

The Power of Participation: How Can Community Partners Sustain the Halifax Mobile Food Market?

by

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the many individuals and organizations involved in supporting the operation of the Mobile Food Market. They work tirelessly to make affordable foods accessible for neighbourhoods in Halifax with food access issues.

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Abstract

Mobile Food Markets (MFMs) are innovative interventions which can support healthy eating within lower-income communities. MFMs enhance food security by increasing access to healthy food by alleviating travel costs in areas where nutritious and culturally-relevant food options may be limited or challenging to physically or financially access. One such MFM operates within Halifax, Nova Scotia. This market began as a 21-week pilot project as a means to support a healthy and sustainable food movement in Halifax. Pilot evaluation data suggested that community partnerships played a critical role in sustaining the MFM, but little was known about how such partnerships function in this context. The purpose of this project was to explore how the positive outcomes of the MFM could be sustained through effective participation in partnerships.

A feminist poststructural approach, which seeks to understand relations of power, was applied to explore how partnerships function in support of the MFM. This approach facilitated greater understanding of the significance of power relations within MFM partnerships. Findings suggest that mutual benefit, relation to MFM purpose, capacity of the partner, and being able to see the results of their work are important for the sustainability of partnership relations. It was also found that the sustainability of relationships with communities depended upon fostering community involvement and building trusting relationships. Funding relationships were also identified as necessary for the MFM to operate. The results of this research may be used to inform strategies to develop and sustain effective partnerships within the MFM in Halifax.

List of Abbreviations Used

FoodARC – Food Action Research Centre

FPS – Feminist Poststructuralism

HRM – Halifax Regional Municipality

MFM – Mobile Food Market

NSHA – Nova Scotia Health Authority

SES – Social Economic Status

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Consuming nutritious food is a fundamental practice for a healthy life, and important for the prevention of chronic diseases (Leone, Haynes-Maslow, & Ammerman, 2017). Unfortunately, not everyone has the same access to healthy foods (Wang, Tao, Qiu, & Lu, 2015). Food security exists when all people at all times have sufficient access to safe and nutritious food (Food and Agriculture Organization, 1996). There are many reasons a household or community may not be food secure; food insecurity is a dynamic process influenced by a variety of factors, all of which are directly related to income (Kirk et al., 2014). Factors might include financial, geographic and transportation-related access barriers. This is the reason food insecurity is prevalent among low-income areas (McIntyre, Patterson, Anderson, & Mah, 2016).

Background

Interventions used to impact food insecurity include improving availability of affordable housing, improved wages, and food programs (Tarasuk, 2017) such as Mobile Food Markets (MFM). MFMs are innovative interventions created to support healthy eating in communities which may experience decreased access to nutritious food options (Leone et al., 2017). MFMs aim to enhance food security by increasing access to nutritious foods and lessening the often-prohibitive transportation costs in areas which may have decreased access to healthy foods, particularly areas experiencing lower incomes or availability of community resources (Widener, Metcalf, & Bar-Yam, 2012).

Context and Significance of Study

The Halifax MFM began in May 2016, as a 21-week pilot project as a means to support a healthy and sustainable food movement in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada (MFM, 2017). The pilot evaluation found various positive outcomes arising from the MFM (MFM, 2017). It was

discovered that the partners who work to keep the MFM in operation play a crucial role in the success of the MFM and in the process of sustaining the positive outcomes of the market (MFM, 2017).

Research Questions and Purpose

The purpose of this case study was to understand how partnerships operate within the case of the MFM in Halifax and how they function in the sustainability of the market. There is one main research question and several sub-questions that were answered to fulfill the purpose of this research study.

Main research question:

- How do partnerships operate within the MFM and how are they sustained?

Sub-questions:

- What does it mean to partners to participate in the MFM?
- How do partners view their role within the MFM?
- What levels of participation are partners at on Arnstein's *Ladder of Citizen Participation*?
How does this affect the outcomes and sustainability of the MFM?
- What power relations exist within the MFM partnerships? How do these affect the way the MFM runs?
- How can partnerships within the MFM become sustainable in the long term?
- How are social and institutional partnership discourses constructed within the MFM?

Study Design and Methods

This research involved a case study, with the Halifax MFM representing the case. In case study methods, the researcher collects comprehensive data about the case, which is defined by specific parameters including time and situational context (Creswell, 2014). A feminist

poststructural approach was also used to guide and analyze the proposed research, in order to gain perspective on how power is related to partnerships within the MFM, and how partnerships affect the outcomes of the MFM. Power relations that exist within the market were examined, and knowledge was acquired regarding how the positive outcomes of the MFM can be sustained through effective participation in partnerships.

The researcher understood that she had an influence on her research and viewed herself as a subject in her research (Butler, 1992). She took into consideration that she was not a partner within the MFM or a member of any of the communities in which the MFM operated. Being an outside researcher may have influenced the results of this study as the researcher did not have pre-existing biases from previous experiences living in or working with any of the community markets or MFM partners. The researcher may have also influenced the results of this study as the researcher did not know the historical context of the operation of the MFM in each community.

The researcher also took into consideration that her undergraduate degree in Human Nutrition and keen interest in understanding and affecting food security issues in the HRM may have had an impact on the way she perceived participant experiences, as well as the fact that she had never experienced food insecurity. To acknowledge these potential biases, the researcher practiced being self-reflexive before and throughout interviews by reflecting on her own values, beliefs, gender, race, social position, personality and experiences (Hesse-Biber et al., 2007).

Summary

This research study sought to explore partnerships in the case of the MFM in Halifax. The purpose of the study was to gather an understanding of the factors that influence sustainability in the MFM. A feminist poststructural approach allowed for insight into the power relations that

exist among partners in Halifax's MFM. The following review of the literature details concepts and literature relevant to understanding the context of this research study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The following chapter explores some of the most recent literature related to food security, Mobile Food Markets (MFMs), partnerships, and the frameworks that were used to understand the research problem explored in this study. This chapter seeks to define and discuss each of these concepts in detail.

Food Security

It is widely understood that consumption of a diet comprised of foods high in nutritional value has various health benefits (Chapman et al., 2016), although many individuals do not consume enough nutrient-dense foods, particularly fruits and vegetables (Leone et al., 2017). Many reasons exist for the under-consumption of these foods, including access, affordability, quality, variety, and availability (Boyington, Schoster, Martin, Shreffler, & Callahan, 2004). Access to nutritious foods differs among populations (Wang et al., 2015). Factors such as gender, social position, and income can impact and influence access to nutritious food (McIntyre, Patterson, Anderson, & Mah, 2016).

Food security is a term that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s and was defined as the ability to meet aggregate food needs in a consistent way (von Braun, Bouis, Kumar, & Pandya-Lorch, 1992). Over the years, the definition has changed several times, and many definitions of food security currently exist. The definition developed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations through the 1996 World Food Summit was “Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (Food and Agriculture Organization, 1996). In the 2018 report, *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World*, it was declared that there remains considerable work to be done in terms of

addressing the alarming signs of increasing food insecurity and high levels of malnutrition throughout the world (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, & WHO, 2018).

Impact of socio-economic status (SES). Individuals with a low SES often plan their food purchasing around food assistance benefits, pay cheques, or when they have access to a vehicle (Andress & Fitch, 2016). In many households, expenses such as rent and utilities may receive precedence over food purchases (Travers, 1996). Strategies or unsustainable practices may be developed by food insecure individuals to meet food intake needs (Hamelin, Habicht, & Beaudry, 1999). These strategies may include the regular use of food banks, selling personal belongings for food, parents depriving themselves of food to feed their children, borrowing food or money from family and friends, and other strategies (Hamelin et al., 1999). Poor health outcomes are often associated with and influenced by food insecurity (Blue Bird Jernigan et al., 2017).

Chronic disease. Food insecurity and chronic diseases are greatly interconnected; it has been found that individuals experiencing food insecurity are at a greater risk for developing diet-related chronic disease (Seligman, Laraia, & Kushel, 2009). Food insecurity is a cyclic phenomenon; chronic food restriction generally leads to greater intake of less expensive, energy dense foods, and overconsumption during times of adequate food supply, in anticipation of times of food scarcity (Seligman & Schilinger, 2010). A 2018 study found that long-term food bank users in Vancouver Canada had a higher prevalence of cardiovascular risk factors compared to the general population (Fowokan, Black, Holmes, Seto, & Lear, 2018).

The stress associated with food insecurity leads to negative social outcomes (McIntyre et al., 2016). This stress may be caused by the constant uncertainty regarding access to food, and could lead to the release of cortisol, which in turn can influence visceral fat accumulation, altered

metabolism, and the development of chronic disease (Laraia, 2012). Dependence on inexpensive, energy-dense foods could also lead to weight gain over time, (Laraia, 2012) influencing the development of obesity and other weight-related chronic diseases (Kirk et al., 2014).

Food Systems

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization, food systems are the processes and infrastructure which are used to feed a population (Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO], 2014). They are made up of the activities and people involved in the production, aggregation, processing, distribution, consumption, and disposal of food products (FAO, 2018). It is important to understand the everyday patterns of food production and consumption, and local food movements, as well as the social context within which local food systems have evolved and operate, because these can influence and inform policy, social programs, and economic development (Gatrell, Ried, & Ross, 2011).

Food security, ecosystems, and social welfare are all highly impacted by the way food systems operate (Eriksen, 2008). In many instances food security, nutrition and the prevalence of hunger have improved due to increased proficiency of food systems (Eriksen, 2008). Improving food systems takes time (Barnhill et al., 2018) however, there is a pressing need to develop and implement policies and practices to create a shift toward more sustainable food systems so that people can have universal access to healthy food (Lindgren, et al., 2018).

Municipal food systems. Food security, affordability, and access all play a role in the health and nutrition status of a municipality (McRae & Donahue, 2013). Municipal planning policies and zoning by-laws have the ability to support local food systems as they determine how land is used within the municipality (Deloitte, 2013). Food is fundamental to a well-functioning municipality (McRae & Donahue, 2013). Municipalities play a pivotal role in the establishment

of robust, healthy, local food systems and food environments (Halifax Food Policy Alliance, 2015).

Many municipalities throughout Canada are working to make sustainable, health promoting, and cost-effective improvements to create adequate food systems (McRae & Donahue, 2013). In Vancouver, Canada, municipal policies support the availability of local food in their food system yet challenges still exist around equitable and adequate access for citizens (Valley & Wittman, 2019). A food system is considered to be adequate if citizens have the ability to acquire sufficient quantities of culturally appropriate, safe and nutritious food produced in a sustainable manner, without requiring access to charitable food sources (Halifax Food Policy Alliance, 2015). Municipalities need innovative, integrated initiatives to meet the complex food needs within municipalities that may affect food security (McRae & Donahue, 2013).

Built environment. The built environment is an important aspect of communities and food systems. The built environment is a term used to describe the way in which land is used within a community and includes the design of the transportation system, food outlets, urban design, and other systems (Keast, Carlson, Chapman, & Michael, 2010). Over the past two decades, the role that the built environment plays in health, diet, and obesity has been studied by many researchers, and their findings have been used to inform practice and policy (Glanz, Sallis, & Saelens, 2015). According to a review conducted to understand the research that has been done concerning food access and health disparities, living closer to healthy food retailers is associated with better eating habits and decreased incidence of diet-related chronic diseases (Arcadia Mobile Market, n.d.).

A community's physical food environment can influence a person's ability to choose healthy foods, based on the availability of fresh and healthy food at nearby stores, and whether

transportation is required to reach healthy foods (Raine, 2005). 'Food deserts' are understood as areas in which people lack access to affordable and nutritious foods, that are often found in highly populated, low income areas (Wang, Qiu, & Swallow, 2014). Food desert communities can cause food insecurity for their residents; access issues with food deserts are associated with chronic illnesses and high levels of stress (Riches, 2014).

A Canadian study examined access to grocery stores and farmers' markets in Calgary, Alberta (Lu & Qiu, 2015). They found that two communities with high need and low access were considered to be food deserts. The results from this study were used to propose a potential best site for the construction of a new grocery store (Lu & Qiu, 2015). A study in London, Ontario found that the addition of a Farmer's Market in their 'Old East' community which was characterized as a food desert facilitated greater availability of healthy food in this area and lowered overall household food costs for this community (Larsen & Gilliland, 2009). Wang, Qiu, & Swallow found that community gardens and farmers' markets can help increase access to fresh foods in food deserts (2014). Although the addition of community gardens would not 'cure' issues associated with food deserts, they are helpful for increasing access to fresh produce, along with providing a range of social benefits (Wang et al., 2014).

The built environment also plays a role in the sustainability of interventions focused on healthy eating choices and life behaviours (Jackson, 2003) as it defines the lifestyle choices available to community residents (Keast et al., 2010). Supportive government paired with regional coordination could lead to improved population health over time by increasing access to local, nutritious foods through local food system initiatives (Wegener, Raine, & Hanning, 2012). It is important for policy makers and community planners to understand and recognize the role

that food and activity, and their interactions, play in the built environments within communities (DeWeese et al., 2018).

Mobile Food Markets (MFMs)

MFMs offer an alternative approach to meeting the food needs of communities with decreased access to healthy foods, within a municipality. They are a recently established, cost-effective alternative to brick-and-mortar stores, used to distribute fresh produce and other healthy foods (Zepeda, Reznickova, & Lohr, 2014). The first MFM was created in 2003 by People's Grocery in California, USA, to bring affordable, healthy food to low income areas (Community Commons, 2012). The notion of a MFM has been well received; various communities around the world have implemented MFMs, which have been adapted to fit the needs of communities (Community Commons, 2012).

Often, MFMs are developed in response to identified needs by low-income communities to gain increased access to fresh fruits and vegetables (Leone et al., 2017). They have been found to facilitate healthy eating in 'food deserts', places where residents lack adequate access to healthy foods, which are often associated with low-income areas (Zepeda et al., 2014). In a 2019 study of a MFM in Texas, United States, researchers found that MFM customers self-reported their health as being good, fair, or poor rather than excellent or very good (Ylitalo, During, Thomas, Ezell, Lillard, & Scott). MFMs provide a unique service by seeking to improve health through increasing access to affordable, high quality fruits and vegetables by transporting them to lower income areas (Widener et al., 2012). It has been found that people are more likely to purchase fruits and vegetables if they are affordable, easily accessible and considered to be of appropriate quality to the consumers (Blitstein, Snider, & Evans, 2012). A travelling market aids in the

removal of the often-prohibitive travel costs associated with accessing many grocery stores and farmer's markets (Widener et al., 2012; Leone et al., 2017).

Formal evaluations of various MFMs have been conducted and have found many ways in which MFMs are beneficial to the communities within which they operate such as an increase in perceived food access and consumption of fresh produce (Gary-Webb et al., 2018; Leone et al., 2018). Five dimensions of food environments have been used to understand the complexity of food environments and access to fresh produce. These include availability, accessibility, affordability, acceptability and accommodation (Caspi, Sorensen, Subramanian, & Kawachi, 2012; Hsiao, Sibeko, Wicks, & Troy, 2018).

The Arcadia Center for Sustainable Food & Agriculture runs a mobile market in the Washington, D.C. area (Arcadia Mobile Market, n.d.). They have created a detailed report outlining the lessons learned in the establishment and operation of their market with the intention of making the report available to help other communities who are starting their own MFMs (Arcadia Mobile Market, n.d.).

FoodShare Toronto has created a similar resource as a guide for how to create a Mobile good food market (FoodShare Toronto, n.d.). Mobile good food markets are similar to MFMs in that they bridge the gap between farmers and low-income communities by purchasing fruits and vegetables from local farmers and distributing produce to markets in low-income communities (FoodShare Toronto, n.d.). Toronto's Mobile good food market is part of the Toronto Public Health Food Strategy project which began in 2010 as links between poor nutrition, obesity and chronic disease were noticed among Toronto's low-income neighbourhoods (Canadian Public Health Agency, n.d.). It was discovered that these neighbourhoods had the least access to public transportation and grocery stores, so the mobile good food market was developed as a solution to

these issues (Canadian Public Health Agency, n.d.). In Ottawa, Ontario a ‘grocery store on wheels’ was launched by MarketMobile and received a grant from the Ottawa Community Foundation to help them expand in 2015 (Ottawa Community Foundation, n.d.). Through this initiative, ‘good food boxes’ are brought to Ottawa’s most vulnerable neighbourhoods, packed by volunteers, and delivered to volunteer-run sites once a month (Ottawa Good Food Box, n.d.). Good food boxes contain affordable, locally sourced, seasonal food and can be purchased by anyone (Ottawa Good Food Box, n.d.).

In Montreal, Quebec, a mobile market is run out of a truck by a social economy organization called Relais laurentien (Arvanitakis, 2017). The market brings food to nine locations across Montreal as part of Montreal’s Integrated Urban Revitalization program. Some items from the market are priced similarly to those in grocery stores, and some are more affordable, however customers know that any profits are reinvested in the community (Arvanitakis, 2017).

