hatfield
South Africa
Tel: 012 420 3111 Fax: 012 420 4555
24 March 2017

The principal

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Request for permission to conduct research

My name is Anelize Gucher-Greeff and I am an Early Childhood Development student at the University of Pretoria. The research I wish to conduct for my Master's degree, involves the role of the media in parents' understanding of optimal nutrition for their young child. This project will be conducted under the supervision of Prof. JC Joubert (UP, South Africa) and Mrs. MC Moen (UP, South Africa).

I am hereby seeking your consent to approach a number of parents in your school to take part in this study

I have provided you with copies of the measure and consent and assent forms to be used in the research process, as well as a copy of the approval letter which I received from the UP Research Ethics Committee (Education).

Upon completion of the study, I undertake to provide the Department of Education with a bound copy of the full research report. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on [anelizegg@gmail.com or 0828695162]. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Anelize Gucher-Greeff (28042868)

Prof JC Joubert

Addendum C: Letter to Parent

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Education
University of Pretoria
Cnr Lynnwood Road and Roper Street
Hatfield
South Africa
Tel: 012 420 3111 Fax: 012 420 4555
24 March 2017

Dear Parent,

Invitation to participate in my research for Master's Degree Thesis

My name is Anelize Gucher-Greeff and I am an Early Childhood Development student at the University of Pretoria. The research I wish to conduct for my Master's degree, involves the role of the media in parents' understanding of optimal nutrition for their young child. This project will be conducted under the supervision of Prof. JC Joubert (UP, South Africa) and Mrs. MC Moen (UP, South Africa).

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Yours sincerely,

Anelize Gucher-Greeff

Prof JC Joubert

Addendum D: Interview schedule

Interview Schedule		
TIME	DATE	PARENT AND SCHOOL
10h00-10h30	16 June 2017	Mom 1 at Home
12h00-12h30	16 June 2017	Mom 2 at Home
15h30-16h00	20 June 2017	Mom 3 at Japsnoetjies
07h30-08h00	26 June 2017	Mom 3 at my school

Table 6.1 Interview schedule

Addendum E: Interview

Interview Questions

1. In your opinion, what is a nutritious meal for your child?

2. How would you describe your child's eating habits?
   Good eater, Picky eater, Eats too much, does not enough
   Other_____

3. How many times a week do you eat a meal with your child?
   Never 1-3 times a week, 4-6 times a week, 7 or more times a week

4. Who prepares the meals for your family?

5. Do you work according to a diet plan? (What diet plan, Reason for following a diet pan)

6. What are your child's favourite food(s)?

7. How many hours is a TV or electronical devices on (includes video games, computer you tube, movies, Gameboy) in your house each day?

8. How do commercials affect your child behaviour and emotions, when they see a product on television?

9. How does a commercial on television affect your behaviour after you have seen in on television?

10. What attracts you to a commercial
11. (low fat food, toys, education, collectables, low calories, colour, information, Characters)

12. Which commercials on television has the biggest influence on your household and why?

13. What makes this commercial, that you have seen on television, stand out from the others (colour, movement, voices, characters, the product)

14. How do you react when your child nagged or bargains with you to buy him/her the product that they request?
15. Does anything influence you to buy certain products (For Example: maybe your child or a commercial you have seen)

16. Who do you think is the target market in most food commercials seen on television? Any reasons for your answer
17. What is the reason for you answer in question 15?

18. Do you want to add anything? Any additional information on eating habits and advertising that you as a parent want to add or discuss.

Addendum F: Questionnaire

Answer the following questions by ticking the appropriate box or by writing your opinion in the space provided.

Please complete all the items, unless advised differently

Full Name: _____

Surname: _____

Contact details: _____

Childs Name: _____

Childs Age: _____

Name of your child's school: _____

A. Gender

Male	
Female	

B. Parents' age

	years old

C. In what area is the Pre-Primary school located?

Urban	
Semi-Urban	
Rural	

1. **Number of hours you watch prime time television per day (4 pm to 9 pm)?**

0 to 1 hours a day	
1 to 2 hours a day	
2 to 3 hours a day	
3 to 4 hours a day	
4 to 5 hours a day	

2. **Number of hours your child watch television a week?**

0 - 2 hours a week	
2 - 4 hours a week	
4 - 6 hours a week	
6 - 8 hours a week	
8+ hours a week	

3. **How often do you eat take-out or pre-cooked meals (e.g. Woolworth's meals)?**

Once a week	
Twice a week	
Three times a week	
Five times a week	
Everyday	
Other (Specify):	

4. **What does your child normally eat for *breakfast*?**

Cereal		Bacon & eggs		Muffin		Toast		Other (specify)

5. What does your child normally eat for *dinner*?

List the items

Meat:	Vegetables:	Starch:	Other (specify)

6. What influences the choice you make when buying food for your household?

Health		Affordability		Family Demands		Any other (Specify)

7. Which of the following advertised products does your child regularly ask for?

Smarties			Toys	
Coke/ Sprite			Lollipops	
Chips			Chocolate bar	
Chocolate bar			Yogi Sip	
Kinder Joy egg			Pizza	
Cereal			McDonald	
KFC			Juice	
Any other (Specify)				

8. Were any of the above purchases made due to advertising?

Due to	Yes	No
Child saw product on television		
Child saw product in a movie		
Child saw product on YouTube		
Parent saw product on television		
Parent saw product in a movie		
Parent saw product in television program		

9. Which aspects of a television commercial draws your attention the most?

Models		Background	
Punch line		Theme	
Photography		Caption	
Colour		Song	

10. If an advertisement motivated you to purchase a product, what was the reason for the purchase?

Product is affordable		Product looks cool	
Product fulfils a need		Child nagging	
Product is healthy		**Product has a lower price**	
Best Value for the Price		Name Brand	
Familiar with product		Product quality	
Purchased because your friends want you to		Product taste better than competition	

11. Does your child recognize advertised products?

Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Everyday

12. Does your child request specific food type?

Yes	
No	

12.1. Please tick list of the food types your child request

Pizza		Sweets		Burgers	
Milk		Pasta		Chicken nuggets	
Yogurt		Fruits		Coke	
Vegetables		Pancakes		Chips	
Chocolate		Cheese		Bread	

13. If your child demands a product in the store, do you buy the product for them?

Yes	
No	

13.1 Please give a reason for you answer in question 13, if yes

Child tantrum		Feel like spoiling my child	
Child is hungry		Sibling already has one	
Child is thirsty		Seen on television	
Get product as reward		Cartoon characters	
Peer pressure			
Any other (Specify)			

14. Who do you think is the target market for most food commercials seen on television?

Children	
Adults	
Both	

15. What are the objectives of television viewing by yourself?

Objectives	Yes	No
To gather information		
To gain education		
To derive entertainment		
To watch advertisements		
To develop personality		
To gain emotional strength		
To spend time with children		
To relax		
Any other (Specify)		

16. How regularly do you watch the following types of TV programs?

	Programs	0-2 times a week	3-5 times a week	6+ times a week
1	News and current affairs			
2	News bulletins			
3	Documentaries			
4	Discussions/Interviews			
5	Movies			
6	Music (vocal/instrumental)			
7	Dance programs			
8	Sports programs			
9	Health Programs			
10	Educational programs			
11	Fashion Show			
12	Advertisements			
13	Development Programs			
14	Animation/ Cartoon			
15	Travel program			

17. Have you been able to detect a link between your food choices and the media?

(Example: Cereal box with cartoon character, Spur)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your participation in the questionnaire