Another Canadian MFM exists in Calgary, launched in 2018 by the Leftovers Foundation to bring groceries to neighbourhoods identified as ‘food deserts’ (Hunt, 2018; Leftovers Calgary, n.d.). During the development of this initiative, the Leftovers Foundation worked with the social work component of the City of Calgary to survey communities to gather an understanding of what types of food community members would like brought to them (Hunt, 2018). The goals of this MFM are to increase access to fresh produce, reduce social isolation in communities, and to enhance food literacy and skills (Leftovers Calgary, n.d.). The Leftovers Foundation has incorporated its own social enterprise into the operation of the MFM called Fresh Routes, which is dedicated to increasing food security in communities and households in Calgary (Leftovers Calgary, n.d.).

There are several challenges associated with the effectiveness of MFMs. These may include the lack of knowledge about nutrition among market customers, the affordability of the produce in comparison to lower-cost foods available at grocery stores, the lack of awareness of the existence of a MFM, and finally, building trust with the community (Zepeda et al., 2014).

There is a limited collection of literature regarding the evaluation, effectiveness, and sustainability of MFMs, as MFMs are a relatively recent phenomenon. More research is needed to understand the breadth of the impacts of MFMs, their importance within lower-income communities and food deserts, and how to sustain their positive impacts on communities.

Health Promotion Relevance

The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion was created at the First International Conference on Health Promotion (World Health Organization [WHO], 1986). Health promotion was defined through the Ottawa Charter as, “the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health” (WHO, 1986). The Ottawa Charter identified several prerequisites for health and strategies for how health promotion action might take place.

One of these is to strengthen community action by planning and implementing strategies based on local priorities and giving communities the opportunity to take ownership over their local endeavours and community actions (WHO, 1986). Community action provides opportunity for improving the health of community members because of the possibilities that lie in changing the environments in which people live and operate to support healthier lifestyles (Thompson, Coronado, Snipes, & Puschel, 2003). Community capacity building strategies such as MFMs help improve food security and local food systems by providing opportunities for community members to build support networks within their community, talk about issues affecting their food security and to work together to support change (NSNC & AHPRC, 2005). Building community

capacity through health promotion initiatives has been found to positively impact the long-term capability of communities to improve the health of their residents (Nickel, Süß, Lorentz, & Trojan, 2018).

Community development draws on resources already existing in the community to strengthen participation of residents in local initiatives (WHO, 1986). A balance between community action and building strong and nurturing relationships facilitates community development (Warner et al., 2010). It is important to recognize that the definition of a community in this context extends beyond the geographic understanding of a community, and that people who act toward shared goals are also defined as a community in this context (Laverack & Mohammadi, 2011).

MFMs are a great example of a health promotion strategy used to strengthen community action using community development. MFMs empower community partners to collaborate and address health inequities associated with food security by drawing on resources that already exist within the community. Interventions focused on community action and empowerment are noteworthy health promotion initiatives because they provide individuals and communities with the opportunity to impact change in a meaningful way through changes that are necessary for improving their health (Laverack & Mohammadi, 2011).

Another area for health promotion action is creating supportive environments, which means that society should be organized in a way to foster healthy, enjoyable and safe living and working conditions (WHO, 1986). The relationship between health and the social and physical environment is recognized through common practices in health promotion which are implemented with the intentions of leading to better health outcomes for the population (Wagemakers, Vaandrager, Koelen, Saan, & Leeuwis, 2009).

The use of MFMs in communities is a health promotion strategy and community initiative that could aid in the fostering of supportive environments. MFMs address food security issues by increasing access to nutritious foods for populations who might not have the ability to readily access these types of foods. This might help them to increase control over and improve their health as it makes healthy choices easier for them to make.

Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) Context

In the HRM, rates of preventable, nutrition-related chronic diseases are on the rise, and are currently higher than the average national rate (Halifax Food Policy Alliance, 2015). Additionally, within the HRM, 14.7% of the population are not able to maintain a basic standard of living (Statistics Canada, 2016). The average rate of poverty is 14.8% which equates to 58,830 people living with low income in the HRM, according to 2016 statistics (Dennis Pilkey, 2017). Poverty can be found throughout every part of the HRM (United Way Halifax, 2018). As such, food insecurity is a significant and growing problem in Nova Scotian households (Voices for Food Security in Nova Scotia, 2017).

Food insecurity and food systems. Throughout Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM), many residents are not able to afford a healthy diet; living on low wages or income assistance may make it difficult to access and afford healthy foods (Halifax Food Policy Alliance, 2015). Between 2002 and 2015, the monthly cost of a basic nutritious diet for a family of four increased by 63% in Nova Scotia (FoodARC, 2017). In 2013 and 2014, 15.1% of Halifax households experienced food insecurity (Tarasuk, Mitchell, & Dachner, 2014). Only one quarter of Nova Scotians reported consuming the recommended daily amount of fruit and vegetables to prevent and manage chronic diseases in 2015 (Statistics Canada, 2017). With the current rates of household food insecurity, and the rising cost of food, many individuals may find it difficult to

meet their daily requirements for fruits and vegetables and other nutritious food needed to prevent and manage chronic diseases (Halifax Food Policy Alliance, 2015). Additionally, a lack of food-related knowledge and skills exists; awareness and effective initiatives are needed to ensure that all Halifax residents are food secure (Halifax Food Policy Alliance, 2015).

Many socio-economic conditions also impact food security in HRM. These include the high number of low-income households, and the high proportion of children living in low-income households within HRM. Many neighbourhoods throughout HRM lack places to purchase healthy foods (Halifax Food Policy Alliance, 2015) or lack of access to reliable transportation (Voices for Food Security in Nova Scotia, 2017). It was found that the distribution of grocery stores and access to other food outlets is sparse outside of the central urban area (K. Poirier, personal communication, September 4, 2018). Low income is often a barrier to accessing healthy food, however living in neighbourhoods with few healthy food retailers further compounds this problem (MFM, 2017).

Throughout Nova Scotia and within the HRM, there have been several initiatives to support the movement towards a healthy, just, and sustainable food system (Halifax Food Policy Alliance, 2015). In 2016, Community Health Teams throughout the province were recognized for their work to support community wellness and build capacity across Nova Scotian communities in reducing chronic disease (Nova Scotia Health Authority [NSHA], 2017). The Halifax Food Policy Alliance has also recently developed the *HRM Food Charter*, with the purpose of revitalizing and strengthening the food system in the HRM (Halifax Food Policy Alliance, 2019). The charter outlines principles necessary for creating a just and sustainable food system (Halifax Food Policy Alliance, 2019). Other organizations working toward improving food security in Nova Scotia include the Ecology Action Centre, Feed Nova Scotia, Farmers'

Markets of Nova Scotia, Food Action Research Centre (FoodARC), FarmWorks, Agri-Futures, NS Alliance for Healthy Eating & Physical Activity, and many others (Ramen & Hart, 2017).

Several reports and plans have been created over the past few years describing the strategies for, and the need to improve food security in Halifax (MFM, 2018). Mount Saint Vincent University's FoodARC has developed several reports with the purpose of build on the growing movement in Nova Scotia for a positive change in food security (Activating Change Together for Community Food Security, 2014) and for conceptualizing the costs of a basic nutritious diet in Nova Scotia (Voices for Food Security in Nova Scotia, 2017).

The report, *Making Food Matter: Strategies for activating change together* highlighted mobile/pop-up fresh and local food outlets as a “timely opportunity for change” with potential for improving food access (Activating Change Together for Community Food Security, 2014). Mobile markets were also identified as an opportunity for addressing community food insecurity through community dialogues with the NSHA (MFM, 2018). A report titled *Halifax Smart Cities Proposal* was recently released by the HRM, highlighting the goal of making Halifax Canada's most food secure city (HRM, 2018). This report proposed to build upon the success of many initiatives that are currently underway, including Halifax's MFM (HRM, 2018).

Halifax's MFM. Halifax's MFM is a not-for-profit initiative that developed as a means to support a local healthy and sustainable food movement (MFM, 2017; MFM, 2018). The MFM was developed based on reports, guides, manuals, academic literature and lessons learned from previously evaluated markets, including Arcadia's Mobile Market in Washington, D.C. (Arcadia Mobile Market, n.d.) and Toronto's Good Food Markets (FoodShare Toronto, n.d.). The work of Halifax's MFM has been recognized in several local reports (HRM, 2018; United Way Halifax,

2018) and a through a variety of news articles, press releases, and other forms of media. Currently the MFM operates in twelve locations across six communities.

This idea has been spreading across Nova Scotia, as different forms of mobile food distribution have recently been piloted or planned to launch including a Good Food Bus in Cape Breton (Jala, 2019) and a food box program in Digby (CBC News, 2019).

Mission, vision and purpose. The vision of the MFM is “creating healthy, strong, vibrant communities through food” (MFM, 2018, p.5). It launched as a 21-week pilot project in May, 2016, and operated on a city bus travelling to five different communities within HRM (MFM, 2017). Based on the success of the pilot project, the MFM launched again during the Winter and Spring of 2017 (MFM, 2018).

The mission of the MFM is “to support community access to fresh, affordable, and culturally-appropriate vegetables and fruit” (MFM, 2018, p.5). This is fulfilled through the offering of an abundant selection of fresh and affordable fruits, vegetables and bread, which change from week-to-week, based on price, customer preference, and availability (MFM, 2017). The purpose of the MFM is “To deliver fresh, healthy, affordable fruits and vegetables to communities within the Halifax region with limited access to healthy food” (MFM, 2018, p.5).

Produce packs were piloted in one community during the May 2016 MFM pilot, where they were very well received (MFM, 2018). Feedback from the pilot suggested that moving the market to an indoor location in each community would ensure customers were comfortable despite the cooler weather. Several other communities decided to launch the produce pack delivery model to meet the needs of their community during the Winter and Spring of 2017; some of these communities continue to offer this model on an ongoing basis. Produce packs provide residents with the opportunity to place an order in advance to buy a bag of fresh produce

for ten dollars (MFM, 2018). These are meant for people who aren't able to make it to the Saturday market to pick up their produce. The 'Food Box Program' is a MFM initiative which was launched in one community and focused on providing fresh fruits and vegetables to seniors in the community who were living at Metropolitan Regional Housing Authority seniors manors (MFM, 2017). A new area the Halifax MFM is beginning to explore is a bulk sales model where organizations can order produce in bulk to sell to their community in a less intensive fashion than a full market. Having multiple delivery options for obtaining fresh, affordable produce through the MFM creates accessible and practical options for market-goers.

The MFM has several objectives to meet their vision, mission, and purpose. These include:

- “Improving the accessibility of fresh, high quality, fruits and vegetables for residents”
- “Increasing engagement and collaboration among and between existing and new partners”
- “Building capacity among community volunteers and local hosts to play an active role in shaping good systems in their communities”
- “Enhancing the sense of neighbourhood pride and community engagement among residents, MFM visitors and customers”, and
- “Assessing the market potential for alternative methods of food distribution for under-served communities within the Halifax region” (MFM, 2018, p.5).

Partnerships. A governance structure, which includes a variety of diverse partners, informed by relevant stakeholders, was created to support implementation of the MFM and to fulfill the purpose and objectives of the MFM (MFM, 2017). Partners involved in the MFM include a MFM Advisory Team, consisting of the host organization, MFM Manager, MFM Coordinator, local community host teams, a local host organization, and community volunteers. The role of the MFM Manager and MFM Coordinator are to plan, implement, evaluate, and report on the

daily operational logistics of the market. Local host teams focus on partnership building and public outreach with their local community. The local host organization supports accounting, administration, business and sustainability planning (MFM, 2017).

Partnership agreements were created and signed by each of the local host teams which outline the responsibilities of the team and the expectations regarding the funds provided to them to support market implementation (MFM, 2017). The advisory team provides expertise in the operational and evaluation aspects of the MFM, as well as identifying priority neighbourhoods and acting as a liaison with local farmers and communities (MFM, 2017).

Evaluations. Two evaluations of the MFM have been completed (MFM, 2017; MFM, 2018). The first was an evaluation of the Summer/Fall 21-week MFM pilot which was led by a Public Health Evaluator using a developmental evaluation approach. The purpose of this evaluation was to “assess the extent to which the original project objectives were achieved, while also identifying and highlighting key lessons learned during the pilot to inform next steps” and to provide the proof of concept (MFM, 2017).

Data collection methods and tools included customer feedback posters, comment cards and surveys, tracking of market sales, world café conversation with Local Host Teams and community volunteers, a key informant interview with the project coordinator, a focus group with the advisory team, and journaling (MFM, 2017). This evaluation found that the market had many positive impacts on the participating communities, including improved food access, increased fruit and vegetable intake, enhanced neighbourhood pride and community engagement, enhanced collaboration and strengthening of partnerships among new and existing MFM partners, and increased capacity of residents and volunteers to shape food systems in their community (MFM, 2017).

A second evaluation was carried out using an impact evaluation approach to understand whether this concept would work during the colder months by evaluating the market over a 14-week period during the Winter and Spring of 2017 (K. Poirier, personal communication, September 5, 2018). It focused on assessing the extent to which the original objectives of the MFM were achieved and identifying the key lessons learned to help plan the next steps for the market (MFM, 2018).

Data was collected through customer surveys, customer testimonials, tracking market sales, and key informant interviews (MFM, 2018). The evaluation findings gave insight into how the MFM aided in enhancing access to healthy, fresh, affordable foods, and the barriers associated with accessing the market, how the MFM was reaching its intended populations, how the MFM enhanced neighbourhood pride, and how the MFM influenced municipal mandate and policies (MFM, 2018).

Various benefits were identified through the second evaluation of the MFM. Market customers expressed that the market made buying fruits and vegetables more affordable for them in the winter months (MFM, 2018), that the market provided an accessible option for those with mobility issues to purchase healthy food, that the market provided a great social connection for the community, the MFM has enhanced understanding of the municipal role in addressing social issues including food security and poverty (MFM, 2018), along with numerous other benefits.

A guide titled *Launching a Mobile Food Market – A How-to Guide to Planning a Mobile Food Distribution Initiative* was recently created to offer advice and insight to other communities or cities who may be interested in starting a similar community food project (MFM, n.d.). This guide shares information and lessons learned regarding the MFM model, the ordering

process, decisions regarding time, place and community selection, and the ingredients of a successful MFM, among others (MFM, n.d.).

Research importance. Through the process of planning and implementing the market, and through the evaluation findings, positive relationships between partners were recognized as being integral to the success of the MFM (MFM, 2017). Partnerships were found to be strengthened between existing partners, while new partnerships were also developed. Community organizations who would not typically work collaboratively together had developed partnerships in their work together toward a common goal (MFM, 2017). A variety of partner organization types were involved and included recreation centres, libraries, community health centres, churches, health teams, family resource institutes, health boards, day care centres, grocery stores, municipal councillors, and many more. Further details about partner organization types and quantities in the pre-pilot and pilot phase of the market can be found in Appendix A.

Additionally, NSHA highlighted their focus on partnerships to improve the health of Nova Scotians through a systems approach in their 2016-2017 Annual Report, *Healthier Together: The Power of Partnerships* (NSHA, 2017). In order to ensure long-term sustainability of the MFM, and of the positive outcomes associated with the MFM, it is important that these partnerships are effectively sustained (MFM, 2017).

Partnerships and Participation

Many partners must be involved in complex health promotion interventions to affect the target population through multiple levels of influence. To ensure successful initiatives with long term impacts, partnerships must be organized in a comprehensive manner to include appropriate partners who share a common vision (Addison et al., 2016).

Research on partnerships has defined partnerships in many different ways. For the purposes of this study, partnerships can be understood as collaborative engagements between two or more individuals from different domains of society, working toward a mutual and sustainable goal (Huijstee, Francken, & Leroy, 2007). Many studies have sought to gather information on the nature of partnerships in different contexts to attempt to understand the factors that affect their success and sustainability. However, to the researcher's knowledge, there have not been any studies focusing on understanding factors affecting the operation and sustainability of partnerships within the context of MFMs, or understanding community partnerships, or partnership sustainability factors guided through a feminist poststructural lens.

There are several topics in the partnership literature which are particularly important to this study, which will be outlined throughout this section. These include the importance of methodology and theoretical approaches in partnership research, factors affecting partnership development, operation, and sustainability, and community partnerships.

Methodology and theoretical approaches in partnership research. It was determined by Kelly (2004) that there is a gap in the partnership literature surrounding theory and methodology as there is no specific theory or methodology used to understand partnership mechanisms and outcomes. Kinge (2014) conducted a study in attempt to fill this gap by examining partnership relationships through the use of the social exchange theory, to identify success factors and barriers in partnership development and sustainability on the institutional level of the National Health Service (Kinge, 2014). Social exchange theory was proposed by Homans in 1958 and states that social behaviour is an exchange process; as people interact, they try to maximize benefits and minimize costs, which generally tends to balance at an equilibrium between the two parties.

In a qualitative research study done by Prigge and Torraco (2006), grounded theory was used to examine American universities who had established and maintained partnerships with industries, and the organizational structures and processes used within these relations. Grounded theory was developed by Glaser and Strauss in 1967 and is a method of comparative analysis which seeks to construct or generate theory from data, which has been systematically obtained and analyzed. Radcliffe and colleagues studied systems-level characteristics and change in community partnerships over time, providing support services for pregnant and parenting teens (Radcliffe, Hale, Browder, & Cartledge, 2018). However, the context of this study is different from that of the MFM as they were examining community partnerships related to a parenting program, and they used social network analysis (Radcliffe et al., 2018), which was not used for this research study. Social network analysis is used to understand the structure of the relationships that exist within partnerships between multiple partners (Provan, Veazie, Staten, & Teufel-Shone, 2005).

A longitudinal case study was done in the UK which involved a local multi-agency partnership which was established to tackle domestic violence (Harvie & Manzi, 2011). This study used Fairclough's theories of discourse which seek to connect language and social and cultural processes (1992). The methodology and theory guiding Harvie and Manzi's research are similar to this study as they focus on power relations and discourses in institutional practices and social processes, however, the context of the MFM is unique to this study.

Although the theories and methodologies outlined above are interesting and may be relevant to the current study, more research should be conducted to understand the power relations and discourses which exist in partnerships using other theoretical frameworks and methodologies.

These studies have demonstrated the importance of using theories and methodologies in partnership research.

Partnership development, operation and sustainability. It is important to understand the motives behind why a partnership begins to help build an understanding of the factors which influence the operation and sustainability of the partnership. The existing partnership literature provides a background of factors which influence partnership development, operation and sustainability in many contexts and settings, however, most of these contexts are not similar enough to that of the MFM to presume the same factors to influence MFM partnerships.

A literature review was conducted by Huijstee, Francken, and Leroy (2007), examining partnerships for sustainable development. Various types of research were explored to gather an understanding of what exists in terms of partnership literature, the type of knowledge acquired through the existing research, and what knowledge gaps exist (Huijstee, Francken, & Leroy, 2007). Although this literature review holds valuable and relevant information for understanding partnership sustainability from both the institutional and individual perspective, the review does not include research on partnership sustainability in the MFM context; this is an important gap in the literature that must be filled.

Other researchers have discussed factors affecting partnership development, operation and sustainability. Kinge discussed the drivers and motives involved in the initiation of partnerships, the factors involved in the development and sustainability and strengthening of partnerships, and the outcomes of partnerships (2014). Kinge's study (2014) also provided an understanding of how partnerships may be sustained over time, through changes in circumstances. However, the findings from this study and factors identified are not be transferrable to MFM partnerships as the context is different and factors are not applicable to the MFM context.

Prigge and Torracco identified that locating, securing and maintaining partnerships was a central responsibility of the university partners in their study, who successfully maintained partnerships with industries (2006). Benefits, which may be potential drivers, of partnerships described in this article included financial support, enhancement of economic development, increase in opportunities, and identification of relevant problems for universities in their partnerships with institutions (Prigge & Torracco, 2006).

Many factors have been identified in the literature as potential influences on partnership development, operation, and sustainability. However, these factors are not necessarily transferrable to the context of the MFM as the partners and setting are vastly different from many studies in the literature.

Community partnerships. Partnerships within the community setting was important for the current study as community partnerships operate differently than partnerships in other contexts. The literature suggests that community partnership's characteristics may influence the way partnerships operate in that community. In a study by Radcliffe and colleagues, it was found that monitoring a community partnership's characteristics can inform opportunities for change that may influence the effectiveness and sustainability of the partnership (Radcliffe et al., 2018). Understanding the way community partnerships operate has been found to help address community needs. Provan et al. found that communities can enhance their ability to address needs in communities by documenting and tracking the relationships that exist between community partners (2005).

A study exploring partnerships for community action took place in Nova Scotia to understand experiences in youth action teams, which consisted of young people and supportive adults taking action on community issues important to them (Warner, Langlois & Dumond,

2010). It was found through this study that successful community partnerships through youth action teams involve shared values among team members which are identified by the youth, have clearly defined roles for adults and youth in the youth action team, and involve thoughtful decisions regarding how to work with community members for community action (Warner et al., 2010).

Through a review of the literature, it was found that large portion of the published research on community partnerships is related to relations between schools or universities and the community. For example, Hartman and colleagues (2017) examined how partnerships between schools and communities may support children who experience maltreatment. University-community partnerships were also commonly found in the literature, for example, Nation et al. studied power relations in university-community partnerships in a study looking at levels of community engagement in youth violence prevention (2011). Whittaker and colleagues suggested that urban universities have a unique opportunity to help communities work toward creating equitable community food systems by strengthening community-led efforts to affect local government planning and policy (Whittaker, Clark, SanGiovanni, & Raja, 2017).

There may be similarities in the dynamics of the partnerships between universities and industries found in the previously mentioned study by Prigge and Torracco (2006), and the MFM and their community partners, but the findings of these studies would not be transferrable to the MFM context as there are not enough similarities. It appears that community partnership research related to MFMs is underdeveloped and is a gap in the literature which needs to be filled to understand partnership operation and sustainability. The framework described in the below section describes how community partnerships operate and how community partners participate in partnerships.

Arnstein's ladder of participation. A model of participation was developed by Arnstein, called the *Ladder of Citizen Participation*, to examine the relationship between citizen participation and citizen power (1969). Arnstein stated that the power in participation is directly related to the extent to which citizens, or partners are involved in the process being studied (Arnstein, 1969). This process may include but is not limited to a program or initiative, institution, department, or business (Arnstein, 1969). Partners' power affects how information is shared, goals and policies are set, and programs are operated (Arnstein, 1969).

Although Arnstein did not explicitly define power, she described citizen power as being synonymous with citizen participation. She stated that participation is a strategy that those who do not typically "hold power" in a certain situation or context can use to exercise their power in decision making and that the redistribution of power enables minorities to benefit from the process in which they are participating (Arnstein, 1969).

The ladder is broken down into eight levels of participation, the lowest rung representing the least level of participation; as the ladder is climbed, the level of true participation increases, along with the power of those involved (Arnstein, 1969). The bottom two rungs represent levels of 'non-participation'; rungs 3 and 4 represent levels of 'tokenism'; the top three levels represent degrees of 'citizen power' (Arnstein, 1969). As citizens move higher up the ladder, the more their voices will be heard, their views will be respected, and their power in decision-making will increase (Arnstein, 1969). A diagram of Arnstein's *Ladder of Citizen Participation* can be found in Appendix B.

To affect the outcome of a process, program, or organization, it is important to recognize the difference between the empty ritual of participation and the level of true engagement, to have the real power to affect outcomes (Arnstein, 1969). Arnstein's model is a simplification of the

relationship between participation, engagement, and power. It was noted by Arnstein (1969) that participation and power may not be as linear as explained through the ladder of participation, and roadblocks to achieving true participation are not considered. This model was planned to be used to understand how partnerships within the MFM function, and how partners may be involved in affecting the positive outcomes of the MFM. Further detail can be found in Chapter five.

MFM partnerships. The literature described above has identified the importance of partnerships and participation, but the research conducted to-date has not examined partner or citizen participation specifically in the MFM context. To maintain the positive outcomes of the market through sustainability of successful partnerships, it is important to understand partnerships and participation from the perspective of participation and engagement in a community initiative.

Conclusion

The literature outlined in this section provided many strengths which helped guide this study. Literature related to food access provided a background on the factors which impact food security and food systems. HRM specific literature has provided context regarding the current state of food security in Halifax, as well as an understanding of Halifax's food systems. The literature in this review has provided an understanding of the benefits and challenges associated with MFMs, the results of several evaluations of MFMs, and a background on Halifax's MFM. Partnership literature has helped to provide an understanding of the importance of methodology and theory in partnership research, sustainability factors in partnerships, community partnerships, and the connection between participation and power in partnerships. The review of the literature has helped provide context for the development of the current study, as well as providing context for interpreting and understanding the results.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter details the methodology and the methods used to conduct this research study. It begins by describing the conceptual frameworks that were used to inform the study. The chapter then goes on to describe the study population, the procedures for data collection and the analytic approach used. Next, the approaches that were used to ensure quality and rigor, ethical considerations, and how the results of the study will be disseminated are discussed.

This study was used to understand the perceptions of the partners involved in the MFM regarding their involvement in the market and their perceptions of their collaborative engagement with other MFM partners. The purpose of this research was to understand how partnerships operate within the MFM, and how partnerships function in the sustainability of the MFM. The results of this research may be used to inform strategies to sustain effective partnerships within the MFM, and to sustain the positive outcomes of the MFM in Halifax, with the overall goal of fostering increased food accessibility and food security within HRM. These results may also be applicable for understanding effective partnerships within MFMs in other locations.

There was one main research question and several sub-questions that were answered to fulfill the purpose of this research study.

Main research question:

- How do partnerships operate within the MFM and how are they sustained?

Sub-questions:

- What does it mean to partners to participate in the MFM?
- How do partners view their role within the MFM?

- What levels of participation are partners at on Arnstein's *Ladder of Citizen Participation*? How does this affect the outcomes and sustainability of the MFM?
- What power relations exist within the MFM partnerships? How do these affect the way the MFM runs?
- How can partnerships within the MFM become sustainable in the long term?
- How are social and institutional partnership discourses constructed within the MFM?

Case Study Method

This study was conducted as a case study, with the MFM representing the case. In case studies, the researcher collects comprehensive data about the case, which is defined by specific parameters including time and situational context (Creswell, 2014). The purpose of a case study is to seek to understand why a decision or number of decisions were made, how they were worked out, and what the results of the decisions were (Schramm, 1971, pp.5-6). In this case study, the decisions regarding the operation of MFM partnerships were explored and sought to be understood.

Case study methodology was chosen for this project for several reasons. First, because the main research question and most of the research sub-questions were “how” questions. Case study methods are considered appropriate and useful for answering “how” questions because they examine operational links traced over time, rather than frequencies or incidence, which other research methods are more appropriate for (Yin, 2009, p.9). Additionally, a case study was an appropriate method for this study rather than an experimental method as behaviours within the MFM did not need to be manipulated or controlled to understand partnership operation in the MFM (Yin, 2009, pp.11-12). Lastly, case studies are often used as an effort to contribute to policy and decision making, rather than to science (Schramm, 1971, p.6). This was ideal for

understanding and illuminating the decisions made in the case of the MFM and why they are important to understand in the context of decision making within the food systems in the HRM.

Conceptual Frameworks

Feminist poststructuralism (FPS). Given the significance of partnerships within the MFM, and the role of power relations within partnerships, a feminist poststructural approach was ideal to use in conducting this research. FPS is described by Weedon (1987) as “a mode of knowledge production which uses poststructuralist theories of language, subjectivity, social processes and institutions to understand existing power relations and to identify areas and strategies for change” (p. 40). As there is no specific, uniform way in which power relations function or operate (Aston, 2016), studying power relations in the context of partnerships within the MFM offers a unique perspective on power relations as they have not yet been studied in this context before and may operate differently from power relations in other contexts.

FPS provided a great guiding framework for exploring this topic. The overarching feminist poststructural concepts of, ‘power as relational’, ‘language and meaning’, ‘beliefs, values, and practices’, and ‘subjectivity and agency’ (Aston, 2016), were used to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationships between power and partnerships.

Using Foucault’s work helped guide the researcher to identify moments of tension where power is believed to be experienced and negotiated by people. These moments were explored through participant experiences with the MFM and deconstructed with concepts from FPS.

Power as relational. Foucault stated that power is relational, situational, and shifting, always being negotiated by individuals (1982). He described relations of power as ‘force relations’ which might function differently in different social institutions, where social relations and social

control are constantly being influenced (Weedon, 1997, p.107). For Foucault, power is not able to be reduced to one particular source, it is always seen as a relationship (Weedon, 1997, p.174). Feminist poststructural views of power were used in this study to understand the power relations and related discourses within the MFM. Power may shift from partner to partner, depending on whether they enter or leave the MFM. Levels of power may heighten or lower depending on each partner's level of participation. Power relations may change depending on different situations or events that occur over the course of the operation of the MFM.

In poststructuralism, knowledge is understood as being closely associated with power; possessing power can aid in knowledge gain and possessing knowledge can initiate acquiring of power (Arslanian-Engoren, 2002). Those who may be subjectively positioned to appear to hold power, due to the practices they may be involved in, are able to control what information is important, accessible and understood as the truth, in this context (Gavey, 1989). Through this, they are able to uphold their subjectively perceived power to access material advantages (Gavey, 1989). Power is exercised within these institutions through the different discourses that affect how individuals are managed (Weedon, 1997, p.110). The discourses that exist within the MFM were important to understand in the context of power, as power affects the relations between partners, within and across discourses (Weedon, 1997, p.110).

Foucault's work indicates that it is important for those who are in a position or context in which they may be subjectively perceived to have power, understand the consequences of the misuse of this power through their positions (Niesche & Haase, 2012). This means that those in the MFM who may be subjectively positioned to appear to hold more power than others must be wary of the misuse of their power and recognize potential impacts of their decisions on other partners, and the overall operation of the MFM.

Viewing power as relational allows for power to be understood in immediate, everyday life (Foucault, 1982). Understanding power as relational is an interesting way to conceptualize power, as it challenges common Western views of what power should look like (Aston, 2016). Weedon (1997) noted that great and bold actions may be required to accomplish small alterations in the negotiating of power (p.108).

It is important to understand power relations in terms of the intent of individuals, and within the context of social situations and institutions where power relations were being studied (Aston, 2016). Intent and context were particularly important in this research study, as the level of participation in MFM partnerships, and their power relations affect the outcomes of the MFM (Arnstein, 1969). It is important to note that research findings should only be interpreted in the context of MFMs as relations of power and discourses may differ in other social situations and institutions. It also should be recognized that this research was being conducted as a case study; partnerships within Halifax's MFM may differ from partnerships in MFMs in different cities.

Although Foucault sees power relations as forever existing within societies and institutions, he does not specify the types or forms that power might exist in within particular areas of social concern (Weedon, 1997, p.111). Therefore, it was important for the topic of power relations in the context of MFM partnerships to be investigated. Understanding power in terms of having the ability to influence the actions of others (Aston, 2016) was essential in understanding how the decisions made by MFM partners affect the outcomes and experiences of all partners involved.

Language and meaning. The use of language is imperative to FPS (Hesse-Biber, Nagy & Leavy, 2007). The use of FPS was perfect for this study because it is understood in FPS that language is a means for gaining insight into another person's world, self and life experiences (Arslanian-Engoren, 2002). According to feminist methodologies, it is important to understand

that participants speak from their experience and language should be regarded as accurately reflecting their experiences (Gavey, 1989). Properly capturing and understanding the unique experiences each participant has within the MFM helped in understanding how partnerships functioned in this context.

Within the practice of poststructuralist methodologies, there is a notion that language is neutral; language is interrogated as part of the social reality and experience it is meant to represent (Cheek, 1999, p. 40). Meanings derived from specific social contexts are established within language used and not by the individual using the language (Weedon, 1997). Therefore, the language used by participants in this study was comprehended as it existed in the specific context of the MFM. It was understood that this language could change, based on different settings, different MFM communities, and different MFMs across the world (Aston, 2016).

As described by Weedon (1997), language is the common factor used in analyzing social organization and meanings and power. The ways in which participants used their language to describe the power relations within the social organization of the MFM was essential for understanding the meaning they gave to the power relations they encountered, and their participation in the MFM. Different meanings and interpretations of similar situations and concepts arose from different participants, despite the use of similar words and language, based on the variety of experiences MFM partners encountered (Arslanian-Engoren, 2001).

In feminist poststructuralism, the researcher did not become “locked in” to viewing language and meanings based on common ways of thinking (Aston, 2016). Although interpretation of another individual’s meanings and experiences is difficult, (Aston, 2016) the researcher used interpretation of the language given by participants to understand the different discourses that existed within the MFM regarding power relations within partnerships.

Beliefs, values, and practices. In feminist poststructural research, beliefs, values, and practices should be given close attention in order to fully understand the experiences of the individuals being studied (Aston, 2016). In this study, the researcher sought to understand beliefs, values, and practices in the context of partnerships within the MFM, so that the researcher could gather an understanding of the participants' reasons for becoming a partner within the MFM, and what they believed the outcomes of the MFM should be. Social, institutional, and individual beliefs, values and practices were also explored to gain an understanding of the origin of the discourses that exist in the MFM.

Discourses are understood in poststructuralism as sets of beliefs that are reinforced through regular practice, which frame the way individuals perceive and understand the world (Weedon, 1997). The researcher acknowledged that different MFM discourses might generate similar values, beliefs and practices, and similar discourses could generate different values, beliefs and practices, dependent on each partner's experiences with the MFM. The different discourses through which beliefs, values and practices are derived were considered and explored, as different discourses can convey similar beliefs, values and practices (MacConnell, Aston, Randel, & Zwaagstra, 2012).

As beliefs are personal opinions, the researcher focused on the beliefs of the participant and suspended her own beliefs in this piece of feminist poststructural research (Aston, 2016). Beliefs and values can be found within the language participants use; in the context of the MFM participants, the researcher listened critically to the way the participant spoke and reflected on statements that may infer beliefs or values about partnerships, power, and the MFM.

Subjectivity and agency. Subjectivity, the ability to be self-reflexive, and understanding agency, are critical for a feminist poststructural researcher. Subjectivity has been conveyed by

Weedon (1997) as the conscious and unconscious beliefs and emotions that allow a person to understand themselves, and to understand and identify their place in the world. The perceptions a person has of themselves are shaped by the social forces surrounding them (Arslanian-Engoren, 2002).

The researcher viewed herself as a 'subject' within her own research, understanding that she had an influence in the context of her research (Butler, 1992). The researcher also became aware of social discourses that may have existed in her life, as well as in the MFM, and tried to understand how to work with, through and against them (Aston, 2016). This involved reflecting on her perspectives and experiences regarding food security, the communities that participated in the MFM, and local community initiatives such as the MFM. As the researcher in this study was not familiar with discourses that existed within the MFM, it was important to gain background knowledge on possible discourses that might exist, and critically reflecting on them before, after, and during data collection, to ensure subjectivity. As discourse in feminist poststructural research is significant in social relations because it can affect how an individual acts, feels, and thinks (Aston, 2016), the researcher developed an understanding of how the discourses existing within the MFM may impact how social relations exist, and how partnerships operate. To do this, the researcher had several conversations with the MFM Manager about the operation of the MFM within different communities and as an entire project, as well as her thoughts on the perspectives of individuals involved in the operation of the MFM and reflected on potential discourses that may come up in interviews.

The researcher acknowledged that participants possessed and had the ability to utilize agency. Agency involves reflective practice through criticizing and challenging discourses that exist (Alcoff, 1988). Possessing agency provides opportunities for people to react to and rework

the power relations and discourses that may be present within their environment (Butler, 1992, pp. 12-13). Agency was observed through the way participants articulated their experiences with the MFM. Their language was used to recognize how they responded to power relations.

Understanding how participants might use agency was used to deconstruct the discourses and power relations that exist within the MFM.

Social ecological model. The social ecological model (SEM) provides a framework which can be used to understand the different levels of influence that affect behaviour (Emmons, 2000, pp. 250-251). The SEM was derived from Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, which described how environmental factors and individual factors interact to influence behaviour (1979). Ecological approaches produce a comprehensive understanding of the factors which influence health outcomes (Moran et al., 2016). The SEM is used to recognize the factors and processes occurring on personal and environmental levels which might influence and determine health-related behaviours (Emmons, 2000, pp. 250-251).

There are five hierarchical levels of the social ecological model including: intrapersonal, interpersonal, institutional, community, and policy levels (Emmons, 2000, p.251). The intrapersonal level focuses on individual behaviour; the interpersonal level focuses on social networks and social norms; the institutional level focuses on organizations; the community level focuses on community resources and relationships; and the policy level focuses on local laws (Emmons, 2000, pp. 251-253). Communication within and across these levels is important for the success of an ecological approach (Moral et al., 2016).

The SEM represents an ideal framework for understanding the multiple levels upon which the MFM impacts a population in relation to food security and other health behaviours.

Interventions which focus efforts on several levels of the SEM can impact the population through

multiple levels of influence (Emmons, 2000, p.253). Through interventions structured in this way, social processes and norms, and available resources which might influence individual choices and behaviour are affected simultaneously (Emmons, 2000, p.253). Furthermore, the impact of the health promotion message is maximized and the larger social and governmental factors that influence health behaviour are impacted (Emmons, 2000, p.253).

Study Population

Sample. To gather an understanding of the case of the MFM and role of partnerships within the MFM, snowball sampling was used. A gate keeper, the manager for the MFM in Halifax provided the researcher with recommendations for which partners would be best to interview based on their involvement in and knowledge of the operation of the MFM and was also one of the first interview participants as a member of the advisory team.

There are many partners within the MFM so it was important to the researcher to interview participants across an appropriate range of roles. This was done through maximum variation sampling, a strategy used by researchers, which consists of determining criteria or characteristics the different participants should possess to increase the likelihood of the data reflecting various perspectives (Creswell, 2013). This helped increase the likelihood of a variety of perspectives being represented within this case study (Creswell, 2013).

Participants were chosen from communities where the market operated very efficiently as well as communities where the market was viewed as not operating as well. This 'operating efficiency' was understood based on the MFM manager and MFM coordinator's interpretations of their experiences with the market in each community. The MFM manager and MFM coordinator were able to identify in which communities the MFM thrived, and in which communities the MFM did not operate as productively. This variation in degree of operating

efficiency of the MFM in different communities allowed for a range of experiences among partners to be captured.

The sample included four advisory team members, two of whom were MFM staff, three local host leads, three core volunteers, and three community volunteers. See Table 1 for a list of definitions of these partners, provided by the MFM Manager. Community volunteers and local host leads came from five different communities. Community members' voices were represented by the community volunteers and local host leads as these types of partners come from communities in which they work or volunteer in and generally also purchase food from the MFM. Community members who were customers of the MFM but were not MFM partners were not chosen to interview because one of the main focuses of this project was to understand how partnerships operate in the MFM and community members who participated in the operation of the MFM as partners were less likely to have a background understanding of the partnerships that exist in the MFM in comparison to MFM partners.

A sample size of thirteen was considered appropriate for this type of qualitative research because extensive detail was collected from each participant, and the point of this research was not to generalize the information across all partners, but to understand the meaning of the experiences of MFM partners within this case study (Creswell, 2013; Hesse-Biber et al., 2007).

Recruitment. Recruitment occurred with assistance from the same gate keeper, the MFM manager, who was well-connected with partners from the MFM. The MFM manager contacted the individuals whom they believed would be effective study participants to ask if they were interested in participating and would like to be contacted by the researcher. If they were interested in participating, they were given the option to provide either their e-mail or phone number to the MFM manager, which was passed on to the researcher, however all participants

provided their e-mail. The researcher then contacted the participants by e-mail with a brief letter describing what participation in the study would entail and worked to arrange interviews with participants. The letter to participants can be found in Appendix C.

Table 1.

Partner type	Role Description
Core volunteers	They work directly with the Mobile Food Market Manager and Coordinator, assisting them, or preparing for the market on Fridays. They aren't associated with one particular market site, but work to serve the overall market.
Community volunteers	They work with one specific market site and show up only on the Saturday to help run the market. Community volunteers are recruited by the local host organizations
Local host organizations	They are the point organizations in each community that are responsible for running the market within that community. They differ from community to community; they can be churches, family centres, seniors complexes etc.
Local host lead	The person chosen from the local host organization who leads the market for the community in which they come from.
Advisory team member	They make decisions around the strategic direction of the Mobile Food Market project and are a member of one of the four groups that govern the project: NSHA, City of Halifax, Metro Works, or Ecology Action Centre.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria. Being a volunteer or employee of the MFM, and agreeing to have their interview audio-recorded and transcribed were the inclusion criteria for participants. There were no specific exclusion criteria for this study.

Procedure for Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews. Data was collected through one-on-one, semi-structured interviews. As this research study was a case study, it was important to build an in-depth picture of the particular case, and interviewing is a recommended form of data collection used to understand a case study (Creswell, 2013). In-depth interviews allowed participants to share their individual experiences participating in partnerships within the MFM.

Interviewing is valuable in feminist poststructural research because it allows researchers to gain insight into the lives of participants (Hesse-Biber et al, 2007). Embracing the feminist poststructural principles that individuals are aware of their position in social settings, are self-reflexive, and have the ability to utilize agency by questioning or challenging their circumstances (Aston, Price, Kirk, & Penney, 2011) was key to understanding how in-depth interviews would provide rich data for this population and research topic.

Interviews were relaxed and conversational to equalize the potential power dynamic between the interviewer and participant (Hesse-Biber et al., 2007). This also helped in the development of trust and a rapport between the interviewer and interviewee (Hesse-Biber et al., 2007). Interviews were semi-structured so that questions could be framed around the research questions, however there was still room for spontaneity in questions and responses (Hesse-Biber et al., 2007). Questions were focused on what it meant to the participant to be part of the MFM, what the participant believed their contribution was to the MFM, what their values, beliefs and experiences were within the market, and challenges associated with participation in the market. Toward the end of the interview, the researcher explained Arnstein's *Ladder of Citizen Participation* to participants and asked where they believe they were situated on the ladder in

terms of participation and power, where they believed other partners were situated, and why. The semi-structured interview guide can be found in Appendix F.

Location. Interviews took place somewhere chosen by the participant that was quiet, comfortable, and private (Creswell, 2013). This included community centres, coffee shops, the grocery store, library, the researcher's office, university student union buildings, and participants' homes.

Analytical Approach

Data management. Data in this research study consisted of audio recordings of interviews, transcripts of the interviews, reflections on the interviews, and reflexive notes. A master list of all types of data collected was developed (Creswell, 2013). Interviews were audio-recorded using high quality recording equipment (Creswell, 2013).

Data analysis began with organization of the electronic data into folders so that the researcher knew what data existed and where they were located (Creswell, 2013). Recordings were transcribed verbatim by the researcher using ExpressScribe software, then identifying information was removed from the transcripts. Transcripts were saved as Microsoft Word files and then transferred into the qualitative analysis computer program NVivo for data management and organization.

Data were stored on a password-protected flash drive in a folder encrypted using VeraCrypt software. A back-up, password-protected copy of these files was made and kept separately from the original flash drive (Creswell, 2013). Hand-written notes were kept in a locked drawer and scheduled to be destroyed following a period of five years after study completion.

Data analysis techniques. The researcher began data analysis by reading through the transcripts several times to become completely immersed in the data, and taking notes (Creswell, 2013). The reflexive and reflective notes were read and reflected upon at this time, as well.

Data were then analyzed through the lens of discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is a data analysis methodology used to interpret and reflect on language and reality in a given time (Gee, 2005). This was an appropriate methodology to use in the proposed study because the contextual element allowed for the understanding that elements of MFM may change and the views of partnerships and power relations should only be understood within their current context and reality.

Discourse analysis followed the structure proposed by Aston (2016). The researcher began by identifying important issues, then applied beliefs, values, and practices (Aston, 2016). She then identified social and institutional discourses that may exist in the MFM, and connected these to evidence and reflect on them (Aston, 2016). Next, the researcher responded to relations of power (Aston, 2016). This was especially important in the proposed research study because of the role power plays in partnerships in the MFM; this step was covered extensively. During analysis, the researcher also reflected on the subjectivity and agency of the participants as well as her own subjectivity and agency throughout the interview process (Aston, 2016). Findings were organized into themes and subthemes to help understand and answer research questions.

Arnstein's *Ladder of Citizen Participation* (Arnstein, 1969) and the SEM (Emmons, 2000) were planned to be used as conceptual frameworks to organize and understand the discourses that are identified, as well as the values, beliefs and practices that are identified. However, Arnstein's *Ladder of Citizen Participation* was not used as planned, further detail can be found in Chapter five.

Quality and Rigor

Researcher reflexivity. Prior to data collection, the researcher practiced being self-reflexive by reflecting on her own values, beliefs, social position, gender, race, personality, and experiences (Hesse-Biber et al., 2007). The researcher examined and reflected on how this may have affected interviews and data analysis, and was mindful of these reflections throughout the interview and data analysis process (Hesse-Biber et al., 2007). She took into consideration that she was not a partner within the MFM, or a member of any of the communities within which the MFM operates, and had not experienced food insecurity. The researcher recorded reflexive notes and memos throughout the interview process, reflecting on interviews, and data analysis. She was conscious of the researcher-researched relationship that may have existed between the participant and herself (Hesse-Biber et al., 2007).

Ethical Considerations

Prior to beginning this research study, an ethics application was approved by the Dalhousie University Review Ethics Board (Creswell, 2013). The purpose of the study was disclosed to participants, along with any risks to them.

Potential harms and benefits. No physical risks existed to participants in this study, however, the risk of psychological distress existed. Some participants may have been experiencing food insecurity, which could have been a source of stress during the interview, however all participants appeared to be comfortable and relaxed. All participants were assured that the interview may stop by their request at any time, any question could be skipped, and they could withdraw from the study up to one month after the interview.

Informed consent. Participants read the informed consent document (Appendix D) and signed the associated signature page (Appendix E) to ensure informed consent was obtained

from all participants. Before the interview began, the participants were given these documents to read and sign however they were not pressured to sign or participate at that time (Creswell, 2013).

Confidentiality. The researcher ensured that participants knew that what they said would be kept as confidential as possible, but as only a small number of participants in the niche community on the MFM were interviewed, full confidentiality was not be able to be guaranteed.

Trustworthiness

Research findings were guaranteed to be trustworthy through a thorough understanding of how the research was undertaken. To demonstrate the plausibility, credibility, and integrity of the qualitative research process, the researcher underwent several processes to ensure trustworthiness and rigour (Ryan, Coughlan, & Cronin, 2007). Procedural rigour, using data collection techniques which were precise and appropriate, (Ryan, et al., 2007) were ensured through critical reflection on data collection and analyzing practices, specifically on practices used to reduce bias.

Credibility was ensured by the researcher offering to member check with participants so that an accurate representation of participants' experiences were demonstrated in the research findings (Ryan et al., 2007). Dependability of the researcher was ensured through documentation of all steps of the research process, along with explanations of the decisions made, with regards to the research study. The researcher also had frequent discussions with her supervisor and committee members (Ryan et al., 2007).

Chapter 4: Results

This chapter describes the main findings from 13 one-on-one interviews with MFM partners exploring the following research questions:

Main research question:

- How do partnerships operate within the MFM and how are they sustained?

Sub-questions:

- What does it mean to partners to participate in the MFM?
- How do partners view their role within the MFM?
- What levels of participation are partners at on Arnstein's *Ladder of Citizen Participation*?
How does this affect the outcomes and sustainability of the MFM?
- What power relations exist within the MFM partnerships? How do these affect the way the MFM runs?
- How can partnerships within the MFM become sustainable in the long term?
- How are social and institutional partnership discourses constructed within the MFM?

The focus of this chapter is the findings related to three main themes identified through analysis: the significance of the MFM, the functioning and operation of the MFM, and factors affecting the sustainability of the MFM and its partnerships. A breakdown of the themes discussed in this chapter can be found in Table 2.

Table 2.

Theme	Subtheme	Sub-subtheme
Significance of the MFM: The MFM is More Than Just a Place to Buy Food	Community impacts	<i>Creates an atmosphere of community</i>
		<i>Provides opportunities for community participation</i>
		<i>Fills a different need in each community</i>
	Impacts related to food awareness and accessibility	<i>Knowledge sharing about food</i>
		<i>Increased physical and financial access to fresh fruits and vegetables</i>
		<i>Shifting focus on food access in broader systems and policies</i>
Functioning and Operation of MFM	Project structure	-
	Partnerships structure	<i>Partners' perceived contribution to MFM</i>
		<i>Critical role of MFM staff</i>
	Partnership importance	-
	Decision making processes	<i>Logistical decisions in the overall project</i>
		<i>Operational decisions in individual communities</i>
		<i>Decisions about what MFM brings to each community</i>
Vulnerability of MFM structure	-	
Sustainability Factors	Partnership sustainability factors	<i>Mutual benefit</i>
		<i>Relation to MFM purpose and enjoyment</i>
		<i>Capacity</i>
	Sustainability of relationships with communities	<i>Seeing results</i>
		<i>Trust is critical to gain</i>
		<i>Success is dependent on community involvement</i>
Funding	-	

Participants of this study included 4 different types of partners involved in the MFM operation. An explanation of their role in the MFM and their identifier used throughout this chapter can be found in Table 3.

Table 3.

Partner Type	Role Description	Participant Identifier
Advisory Team Member	They make decisions around the strategic direction of the Mobile Food Market project and are a member of one of the four groups that govern the project: NSHA, City of Halifax, Metro Works, or Ecology Action Centre. The advisory team also includes MFM staff such as the MFM Manager and the MFM Coordinator.	A1, A2, A3, A4
Local Host Lead	The local host lead is the person chosen from the local host organization who leads the market for the community in which they come from. The local host organizations are the point organizations in each community that are responsible for running the market within that community. They differ from community to community; they can be churches, family centres, senior's complexes etc.	L1, L2, L3
Community Volunteer	They work with one specific market site and show up only on the Saturday to help run the market. Community volunteers are recruited by the local host organizations and are members of the community.	CM1, CM2, CM3
Core Volunteer	They work directly with the Mobile Food Market Manager and Coordinator, assisting them, or preparing for the market on Fridays. They aren't associated with one particular market site, but work to serve the overall market. Some core volunteers are also MFM customers.	CR1, CR2, CR3

Two main discourses were identified through participant interviews; their construction will be described throughout this chapter. The first and most prominent was the institutionally derived community of appreciation discourse. This discourse was constructed through the meaning behind the language participants used to describe the beliefs and values of MFM partners and customers regarding the MFM. This discourse was labeled as a community discourse because it is constructed and experienced by the people who are associated with the MFM as a partner or a customer. Within this discourse, participants believed the MFM was beneficial for the communities it served and valued the MFM model and structure. These beliefs positively impacted the practices partners engaged in related to the MFM and reinforced their beliefs. The second discourse evident through participant language was the socially constructed food accessibility discourse. The beliefs demonstrated through this discourse related to issues associated with food accessibility such as the high costs of nutritious foods, especially in lower income communities, and the lack of physical accessibility to nutritious food options in lower income communities. Through analysis, it was found that MFM practices challenge this discourse.

The way these discourses were constructed and how they operated through people within the context of the MFM will be described throughout the rest of this chapter.

Significance of the MFM: The MFM is More Than Just a Place to Buy Food

This section describes the impact and benefits participants identified that the MFM provided to communities and partners of the MFM as well as what it meant to them to participate in the MFM. The themes described below represent the common and pertinent values participants discussed during their interviews. Many participants acknowledged that the MFM doesn't reach a lot of people in comparison to the number of people who live in Halifax and does not reach a

large percentage of the communities in which it operates. However, for the people it does reach and for the people who are involved in its operation, the impacts are numerous. These impacts were broken down into impacts on the communities and impacts related to food awareness and accessibility.

An institutional discourse existed among participants that could be described as a community of appreciation around what the MFM provides to communities. Participants reported that the MFM meant much more than just providing a place for community members to buy food and explained the various impacts it has had within the communities in which it operates. MFM partners felt they were supporting a greater initiative than that. The following section illustrates how the community of appreciation discourse could be seen through participants descriptions of an atmosphere of community, the participation in meaningful opportunities by community members, and the individualized approach taken to meet the specific needs of each community in which the MFM operates. As one participant stated: “it’s not just like how many people are getting more fruits and vegetables in their diet. It’s bigger than that” (A1).

Community impacts. Many participants discussed the significance of the benefits the MFM has provided within the communities in which it operates. These positive descriptions contributed to the formation of the community of appreciation discourse.

Creates an atmosphere of community. Several participants described how the MFM creates a space and opportunity for community members to come together and allow community members to feel like someone cares about them. The experiences described below were interpreted together as the MFM helping to create an atmosphere of community among those who attend and run the MFM in each community, which contributed to the community of appreciation.

One local host lead described the efforts that she and the rest of the MFM team in her community put into creating an atmosphere of community among those who attend the MFM and the benefits community members experience from this. The following quote shows how power operated through people as they negotiated power relations; they used their agency by building an atmosphere of community. This was done through practices such as creating events for kids, recipes, and opportunities to learn new skills:

“We really try to create an atmosphere of community around the mobile market so we have different events for the kids to come to and information for the parents...one of the things we do is we feature a vegetable. And so then we have recipes...they're learning new skills, they're learning different ways of cooking...so it really has a great incentive, and that's part of what I think is really impactful for families” (L2).

A sense of community was also described by a core volunteer who stated that she felt this sense in all aspects of the operation of the MFM. She explained that there was a sense of community among the core volunteers who gather each week to sort produce, and she felt a sense of community among MFM customers when she attended the market in her own community. The community of appreciation discourse was apparent in her words as she described the practices and values of the people who contribute to the operation of the MFM:

“Yeah so, I think everything from Friday volunteering to like the Saturday market has an aspect of community to it so even like just the women that work there on Fridays and volunteer their time, they're amazing and I—they make the experience, really. Like you know, you're always excited to see them and there's always things to talk about and it just sort of brings that sense of togetherness when you're all helping for this good cause, and then Saturday some of them are customers as well so you would see them then and then it

really just has that sense of community to it, my kids really enjoy going there too you know they have lots of family-focused activities that I really enjoy and the kids really like and things like that” (CR1).

Participants also described values connected to the practices of creating an atmosphere of community. Many participants valued the social benefits of attending the MFM. One community volunteer (CM2) described the MFM as a place that allowed her to socialize and make friends in her community. A core volunteer described the strong customer base and community presence she saw among MFM customers and that she believed it was a great place to meet others in the community. Another participant valued being able to share their experience buying food with others in their community: “There’s that sort of shared thing you don’t get when you go to a grocery store” (CM1).

Some participants told stories about MFM customers supporting each other, which added to the construction of the community of appreciation. For instance, one participant described generosity among community members by explaining that some people in his community will buy a produce pack to donate to anyone who comes to the market and expresses that they are not able to afford a pack that week: “it’s other people who are expressing generosity in their respect by purchasing something and having it donated” (CM3). This practice among members of his community was something participant CM3 valued and emphasized.

Relations of power were negotiated as people came together through the atmosphere of community. How power operated could be seen when participants described their relations with words and actions such as sharing, togetherness, support, and generosity. This demonstrated how their common beliefs and practices negotiated and ultimately shifted the power within this particular community gathering around food.

This section shows how the community of appreciation discourse was constructed through participants' words about the different aspects of the atmosphere of community in the MFM which they valued. This mainly related to participants' descriptions of their appreciation for the social benefits of attending the market such as feeling a sense of togetherness or a sense of community, having a shared experience with other MFM customers, and family focused activities at the markets.

Provides opportunities for community participation. Several participants described how they valued that the MFM has created opportunities for individuals to become involved in and shape an initiative in their community as a volunteer, employee or customer, contributing to the construction of the community of appreciation. This was mentioned by a variety of participants but was a very strong theme and appeared to be a highly valued outcome of the MFM among advisory team members. One advisory team member believed that some of the most impactful outcomes were seeing from the MFM were around creating opportunities for communities to come together to engage in something meaningful: "I think also some of the biggest outcomes we're seeing is just around neighbourhood building and community building and you know, real tangible opportunities for neighbourhoods and community residents to come together and do something really meaningful" (A2).

Another advisory team member explained that creating these opportunities for individuals to participate in their communities through the MFM was something the advisory team highly valued: "I think that's something we strive for is, getting community feedback, and also, I think moving community members up the ladder, you know like giving them volunteer opportunities, giving them like local host lead positions, and whatnot, I think that is very powerful" (A1). Analysis of participant A1's words suggested that the advisory team acknowledged a hierarchy

between community members, MFM positions in communities, and the advisory team and that the advisory team has worked to purposefully negotiate and shift this power dynamic to become more equitable.

One core volunteer described a shift in power relations through her MFM role as she gained experience, explaining that she was in the same role as she was when she began volunteering with the MFM but had gained opportunity to guide and supervise new volunteers as time went on: “I’m still the same position but I guess the more I learn, the more I get to sort of take charge. And there will be like newer volunteers and I’ll be the old one so I get to like sort of supervise them or guide them and that’s usually the case if there’s an older volunteer” (CR2).

Purposefully balancing power shows how people work within and through a community discourse to create different meaning. This was demonstrated as volunteers became leaders in this particular community; not all communities are constructed with volunteer leaders, but in this case they were. This corresponds with participants’ stories that predominantly focused on constructing a community of sharing and supporting each other. This was an example of how negotiating power relations through equitable positioning of MFM partners constructed this unique MFM community that could be summarized as a community of appreciation.

One advisory team member explained that the MFM is meant to address food access issues, however she valued the fact that the MFM provides opportunities for community members to be involved in and to help shape the food system in their community. Similar to the previous quote, analysis of the language participant A3 used indicated that a relation of power existed between community members and the people who make decisions regarding food systems. Participant A3 showed an example of responding to this power relation through providing opportunities for community members to shape their community food system. This is another example of practices

used in the MFM to purposefully negotiate and shift power relations through the community of appreciation discourse. Therefore, the MFM has provided opportunities for community members to exercise their agency to negotiate and challenge these power relations to help define the systems and processes that define their food system. Agency was needed in this situation as the community was creating something new compared to the everyday common practices of communities using grocery stores:

“... it really is about addressing food access for people with limited access to healthy food but more importantly to that I think the Mobile Food Market provides opportunities for residents, for community members to help be part of the systems and the processes that define their food system so it's very much about supporting self-determination around food and offering opportunities for community members to engage in that kind of you know, food systems design and planning that meets their specific individual and community needs” (A3).

This quote shows how agency was being practiced in multiple ways. Individuals such as volunteers were negotiating relations of power and creating a new community discourse of appreciation, which enabled community members to use their agency to choose their own foods and participate in events and socializing, which is empowering. This is an example of how common beliefs and practices have been used to shift power relations in the MFM.

Fills a different need in each community. Several participants described how the individualized approach that is taken meets the needs of each community in which the MFM operates. This practice was articulated most strongly in the interview with participant A3. She explained how the MFM has been adapted to fill a different need in each community and has

been altered based on needs that the community has identified. The needs in each community change over time and the market is further adapted to meet those needs.

“I'd say the impact the project has on each community totally differs in each community and that was something that—that was something that was interesting to see as it unfolded, so when we first started off it was a bus market that went to five communities, it looked the same, the food that we brought to each community was slightly different depending on their preferences but mostly it was a one-size-fits-all model. And then based on how the communities experienced that and how they responded to like how well it fit their needs, we updated the model. But one thing that became apparent, kind of after our first pilot is that the project is filling a slightly different need in each community” (A3).

She went on to explain the different needs that the MFM is filling in each community: “...some places it's more about food access, but some it's about tying in—making a welcoming space for people who are new to the community, for some it's creating volunteer opportunities for youth for some it's about creating access to fresh fruits and vegetables for snack programs. At a local high school—for some it's an opportunity for different ways that the church can engage with the community, so it's quite different” (A3).

The advisory team member also provided an example of how the practice of filling this need looks different in each community:

“So, for instance, in [Community Name 1] there are no community gathering places so there are no rec centres, there's no library, there's no cafes even. So, there is no place for you to go and just like chat with neighbours, run into your neighbours, except maybe [Store Name]. And so the market fills a very different need there. Yes it's still about food

access but it's very much about community residents coming together and having a place to volunteer, a place to feel welcome. Where in [Community Name 2] for instance there are all kinds of existing gathering places for residents so the market—when we first had an actual market site there, it wasn't—it wasn't really filling the need because the need wasn't a community gathering space, it was more about, purely about access to food but more so convenience. And so that's why we changed the model to be run out of the [Community Organization] and to be more focused around produce packs” (A3).

This practice was also discussed by a core volunteer who explained that when the core volunteers sort produce, they sort it by community because each community has different needs based on their demographic:

“...we'll be dividing [the produce] up in communities because it's community based and so far as what the community buys is what's important. Like our neighbourhood is a lot of ethnic groups and so they tend to choose foods differently than what are going to another place because of what the people want, like you know they want more okra...it's community based that way, by product selection, I think” (CR3).

The above quotes illustrate that meeting individual community needs was a pertinent value among advisory team members. Advisory team members used their agency to negotiate power relations existing between community members by responding to community needs through adjusting and adapting the MFM model to operate differently in each MFM community. This practice of using an individualized approach supported a sense of appreciation among community members and contributed to the construction of this discourse.

Impacts related to food awareness and accessibility. The community of appreciation discourse was also evident as participants discussed values associated with the impacts of the

MFM related to food awareness and accessibility. Most participants believed the main reason the MFM exists is to increase accessibility of food to individuals who may have reduced access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Participants described how the MFM has improved the accessibility of food in the communities in which it operates and how it has impacted awareness about food access issues in the communities in which it operates and beyond.

Knowledge sharing about food. Overall, participants described the MFM as reaching community members on a simple level through providing opportunities for community members to learn basic recipes and basic education about food. A few participants described the difficulties and complexities surrounding healthy eating for individuals experiencing low income. Many participants expressed how the MFM provides a non-judgemental environment where people can try new foods and learn about food by gaining basic cooking skills and food knowledge. They explained that they have strived to make the MFM a place where buying food can be a more interesting and engaging experience. This was a common theme among the community volunteers but was also mentioned by many other participants.

Analysis of participants' words and stories suggested that community members who have a low income may experience anxiety when purchasing and preparing food. The community of appreciation discourse was apparent through participant language as participants discussed valuing how the market provided a space for community members to purchase their fresh produce and learn how to cook with it in a non-intimidating environment. For example, one community volunteer explained that many people who might attend the MFM don't find shopping for food at grocery stores and markets a relaxed experience. The MFM therefore has provided an opportunity to try new fruits and vegetables in a non-intimidating environment. This

was an example of addressing power by making the experience of shopping for food non-intimidating for MFM customers:

“I feel that a lot of people find grocery stores and markets, particularly organic markets and things like that intimidating. They find the whole concept—so we kind of default to frozen french fries and ketchup because it—and wieners, you know because it's quick, we know what we're doing and you give me this strange vegetable and tell me it's good for me and I need to cook it for an hour or whatever and I'm like, yeah ... but it still kind of stretches a bit without being too intimidating” (CM1).

Another community volunteer explained her belief that some market customers may not know how to use the foods that they are buying at the MFM:

“It dawned on me as people were shopping that many people don't know how to use fresh vegetables and even fruits, I mean things like kale and swiss chard, people are kind of shy, they might just think you boil it like spinach but there's a million ways to prepare it and it's one of the healthiest foods...we're trying to introduce them to also healthy eating, this is not just a mission to give them food, it's also a way that we're advocating for improving their health, in a subtle way. And so that I think is a very valuable thing” (CM2).

She went on to explain the practices the MFM in her community engaged in to help increase knowledge about food. Programs and services such as these were mentioned by many participants and the services differed greatly in each community:

“We try and provide programs on the side. We have food demonstrations you know, all sorts of things. And a lot of times, people appreciate that we've made the effort to also, not entertain per se but sometimes educate. We've taught people how to ferment foods,

how to make sourdough bread, the Atlantic Superstore comes in and does us a great service by giving samples of some of their deli things that they make with fresh foods and I have made it my sole endeavor to produce recipe cards, which I have many of. They're my recipes and I partnered with a community health organization and they've—they've produced them for me” (CM2).

Participant L2 described similar practices in her community to help MFM customers learn about food. These practices as well as those described above demonstrated how power operated through people as they negotiated and worked to make customers feel more comfortable as they challenged the everyday practices of purchasing food in mainstream grocery stores. An increase in community member’s knowledge about food supported their increase in agency to make choices about their food.

Several participants described how they believed conversations with other market customers and staff have encouraged MFM customers to learn from each other. This is another example of how people were creating a community of appreciation through the MFM. A community volunteer provided an example of how different people who attended the MFM have supported each other in simple ways, sharing knowledge about food and cooking to make healthy eating accessible: “...well somebody two weeks ago hauled out the bag of beets and said "I have no idea what to do with this" and [Local Host Lead] was like "Oh you just scrape ‘em and put a little oil on ‘em and put ‘em in the oven and they're you know, delicious" kind of thing. Well, they—otherwise they would have gone to waste” (CM1).

It was apparent that she valued the shared environment that the MFM provides which allows MFM customers to learn from each other as they purchase food: “Yeah and so there's that kind of shared thing that you don't get when you go to a grocery store. Yeah, may be great produce

and heck yeah, part of ours comes from Loblaws so it's the same produce but you don't get the kind of like "what is this? What do you do with it?" (CM1).

Participant words describing the sharing of knowledge in the MFM environment demonstrated a negotiation of power relations. This was shown through empowerment of community members through their increased knowledge and agency used to make informed decisions as they purchased their food. This negotiation of power relations contributed to the construction of the community of appreciation discourse as participants demonstrated how they valued the opportunity for MFM customers and partners to share knowledge with each other. They described this through explanations of the benefits of a non-judgemental, non-intimidating and relaxed environment where MFM customers could learn about food and cooking.

The impact on children who attend the MFM with their families was described by one local host lead. She shared that some children were becoming familiar with different fruits and vegetables their families hadn't previously been able to afford:

“I know lots of children here can't distinguish some of the fruits and vegetables because their parents can't afford to buy them. So you know, when they are out and if they're at a different function—they come here and there's like fruits and vegetables—they're more reluctant to try them if they're not familiar. I find they're becoming more familiar because food is becoming a little bit more familiar to them” (L2).

The above quotes illustrated how knowledge about food also contributed to how the socially constructed discourse of appreciation was negotiated by people. Knowledge was power as volunteers supported people experiencing low income and food insecurity. This type of sharing contributed to a sense of appreciation among community members. These quotes also demonstrated that those running the MFM valued creating opportunities for community members

experiencing low income and food insecurity to exercise their agency by purposefully negotiating and shifting relations of power through provision of these opportunities. Additionally, the discourse of community of appreciation existed among community members. Participants appeared to appreciate the benefits the MFM provides and they believed that community members also appreciated these benefits.

Increased physical and financial access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Participants of all types believed that for the people whom the MFM reached, there was an impact on their fruit and vegetable intake and their access to affordable, healthy food. Through participant language, it became evident that accessing healthy food is difficult in lower income communities. A social discourse of food accessibility was evident through analysis and is described throughout this section. This discourse included physical barriers and barriers related to the expenses associated with eating and purchasing healthy food, which can be found throughout many quotes in this section. The practices engaged in through the MFM have been described to challenge this discourse by making purchasing and consuming nutritious food easier for community members. This has ultimately led to a shift in power relations as agency was used to address the socially constructed discourse of food accessibility. The practices related to making nutritious food more accessible contributed to the creation of the community of appreciation. For example:

“...for the people we're reaching, I feel like it's making a big difference in the sense that yes, I believe they're getting more fresh fruits and vegetables into their diets and for many of these people who shop at the Mobile Food Market, that's a big thing. Affordability of food is a very big issue and something they're dealing with day-to-day. So, you know, I think we're achieving good outcomes surrounding increasing access to fresh fruits and vegetables” (A2).

Many participants believed that the MFM has been satisfying its mission of supporting community access to fresh fruits and vegetables by responding to the discourse of food accessibility and facilitating a decrease in food access issues for MFM customers. For example, one community volunteer explained this simply: “I think it satisfies the real initiative of why we did this in the first place and that was to make food readily available to those people that don't have access to fresh food” (CM2). Participant CM3 explained that the reason volunteering with the MFM appealed to him was because of its mission to increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables to those who need it, along with its other benefits. This volunteer used his agency to challenge the status quo of the everyday practices of selling food in a particular way through grocery stores, to challenge common food accessibility discourses.

One core volunteer spoke about potential difficulties individuals and families might experience when trying to access food and how the MFM prioritizes addressing these issues:

“...for people who don't have that—that don't have the luxury to be so close to a grocery store, just or even to be able to go even if it's close by, they might not be able to go just because they have mobility issues or they don't have a car or they have a lot of kids so they can't necessarily leave them at home or take them to stores, so there's a lot of complications, I think the mobile market really tries to address all that as much as they honestly can...it's something that's there to like ease people's access to food” (CR2).

Many participants valued the freshness of the produce provided through the MFM. The community of appreciation discourse was evident as participants spoke about this topic. Several participants discussed the lack of acceptable options for purchasing fresh produce in their communities, highlighting food accessibility issues. For example: “There's a wider variety of things available for people than—than they could probably get, you know, like at the corner

store, they don't have much in the line of fresh anything. And when they do, it's very poor quality” (CR3). This quote illustrated how the practices of easing access to healthy food through the MFM challenged common social discourses related to food accessibility in lower-income areas. This negotiation showed how power was exercised within discourses and how it supported a shift in power as MFM customers were more readily able to access healthy food.

It was mentioned by a local host lead that in her community’s grocery store, the produce is not always fresh so the MFM provides a reliable and low cost source of fresh fruits and vegetables: “[The MFM] provides low cost, fresh produce and I—and I really can't stress the fresh enough...the produce is almost always fresh. And if it isn't, they'll look at that next time...and [the community members] are used to like—[the local grocery store] doesn't always have the highest quality of produce. Often it's half rotten when you go” (L1).

Similarly, another local host lead explained that her community is considered a “food desert” situated in a low-income area where accessing fresh and affordable fruits and vegetables is difficult. The discourse of food accessibility was evident in her language:

“I really enjoyed just the planning of it and the whole concept of it, to bring fresh and affordable fruits and vegetables to lower income areas because you know, we're in a food desert here, right? The nearest place is what we call the blue store, which is a little store that charges exorbitant prices” (L2).

She went on to explain that it was important to her that her community could rely on the MFM as a consistent, reliable source for fresh and affordable food:

“It means, well it means so many things. It means community, it means sustainability, like I really—initially you know, we had funding year to year, kind of season to season and really looking at that long-term, five-year at least, funding so we could have it

sustainable. So it means that people can rely on us to have fresh and affordable food every second week” (L2).

Stories were shared enthusiastically by many participants about how different MFM customers have changed the way they eat through shopping at the MFM. This change demonstrated a shift in power and an increase in use of agency among community members in terms of food purchasing practices. For example, participant L1 shared the experiences of members of her community, guided by the community of appreciation discourse:

“We've had one man come and buy produce packs, he didn't eat vegetables. Actually he worked [at a child care centre] and they don't make a ton of money so it's really convenient, right. So he started by buying a [produce] pack and he started eating vegetables and he continued to buy the packs but in between weeks he would go to the grocery store and buy vegetables, which he had never done before, so—and his lunches would be full of fresh fruit and vegetables right so the health benefits... And another customer told me she eats more fruits and vegetables 'cause she just spent money on this and normally she might not buy that stuff but now she spent money on it so she feels guilty if she doesn't eat it. She has to eat it 'cause that's her food money, right. So it forces her to eat more, whether she wants to or not, so—and she likes that. She's been coming every week for years” (L1).

Some participants shared their own experiences of how they are or were food insecure and how this experience contributed to the importance they saw in the role of the MFM in their community in terms of the high costs of purchasing healthy food. For example, this quote demonstrated participant L1's use of agency and acknowledgement of their subjective position to contribute to a community opportunity that was meaningful to them: “...it makes me feel good

that I'm helping other people, and I buy a pack too (laughs). I get to enjoy it as well. At one time I was food insecure and so I know how much that means to people when you get a good deal” (L1).

A core volunteer stated that accessing the MFM helps her afford the type of diet she needs to be healthy: “I'm retired and I don't have any kind of an income other than my old age pension and my Canada pension, and I now have diabetes so I've had to increase my fresh fruits and vegetable intake, and so for me, it means being able to afford to be on the diet I'm supposed to be on” (CR3). Similarly, one local host lead valued that the MFM provides a way for members of her community to purchase fresh produce at a reduced cost: “I guess with today's society and like I guess everybody like looking for a healthy way to live, it's easy I guess to—to get like a Mobile Food Market package of vegetables and things like that, as opposed to spending all of your coins [laughs]. It can get very pricy” (L3). These quotes demonstrated how MFM customers used their agency to challenge the common discourses related to food accessibility by purchasing food through the MFM rather than the mainstream methods of buying food at grocery stores and other stores that sell food.

A few participants brought up issues of equity around access to fresh fruits and vegetables and stated that individuals experiencing low income should have the opportunity to access fresh fruits and vegetables: “And it means that [community members] have an opportunity to be on a—not so much an equal, but at least having more access to fresh and affordable food. I think it's a shame that some families have to choose between paying their bills and eating fresh food, right?” (L2). Another local host lead shared a similar thought: “Just because you don't have a lot of money doesn't mean you shouldn't have access to fresh produce” (L1). It was evident that participants valued equity and their practice followed, building a community of appreciation

through the creation of opportunities to facilitate equitable access to fresh produce among people experiencing low income in MFM communities.

One community volunteer (CM1) expressed her appreciation for the way the MFM was designed to be accommodating to make healthy eating accessible for community members. She provided an example of allowing seniors to split a produce bag rather than buying an entire bag for themselves: "...the kind of things that I feel that the market is doing and so-on—they're giving—I think they're trying to accommodate, going into some of the seniors [homes] now and saying "okay you can split a bag" you know "two of you can order a bag" you know" (CM1). This is another example of how a community of appreciation has been created in the MFM through the negotiation of relations of power among community members and MFM partners.

Shifting focus on food access in broader systems and policies. An important value identified among advisory team members was the role that the MFM plays in raising awareness about food insecurity and accessibility in Halifax and in the role the MFM plays in Halifax's food systems. Raising awareness challenges the common discourses that participants identified in the previous section regarding food accessibility. The common value shared among MFM partners for addressing food insecurity and food accessibility issues contributed to the construction of the community of appreciation discourse. The following quotes and experiences demonstrated how power operated through people and could be influenced and shifted through discourses.

One advisory team member (A4) believed the MFM provided an opportunity for the advisory team organizations to gain a realization of where the interests and values of local organizations overlap with regards to addressing food insecurity and food accessibility issues. This also afforded the opportunity to come together and work to address them, challenging

dominant food accessibility discourses that were described or alluded to by participants. This participant also stated that the partnerships made through the MFM have also allowed other ‘Healthy Cities’ and ‘Healthy Communities’ work to begin. The participant went on to explain that as the word got out about the MFM’s impact through media articles and evaluation reports, the Mayor and Council began to talk about food insecurity, poverty reduction, housing and homelessness, and health equity. This is an example of shifting power relations as the Mayor and Council are generally subjectively positioned to appear to hold power and people experiencing food insecurity, poverty, homelessness and health issues are not. The community of appreciation discourse was guiding participant A4’s language in the quote below:

“I think that because of that, it shifted or deepened awareness among different people, I would imagine in the general public but I certainly saw it—it's hard to know but I certainly saw it within the Mayor and Council, their conversations about food and food security...they just started talking about—about food security and they started talking about poverty reduction, housing and homelessness, health equity. They started using those words at council meetings and making decisions around—to address those issues” (A4).

Another advisory team member believed that the MFM has helped start a bigger conversation around food within the HRM: “...seeing some of the other impacts that it's had, some intended and some unintended, but kind of infiltrating municipal thinking, starting conversations around food, expanding the city's idea of what their mandate is around food so it still has its original intended purpose and that carries on our social mandate but I do see it as being an important part of a bigger conversation around food...” (A3).

Similarly, participant A2 stated that the MFM has allowed municipal councillors and other decision makers in Halifax to value food security and food accessibility in Halifax as a municipal issue.

“...I also just think it's really helped us to put food security issues front and centre, like I think more municipal councillors than ever are starting to understand the role of the municipality in food, whereas typically that would be something that— 'why is this a municipal issue?' So I think in terms of you know, leveraging resources and that kind of thing, it's also had a really big impact in terms of you know, why local government, the health authority and other organizations should be working on food issues together. So I think it has impacts at all levels like individual, community, and sort of more systems-wide for Halifax” (A2).

It is evident through the above quotes that the community of appreciation discourse has impacted the way the MFM is perceived throughout the HRM. The construction of this discourse has allowed decision makers as well as the general public to become aware of the positive impacts the MFM has had on people living in MFM communities. It was described by one advisory team member that initiatives like the MFM might not have a large impact on their own, however the result of many initiatives together could impact food systems and food policy.

“I think these little projects that might not have a huge impact on their own are really important because these people who are sitting behind a desk everyday trying to work on policy that will create, I guess, better food policy, they need little projects like ours to say “look, this is what they’re doing, this is a success they’ve had, like, we need policy to, you know, maybe, eradicate food banks, or make it so that food across the board is more affordable” or whatever. So, yeah, I feel like different levels of society need these smaller

projects on the ground to point to and say like, “this is, I don’t know, a cool project that is happening and look at their impact” (A1).

One participant explained that there are many initiatives about food and food security happening in Halifax, but she believed the MFM was a project that people could relate to and that could help them understand the state of food insecurity in Halifax. The community of appreciation discourse has made issues of food accessibility and food insecurity easier for people in the HRM to understand as it has allowed these issues to be brought to attention through an understanding of how they can be addressed.

The current need for alternative models of food distribution was brought up by participant A2. She believed that the MFM could contribute to building ideas for what a successful model could look like: “I also think that you know, in Nova Scotia, where, well across Canada, like globally our food system has become so consolidated like in large companies, we need alternative models, for regional food distribution and regional food access so I think what we're trying to do is just build ideas and models for what you know, regional food distribution could look like” (A2).

In summary, the discourse of community of appreciation was shaping participants’ perceptions of what the MFM was providing with regards to a shift in focus on food access in broader systems and policies. This community of appreciation discourse allowed the food accessibility issues that the MFM has been working to address to surface in municipal conversations. Therefore, the community of appreciation discourse has competed with and challenged the dominant discourses related to food accessibility. Together, these findings suggest that the MFM has been helping shift and negotiate relations of power regarding food systems and food accessibility as these issues are brought to the attention of municipal stakeholders.

Functioning and Operation of MFM

This section describes the common beliefs participants shared about the structure of the MFM and how partnerships operated within the MFM. Participants described a hierarchy related to the partnership structure within the MFM and decision-making processes during participant interviews, which is explained throughout this section.

Project structure. Overall, most participants believed that the MFM has been functioning well as it has been operating since the beginning of the project. Generally, participants felt that the way the MFM was serving communities was working well and those involved in the operation of the market felt they were appreciated in their role and their input was being listened to. Participants seemed pleased with the types of partners involved in the MFM operation and the level to which they were involved. Participants shared a belief that the structure of the project was working well contributed to the community of appreciation discourse. Participants valued the project structure and unique MFM model and connected the structure with the success of the MFM: “I think the setup we have now is absolutely necessary for the success of the program” (CM3).

Many participants spoke about how the MFM in Halifax is a unique model as MFMs are a relatively new concept and its structure has changed and adapted frequently. One advisory team member described this; her language is guided by the community of appreciation discourse: “...the way that it’s set up and how we reach other, I guess organizations or different groups in the city, like it really does seem like a collaboration...I think it’s a really unique model” (A1).

Many participants valued having a project model in which community voices are incorporated. One advisory team member explained that the partners involved in the MFM are wonderful but having a model where all partners’ perspectives are acknowledged and accounted

for is critical: “I really think largely the success of the project is because of the collaborations and I don’t think it’s specific to the four groups we have working with us, they’re all wonderful but I think it could, you know, some have like come and gone, swapped in others so I really just think it’s that model that you know, everyone has equal say, everyone brings a different perspective, that has worked marvellously for our project” (A1). The development of this unique model has been guided by the community of appreciation discourse; values related to the purpose of the MFM such as collaboration and considering the perspectives of all partners are incorporated into the model. The focus placed on practicing these values is appreciated by community members and MFM partners.

One local host lead mentioned how she likes that in the structure of the MFM, everyone has their own set role that they stick to, but everyone can also contribute their input to the project:

“Everybody has their roles, everybody is meant to do that one thing. So, everybody can't be I guess, everybody can't be at the same because if your job is to order, then your job is to order and if your job is to bag then your job is to bag, if you're to deliver, you do— everybody plays a role. So everybody can't be the same but everybody can have an opinion” (L3).

One advisory team member acknowledged that, although they were doing well at involving community members in the MFM, there is always room for improvement in this area: “Yeah, so the more the community members can be involved, the better I think. And definitely something we could always do better at I think. Yeah. I think we’re doing pretty well but, always room for improvement, always room to like kind of lift up the voices of people who are just coming to the markets and yeah, living in the community” (A1). Her language describing 'lifting up voices' suggested that she felt she was subjectively perceived to hold power in her role and was working

to negotiate power relations to balance power dynamics with MFM customers. Similarly, participant L1 believed that the market was operating well but with more capacity, more could be done in terms of involving community members who are not currently accessing the MFM.

A few participants described how the structure of the MFM allows many partners to come together so that work is not duplicated. One community volunteer compared the structure of the MFM to other initiatives she's volunteered with and explained that she saw the potential the MFM could have as it continues to operate because the work being done has been less siloed and proper communication has been happening to allow the market to operate efficiently. This type of project model was constructed through a community of appreciation discourse as the partners involved in the MFM operation value the way it is run which influences their desire to continue being involved as a MFM partner.

Based on statements from several participants, it seems clear that the MFM advisory team members have taken their time to ensure that communities and other partners are happy with the way the MFM is operating. One advisory team member (A4) shared several examples of practices the advisory team engaged in during the pilot to ensure communities were able to shape the structure of the market including an evaluation and several focus groups with all communities to explore the idea of the MFM and then to share resources and lessons learned with each other about what worked and what in their communities. This was an example of the advisory team negotiating and shifting power relations through the creation of opportunities for community members to shape the market in their community.

Similarly, another participant discussed how the advisory team has taken their time customizing the operation of the MFM to fit each individual community in which it operates: "We take our time when we're choosing these organizations because yeah, you need like the

right fit I guess. Each community is very different, so it's not like every rec centre in every community works. You know, like some it's the church that works better, some it's the rec centre, some it's the senior's like housing complex" (A1). As previously mentioned, this customization contributed to the sense of community appreciation for the benefits the MFM provides.

Based on the above quotes, it was apparent that participants shared a common belief that the MFM structure has been serving its purpose as it has been operating well. It was also evident that participants shared a common value of incorporating the community into the structure of this project, which has contributed to the construction of the community of appreciation discourse. Analysis of these quotes suggested that the practice of incorporating the community into the project structure was a way of negotiating and shifting power relations between those designing the MFM project and those who use it.

Partnerships structure. Similar to the structure of the overall project, participants generally believed that the structure of partnerships in the MFM worked well for the project. Most participants stated or alluded to the fact that there may be a hierarchy among the MFM partners as they described power relations existing in the MFM. When speaking about the advisory team, one community volunteer described them as "the biggies", suggesting that she saw them at the top of the hierarchy, subjectively positioned to hold more power than others in the MFM partnership structure. One participant who saw a hierarchical structure described the relationships from top to bottom as "friendly": "It's a very open and friendly relationship you know, we have [MFM Manager] and [MFM Coordinator] up there and sort of I'm down here and that doesn't matter" (CM3).

Although many participants recognized a hierarchical structure of partnerships, they seemed to feel like the partnership structure was fair and worked well for the purpose of the project. One community volunteer (CM1) stated that the MFM does not seem to be a “top-heavy” structure. She went on to explain that she believed that the reason why the MFM has been functioning well was because there were many levels of management and decision making within the MFM which are all vital to the operation of the MFM.

Likewise, a local host lead valued the structure of partnerships in the MFM and described the partnerships as “well rounded” as everyone involved in them has the opportunity to contribute to the project: “I find it's very well rounded in terms of everybody has an opportunity to bring their opinion or their guidance or their skills or their input and it's used from a—in a team perspective, everybody kind of benefits from it. So I really feel like it's you know, it's kind of the only way I think, of running a team” (L2). Other participants shared sentiments that everyone is heard “on the same level”. Analysis of this language suggested that power relations were negotiated among partners and that power relations shift situationally based on the different decisions being made. As previously described, the advisory team purposefully worked to negotiate and shift power relations through communication, seeking input from all partners and equitable positioning of MFM partner roles.

Participant CR1 described the practice of different partners in the MFM working together across hierarchical levels. Her words suggested that she experienced the community of appreciation discourse as she discussed her value for the structure of MFM partnerships: “Well I think with any organization you need hierarchy of some sort. So you definitely need somebody to make decisions and to take on that role, but you also need the feedback from the people that

are directly affected by those things and then you also need people who are just willing to help like me that just help the entire process along” (CR1).

While there appeared to be a hierarchy among the MFM partner roles with the advisory team seen at the top, those subjectively positioned in higher level roles such as the advisory team still felt connected to the purpose of the project. One advisory team member mentioned this when describing her role within the MFM: “I would say like coordination for the other advisory team members, connecting dots between operations and leadership and things like that. So it's a pretty high level role but I still feel really connected to the purpose of the project” (A2). Analysis of participant A2’s words demonstrated how power operated through people as her language suggested that she believed she was in a position of power as an advisory team member.

The partnership structure has shifted over the course of the operation of the MFM. Although the advisory team partnerships were vital from the beginning and necessary throughout the growth of the market, the leadership of the advisory team has facilitated power to shift to other partners within the communities in which the MFM operates as the individual community markets became more established. This was explained by an advisory team member: “...as far as to where we are today, I think the partnerships that existed at the advisory level were critical. I think they're becoming less critical as time goes on and these markets become very well established” (A2). Analysis of participant language suggested that over the course of the operation of the MFM, the community of appreciation has been constructed and strengthened and has supported other MFM partner’s involvement in MFM practices and partnerships as individual markets became established, allowing advisory team members to take a step back.

Partners’ perceived contribution to MFM. In general, participants saw their role as being one small but important piece that contributed to the large project of the MFM. Many

participants believed that it was important to have many people in many roles to support such a large project to function efficiently. All participants discussed their connections and collaborations with others in the MFM as they described their role in the MFM, signifying that partnerships are important and numerous in the MFM.

Many participants articulated that they valued the many important roles within the MFM and that without someone doing each of those roles, the market would not operate well. For example: “I definitely see myself, it’s just like, kind of like the grunt work, like it is purely operations, so there’s a lot of people on the project that like, it wouldn’t exist without them. I’m not saying that without me it wouldn’t exist, but like without someone doing just like, purely *doing*, the project wouldn’t run” (A1). The community of appreciation discourse was clear in participant words as they explained how they value the roles that the other partners of the MFM contribute to the MFM operation.

When discussing their role, participants often described how they worked to support others who work or volunteer in the MFM. One core volunteer stated: “I think it's more of a support effort in the sense of the Friday volunteering...vegetable sorting and things like that” (CR1). Through analysis, it was understood that most people who are involved in the MFM operation are interested in supporting and helping each other so the MFM can operate smoothly. A community volunteer explained their efforts to support the MFM Manager and MFM Coordinator:

“Without volunteers to work the operation, 'cause we're all volunteers, it wouldn't exist, so, simply put, I think without the coordination, we probably wouldn't have as successful a time because the administrators, [MFM Coordinator] and [MFM Manager], are spending most of their energy just keeping up with the flow of ordering food, adjusting

you know, how much we need of different veggies and fruits every week, that in itself is a huge job, and then the day before the market, they're packing it up, getting ready in individual bags and getting it ready to use for that weekend, so they really don't have the time to spend you know, for coordinating” (CM2).

Others, such as this local host lead, saw their role as connecting different groups of people: “I see my role as bridging the gap between [my community] and the team that comes in like the mobile—the actual physical bus that comes in” (L2).

Analysis of participant language revealed that the operation of the MFM relies on collaboration and that participants valued this aspect of the MFM. Participant’s gratitude for the work that other MFM partners contribute to the operation of the MFM supported the construction of the community of appreciation discourse. Participants explained their appreciation for this work by explaining that the MFM wouldn’t exist without the help of other partners.

Critical role of MFM staff. Most participants believed it was important to have staff dedicated to the operation of the MFM. In Halifax’s MFM these are the MFM Manager and the MFM Coordinator. Participants valued the work that the MFM Manager and MFM Coordinator put into the project and stated that they felt lucky and appreciative for their dedication to the project. This was another example of how the community of appreciation discourse was illustrated. It was also expressed by many participants that the MFM staff provided a link between partners of the MFM and have been essential to the functioning of the market. This was described by one advisory team member:

“I think [MFM Manager] and [MFM Coordinator] were really critical—had really critical roles and probably frustrating roles at times for them to make sure that the communities

felt heard and empowered and that we listened to what they were saying and responded quickly and they also—probably [MFM Manager] and [MFM Coordinator] felt pressure from the advisory team and so they were—they were sort of the lynch pin I think between the whole—all of the partners, to make sure that everyone felt like they were getting what they needed or had a say” (A4).

Similarly, one community volunteer expressed that the MFM staff are the link between the advisory team and the community markets, and that they are often the vehicle by which feedback from communities gets back to the advisory team. They explained that MFM staff are very well informed about what works and what doesn't in the markets: “...these are the people that kind of are the liaison between the administration and the actually nitty gritty of how the markets themselves work. And so they kind of get a chance to hear the data from here and take it back, you know, they're kinda the conduit by which information can run” (CM1).

One advisory team member explained that they did not have direct relationships with many of the other partners who worked in the communities and they valued having the MFM Manager and MFM Coordinator to rely on as their link to the communities: “...we don't have direct contact with all of these groups, we have direct contact with [MFM Manager] and [MFM Coordinator] and we rely on [MFM Manager] and [MFM Coordinator] to bring back what it is that community needs are...but it's hard for me to know, like what relationship the local host organizations have with all their volunteers” (A2).

The role of the MFM staff requires a lot of dedication and time for building and maintaining relationships, which was something recognized by many participants and described by an advisory team member:

“I think in order to sustain the partners, I mean that's I think a big part of [their] job which is often not accounted for when you're thinking about the hours it takes to do this work which is maintaining relationships and so you need—what's required to maintain the partnerships, is time dedicated to fostering those relationships and so that's phone calls, that's attending meetings, that's casual conversations on site, that's making sure that yeah, you have—there's trust built up there” (A3).

Analysis of participants' statements regarding the MFM staff suggested that MFM staff are subjectively positioned to hold power as many partners rely on them for many aspects of their position in the MFM. This type of positioning demonstrated how power operated through people. It was evident that participants valued the role that the MFM staff play in the operation of the MFM and that the recognition of their work contributed to the community of appreciation. Participants described their appreciation for the MFM staff by describing their role as critical and being the link between various other partners.

Partnership importance. Partnership importance regarding MFM operation and sustainability was a common theme among all participants; all participants expressed that effectively operating partnerships have been fundamental to the success of the MFM. Many participants described new partnerships that the MFM has allowed to form and the fact that it has facilitated the strengthening of other partnerships including partnerships between communities, institutions, organizations, individual community members and many others. Throughout this section it can be seen that the community of appreciation discourse was apparent in participant's language about partnerships as they valued the focus placed on developing effective MFM partnerships in the MFM model. As such, several participants connected the success of the

project to effectively operating partnerships. One advisory team member believed that effective partnerships have been essential since the beginning of the project:

“I think the partnerships are what made the success of the project. From a leadership team perspective, I think just the ability to leverage and share resources across organizations and institutions to sort of test—you know, share risk among different partners to test new ideas to do things on the ground and do things that couldn't have been done as individual partners, I think that was critical to the launch of the Mobile Food Market and then on the ground, it's like—you know, these things—the markets completely depend on community investment and so local hosts, their partners, like all of those community organizations that are partnering on the ground—you know, make this work happen and so yeah I mean I think partnerships are pretty much fundamental to the success of the market and have been from the beginning” (A2).

One local host expressed that she valued having communities see that the MFM project has been using a collaborative approach by drawing on partnerships and that decision-making power about the project is dispersed among many people and organizations. Analysis of her language suggested that she understood she was in a position of power as the lead in her community; she valued collaboration in decision making, and negotiated and shifted power relations that existed between her and the community members. Additionally, she believed that members of her community valued this approach to leadership, demonstrating a community of appreciation among MFM customers.

“It brings a collaborative community approach, and I think it also helps communities see that it takes more than one organization or one person to bring things together. It's really helpful for them to see that it's not just me doing all the work, but I'm a part of the team

and those teams all come together to make decisions, those teams come together to kind of build up the market and build up the organization and stuff” (L2).

Several participants discussed the importance of having a variety of partner roles. For example: “Logistically speaking, to be able to set up something like this, you really do need, like the local host organizations and them—the advisory team for the big picture. But when it comes down to the day-to-day, you need the other volunteers, the community volunteers and the core volunteers” (CR2).

As mentioned previously, partnerships allow for individuals, groups and organizations to collaborate rather than duplicate each other’s work. Participant CM1 explained the importance of this in terms of finances of the project. She reported that rather than individual organizations using finances for similar smaller and individual projects, partnering and pooling finances can provide the opportunity to use financial resources more efficiently to create a larger impact so that work is not duplicated by organizations working in silos.

Likewise, a local host lead explained that there is only so much funding for food security-related projects so it is important to utilize partnerships to make a larger impact together: “Funding is spread so thin, especially when you're talking about food security, it's such a trendy—not trendy but it's—you know it's in the news all the time and it's become a really big ticket item, so everybody's applying for funding around food security and there's only so much money to go around” (L1).

One local host lead (L3) spoke about finances in a different light; she stated that since the MFM is a not-for-profit organization, partnerships are important so that the MFM doesn’t have to pay for resources such as space to operate the MFM. The above quotes and stories about finances were guided by the community of appreciation discourse and demonstrated how

participants understood that resources for projects such as the MFM are not always readily available and they value how the MFM model facilitates consistently practicing making the most of what they have through effective partnerships.

Each community and organization involved in the MFM had their own idea of what works well in their community. Participant A4 described the process of building partnerships in the MFM by recognizing and taking advantage of what is available to them through these partnerships. Through analysis of participant interviews, it was evident that the advisory team valued this practice as a way to negotiate and shift power dynamics between the MFM leadership positions in the advisory team and other MFM partners. In the following quote, she referred to this as a strength-based approach:

“Well, I think, it's almost like taking a bit of a strength-based approach I guess to roles and so the local host teams were picked and created because they had—they are based in the communities and have those existing relationships with other service providers or—and/or community members in the community and so it was really important, they were integral to like, getting the word out in their community and so we let them, we sort of helped them figure that out but we let them like get the word out in whatever ways you do. Like do you have a newsletter, do you put posters up at the school, like—so I think we tapped into I think it was really important to tap into everyone's strengths” (A4).

Decision making processes. Three main themes surrounding the practice of decision-making in the MFM were identified during data analysis. These included decisions about the logistics of the MFM project as whole, operational decisions in each individual community market and decisions about what the MFM brings to communities. Several participants expressed their belief that one group of people could not make all the decisions in the MFM and felt that a hierarchy of

partners is useful in the MFM model. One participant stated that it doesn't make sense to have 40 people sitting around the table making all decisions about the markets together (A4). The following sections describe the types of decisions that are made within the MFM and contain details about the relations of power that exist within the MFM.

Logistical decisions in the overall project. It was believed by all participants that the advisory team members generally made the decisions about the logistical aspects of the MFM and are subjectively positioned to appear to hold decision making power. These decisions involved interpreting feedback from communities to make decisions about what is sold in each community. Other decisions related to funding and finances are also made by the advisory team, as mentioned by one advisory team member: "I think there are components of the market that are—community members don't have a say in because it's funding related, you know" (A1).

Participant L2 believed that it would not be practical for community members to make all decisions but she felt that community members' contribution to decision making was sufficient: "the community can't make all the decisions because there are logistics that we just don't have control over, but I really feel like there's a great community contribution to the decision making" (L2). Similarly, one community volunteer (CM1) stated that: "not everybody's mind works to handle those kind of things" when describing the leadership role that advisory team members play. Relatedly, another community volunteer stated: "because volunteers come and go—I can see where they would be useful in helping make some decisions—but they obviously couldn't participate in the planning and financial aspect of the—of the workings of the group" (CM2). She went on to explain that not everybody wants to be involved in decision making processes and that in her opinion, the most successful volunteer operations run with a variety of people making decisions at different levels and areas of the operation.

At the beginning of the project there were a lot of moving parts and decisions to be made so the advisory team took ownership over decision making at that time. Participant A4 felt that she had a lot of decision making power in her role on the advisory team at that time: “I think there were a lot of decisions that had to be made at a variety of different levels and so like I said earlier, it just doesn’t make sense for 40 people to make all the decisions because there would just be decision fatigue, I think at all sorts of levels” (A4).

The advisory team had to make some decisions without input from the communities due to external constraints and controls, however they valued and prioritized having the community have the biggest input in how the service is designed, and valued purposefully negotiating and shifting power relations through this practice. This was reported by several advisory team members, for example:

“...the people who are going to be most affected—or those who the service is designed to support—need to have the biggest say in how the service is designed. So, while I don’t—while I think that can be sometimes idealistic in the sense that sometimes there are just things out of our control like when the busses are available so there are certain constraints and parameters so I would say that’s what advisory holds in place. But their decision-making power is really about those things, the constraints that are put on the market by external controls. But for all the things that we can control and that we can adjust, I think the different community members having a say in those things is vital to the success of the market on the ground, it’s why people show up. So, yeah, I think it’s critically important that you know, different community members have a say in how the market looks on the ground” (A2).

The above quotes suggest that participants valued the advisory team's decision making leadership role in their subjective position of power. Throughout analysis of participant interviews it became evident that participants believed that not everyone involved in the MFM operation wants to be involved in the project-wide logistical decisions regarding the operation of the MFM. However, they could exercise their agency by providing input on these decisions and their voice would likely be heard and considered as the advisory team works to negotiate power relations so that all partners are equitably positioned during decision making practices. This type of flexibility contributed to a sense of appreciation among MFM partners and suggested that relations of power are consistently shifting, being negotiated, and are malleable. The practices described through this section illustrated how power operated through people as they negotiated and used their agency as they made decisions.

Operational decisions in individual communities. It was reported by many participants that the local host leads and local host organizations make decisions in individual communities regarding how the MFM operates within that community, along with the community volunteers. Local host leads often inform decisions made by the advisory team; this was explained by many advisory team members, for example: “And I’d say the local host lead—yeah are definitely informing us. They are—if they have ideas, they can come to us and usually it’s a yes from us. Not a—yes you can do that but yes like we will definitely take that into consideration” (A1).

One advisory team member stated that those working in the individual communities such as local host leads and local host organizations, community volunteers, and community members have ultimate control over what happens with the MFM in their individual community: “I think that local host leads and community members have far more control over the market than they think so if local host leads decided that they didn't want a market in their community anymore

there would be no market” (A3). This quote showed how power could be negotiated and suggested that participant A3 believed that local host leads may not realize that they are subjectively positioned to hold power within their community’s MFM.

A similar sentiment was shared by a community volunteer as she explained the power relations local host organizations are involved in through their decisions within their own community. Needs differ between communities and local host organizations would know more about the needs within their community than those outside of their community:

“...your local organization can have hopefully a lot of input in the decisions and knowing their community and what's needed there which is—I'm finding is quite different, that the communities, one size does not fit all and you know, and so and your local host and host organization know what their community needs and so hopefully will be involved in this partnership end and delegation to some extent as to what—what falls where and what's possible and so on” (CM1).

Participant L1 explained that she valued her defined role and valued that she has certain operational decisions she has to make and doesn’t have to worry about the logistical decisions that the advisory team makes: “I just have to order my produce, give them the money and take delivery, and deal with this end of it. I like that—that takes—it makes my job really easy, right. So there's different levels of decision making and—and in different areas of the market so, they all work smoothly as far as I can tell anyway” (L1). Participant L3 valued that there are not too many people involved in the decisions about the MFM within her community because the decisions become confusing to make when too many people are involved. The values these local host leads described demonstrated the construction of a community of appreciation for the structure of the MFM among people in this role.

Although local host leads are the leaders in their community markets, they don't necessarily make all the decisions regarding the operation of the market in their community; this was explained by many participants. For example, participant L2 explained how she gathers the rest of the team in her community to help her make decisions:

“Like I just think you know, leader doesn't mean that I do all the decision making, it just means that I bring the people together and help them make decisions along with me, so I think that's really important and key in terms of understanding the—the core team and understanding the host team and the responsibility of that, 'cause I really don't feel like I lead the team, I feel like I bring them all together and we as a group make decisions.

There are times when I have to say just "I think this is going to be the best of the two" but at least it's not—the decisions aren't made without real input from the whole team” (L2).

These statements indicated that the local host leads recognized their position of power and worked to purposefully negotiate and shift power relations by seeking input in decision making processes from other individuals involved in the community market to encourage equitable positioning of those who are affected by the outcomes of the decisions made.

Additionally, a local host lead explained that when she has suggested changes to be made to the advisory team she felt like her opinion was valued, creating a sense of appreciation. She stated that community volunteers often have suggestions and that if they involved decisions to be made on the local level, she would make them herself and if they are larger than that, she would pass them on to the advisory team, suggesting that relations of power are constantly shifting between partners depending on the types of decisions being made:

“I know that if I suggest or ask or bring something up then it's really valued and listened to and considered. So I do, that...Our community volunteers, they've always got

suggestions and they—those would be made to me, and then if that involves the bigger picture of the mobile market itself, I would pass that on but if it's just something local here that we can deal with then I really listen to my volunteers. So we've made changes based on what the volunteers have said” (L1).

Decisions about what MFM brings to each community. Most participants indicated that they believed community volunteers and community members who attend the MFM in their community subjectively hold decision-making power regarding what is brought to them through the MFM; they have been encouraged to exercise their agency through involvement in these decisions. It was also clear that market staff and local host leads were responsive to the needs indicated by each community, which demonstrates how market staff and local host leads have been building a community of appreciation discourse among community members. One local host lead believed that it is critical to meet the needs of communities and listen to their input and build this discourse because if the community members stop attending the MFM, there would be no MFM in that community:

“...for the community I think, we have the feedback cards and we've used those cards to change the way the market looks to bring different things in to really listen to the community so that—because I mean this is community driven. If they stop coming, we stop providing, we won't be able to provide so I feel like the community is probably about half responsible as well because you know when they put something on that card, they are—we really want to know, like why is it they feel this way and we try to address it, so I really feel like it's a great process in that way” (L2).

Many participants provided examples of instances when feedback from the community was put into action, suggesting that this is a routine practice used to purposefully and equitably

negotiate and shift relations of power by ensuring community voices and needs are considered. This included feedback about what food was brought to the communities, how the MFM customers purchased it, as well as the way it was delivered. One advisory team member explained this: "...our market in [community name], how that looks is informed by the community. So if the community says we want more of this food and not that, we want to have like a community discount program, that's, they can shape that however they want" (A3).

Community volunteers and local host leads who were interviewed, along with the rest of the MFM volunteers and staff in their community described themselves as friendly and receptive to feedback while the market is operating in their community. One community volunteer (CM2) explained that they ensure the community has input into the decisions about what the MFM brings to them through questionnaires and making an effort to ask customers about what they would like the market to bring. The individuals operating the market within this community valued having input from members of the community and ensured that community is continuously served based on their needs. Similar values were evident in other participant interviews suggesting that similar practices occur throughout all market sites. These practices demonstrated how the MFM volunteers and staff in their community have been constructing a community of appreciation among community members by valuing their needs. Additionally, these practices showed how MFM volunteers and staff have been intentionally negotiating and shifting power relations to become more equitable by ensuring MFM customers feel comfortable sharing input and feedback regarding how they want the MFM to look in their community.

Participant CM1 expressed that it is impossible for all feedback from community members to be considered and accommodated for. She went on to explain that the people who are working on the ground such as the community volunteers and local host leads know more about the

operation of the MFM within communities and their voices should be heard a little louder than the community members:

“I’m not trying to be elite there, but some of it is more informed than other...we get people who say "I don't ever want to see lettuce", well that's—I'm sorry, sometimes—sometimes lettuce happens [laughs] ... people have preferences and so on but that's not really something that you can accommodate completely” (CM1).

Vulnerability of MFM structure. Although participants described the MFM as functioning well overall, participant CM1 expressed that a potential weak spot in the structure of partnerships is that local host leads and the MFM Coordinator and MFM Manager have a lot of responsibility with the MFM on top of their other responsibilities to keep the market operating as well as it does. She stated that although this is not currently an issue, it could become an issue in the future. A local host lead echoed this thought: “People get burnt out, the organizations get burnt out” (L1). Many other participants expressed that they believed the MFM staff go above and beyond in their role and put in a lot of extra hours.

Another community member described another potential weak spot of the MFM structure as the fact that a large number of the people involved in its operation are volunteers, which could potentially be a destabilizer of the operation: “I think there's opportunity for growth but you know it's sort of run to a degree by volunteers so that sometimes can be a destabilizer in a sense” (CM3). These factors could affect the sustainability of the MFM and MFM partnerships.

Sustainability Factors

Identified factors related to the sustainability of the MFM fell under two main themes: the sustainability of partnerships and the sustainability of relationships with communities. A third influence on sustainability of the MFM related to funding is explored in this section.

Partnership sustainability factors. As mentioned previously, it was expressed by all participants that partnerships are fundamental to the success of the MFM. A variety of partner roles, backgrounds, and levels of involvement in MFM processes are necessary for the MFM to function well. The next four sub-sections will outline the factors that participants identified as factors which facilitate the market to run well.

Mutual benefit. When asked about how the MFM could sustain partnerships in the long term, many participants described the idea that being involved in a MFM partnership should be beneficial for both the partner and the MFM. Analysis of participant interviews suggested that ensuring both parties involved in the MFM partnership are benefitting from involvement in this partnership is a way of intentionally negotiating and shifting relations of power, which in turn impacts the sustainability of this partnership through equitable positioning of both parties within the partnership.

This was a very strong theme among advisory team members and could be described in terms of benefitting them by helping meet their own personal or organizational goals. It could also be described in terms of benefitting them through the feeling that they are contributing to the project by feeling heard or valued. One participant described this in terms of reaching goals: “I think the obvious one is that we need to make sure that partners are benefitting from partnering with us in the long run so, yeah I guess that means that we are helping them reach their goals as well as them helping us reach ours” (A1). Likewise, another participant valued partners being able to see their involvement in the MFM as helping them to achieve their organizational or personal goals:

“I think in order for a partner to want to stay with the work, they have to see themselves in the work, they have to identify with the purpose and the mandate and they have to see

that work as helping them to achieve their goals and sort of the outcomes that they want to achieve within their organizations or you know, personally” (A2).

Participant L2 believed that checking in with partners to ensure their needs are still being met could help sustain partnerships or help them recognize that they may no longer be a fit as a partner of the MFM: “I think we need to be consistently saying, "is what you expected of the market, is it meeting that need? Is there anything that we can change?"... sometimes organizations grow and change and it's no longer a fit for their organization, but they're staying because they made a commitment” (L2).

One participant discussed her personal goal of contributing back to the MFM because she felt that the MFM has been so helpful to her: “And I'm happy to be [a volunteer] because I don't know, I feel guilty because I never used to be poor, I feel guilty taking and taking and taking and I feel like I should contribute back, you know” (CR3). The community discourse of appreciation was evident throughout the interview with participant CR3 as she spoke about how she valued the MFM's services and the opportunities it has provided for her to be involved in her community.

One participant described the importance of partners feeling like they are making a difference and are being heard: “I think it's important for all the partners to feel like they're making a difference and feel like they're being heard and that their objectives or needs are being met and I think the Mobile Market is like a pretty good way of doing that” (A4).

Similarly, a community volunteer explained that to sustain partnerships with volunteers, the volunteers should feel valued and like they have input: “...in order to keep them, as I said, I think you have to make them feel valued... I think they need to feel that they have some input”

(CM1). She went on to provide an example of how community volunteers could feel discouraged if their feedback is not considered:

“If volunteers or whatever feel that they have some input in what goes on, even if it's just saying you know "every time six—five times out of six that we get this product, it's crappy. Can we please maybe not get this product?" And—and that's—and if that product keeps showing up, you feel like hm... And if that's not being listened to above us then after a while you get discouraged” (CM1).

Analysis of the above quotes about partners feeling like they are making a difference and having their input heard, suggested that these factors have allowed partners to feel like they have power and agency to affect MFM practices and processes. This feeling of power and agency is important for the sustainability of their partnership within the MFM as it contributes to the community of appreciation among MFM partners for the MFM model of decision-making processes.

An advisory team member identified the fact that to sustain partnerships with local host leads, it is important to check in with them to make sure that their involvement in the MFM is consistently meeting the needs of their organization. Providing the opportunity for partners to use their agency to explain their needs and ask for what they want is a way of intentionally negotiating and shifting relations of power. This has positively impacted the sustainability of partnerships as it ensures partners' needs within the partnership will continue to be met, as described in the following quote:

“...regular check-ins to see if what are you—'what are you hoping to get out of this role and how can we help you get what you're hoping to get?' Same thing with the local host

leads. ‘Is this program still meeting the needs that your organization was hoping to meet when you originally launched it, if not, are there ways we can tweak that?’” (A3).

The community of appreciation was constructed as partners made mutual benefit a priority in MFM partnerships; this discourse was apparent in participant words throughout this section as they described how they valued the fact that mutual benefit is prioritized. The practicing of a mutually beneficial partnership demonstrated how power operated through people as they negotiated through the giving and taking of feedback and input on MFM decisions, as well as through supporting each other to reach goals.

Relation to MFM purpose and enjoyment. Several participants expressed their belief that it is important for partners to relate to the mission of the MFM project. Many participants believed that if partners valued the purpose of the MFM, they would continue to want to be involved with the initiative: “...because you're donating your time, like if it's something that's important to you, you're gonna want to like keep doing it and stay in that partnership” (CR1). The idea of partners valuing the purpose of the MFM is directly aligned with the community of appreciation discourse; this community has been constructed through the collective value for the purpose of the MFM among MFM partners.

One participant explained that people generally understand the purpose of the MFM and find the novel idea of bringing food around on a city bus intriguing. Therefore, finding people who are able to relate to this work is not difficult:

“I don't know why but I think it was just sort of the mobile market was this, people could, people really latched onto it really easily, I don't know if it was just the, you know, food on a bus is like "oh what?!" if it's the novelty of the idea or it's just like "oh weird" but people really latched on to it and um, and—and rallied around it and it made them excited

and committed to the work and so I think that spurred on a lot of interest in like continuing to make community change in the communities” (A4).

As volunteers generally have had less formal responsibilities with the MFM, they are able to use their agency a lot more readily than other partner positions to decide whether they want to leave their volunteer role or continue to be involved with the MFM. Therefore, a common theme among community and core volunteers when discussing sustainability of partnerships with MFM volunteers was making sure that they enjoy the work they are doing. The community of appreciation discourse was clear in participant words as they described how they enjoyed their involvement in the MFM. For example, participant A1 described their job as rewarding and stated that they saw their work as meaningful to other people: “It’s a really special project, I can say a hundred percent it’s the most rewarding job I’ve ever had. It’s represents a job where I get to enjoy what I’m doing, and I really enjoy the people that I work with, and I feel like the work I’m doing is meaningful to a lot of people” (A1).

Capacity. Dialogue related to capacity was mainly found in interviews with advisory team members and community volunteers. Capacity in this context referred to both the capacity that individuals involved in the MFM have to support the project as well as the capacity that is needed to sustain the MFM.

One advisory team member explained how capacity to operate the MFM is difficult to find among those working within communities, specifically with local host leads. This was consistent with what was previously explained to be a potential weak spot in the MFM structure. It is interesting to note how participant A1 discussed capacity in relation to hierarchy in the following quote: “So as you move down to like the local host teams, maybe organizations that have less funding, less resources, so that’s always been a trick is

finding people with capacity but once you've found them, and usually like, we work really hard to build those relationships. So that they are lasting and are sustainable" (A1).

Participant CM2 explained that she believed retirees make good volunteers because they do not have work commitments and therefore have a greater capacity to support the project. It has been explained throughout this chapter that it would not be possible to sustain the MFM project without support from all the partners involved in the project. One advisory team member stated this point from a capacity perspective:

"And I think just, the sustainability of the project has been absolutely dependent on having these community partners. There's no way that one or two staff people could carry all this project. So it's been essential to maintain good relationships with the organizations and stakeholders in each community, and also with the volunteers, so I think there's a host of reasons why it's really good" (A3).

One local host lead expressed that she believes that more could be done in her community MFM with increased capacity and increased resources: "I think there's a lot more that could be done if people had more time, energy, money...somebody said it at the [Community Group Name] meeting, the will is there, it's just the resources, right" (L1). Her language regarding the "will" that the individuals involved in her community MFM have implied that the people who are involved in this initiative are committed to the purpose of the project. This suggested that she saw the community of appreciation discourse guiding those involved in the MFM in her community, affecting their desire to become and remain involved in the initiative.

Seeing results. Several participants believed that to sustain partnerships, the partners must see the result of the work they are engaging in and contributing to. The community of appreciation discourse could be seen through participant language throughout this section as

participants explained how they valued seeing the results of their work through partner and market customer words and actions, and how it has encouraged them to continue working hard. One community volunteer provided an example of seeing results through feedback from market customers: “The feedback that we get from them is very good. They—they feel like we've done them a tremendous service. And that kind of boosts our morale and keeps us going” (CM2).

A local host lead described the significance of seeing the immediate impacts the MFM has had on MFM customers:

“It's interesting because we often don't—or I often don't think about food and it's impact throughout a whole family, right? So I see some families that come on the bus and you know, they literally get their grocery order of fruits and vegetables and the impact—sometimes I see it when they're at the cash and they're like "that's all? Like that's all I'm paying?". So it's kind of like seeing those impacts, the immediate impacts of food security. Like knowing that they can have fresh fruits and vegetables, I think that's an important thing” (L2).

Seeing results was also explained in terms of watching market customers socializing, learning and enjoying themselves at the market. These gestures impacted MFM partners' practices by motivating them with a tangible outcome of their work: “Customers really appreciate finding not only what they need to eat but it's their opportunity for socialization and learning and many of them really like that and I think that's—that kind of energizes us when we see people you know, that are learning and appreciating and really are enjoying themselves” (CM2).

Sustainability of relationships with communities. The following two sub-sections describe the factors necessary to sustain relationships with communities involved in the MFM.

Trust is critical to gain. Trust in the MFM was identified by many participants as important to build with communities for the success and sustainability of the MFM as trust is valued by the MFM and by the communities. One advisory team member explained that consistent communication with communities is needed to build trust with them. She believed trust was important so communities understand that the market is in their community to stay:

“What's required to maintain the partnerships is time dedicated to fostering those relationships and so that's phone calls, that's attending meetings, that's casual conversations on site, that's making sure that yeah, you have—there's trust built up there. Trust that the project's not going to disappear tomorrow, that's another thing. And so I think building up the trust in these—in these communities that, okay, we're a valuable service but “I don't want to come to depend on this too much because what if you're not there next week” so I think that's a big part of it” (A3).

She went on to describe how she believes that gaining trust from communities has supported the MFM to function well: “I think there are also issues of trust in these communities, so having residents there say "this is our project, we own and run this project" gained trust for the initiative in those communities and completely changed the trajectory of the project, so I think trust is a big issue” (A3). This quote illustrated show shifting relations of power between the advisory team and communities, and negotiating power relations has helped with the sustainability of the partnerships between the communities and the MFM. This has created opportunities for the community to use their agency and direct the project the way they want to in their community.

Leaders from local host organizations in each community were described as the trusted faces among community members so cultivating relationships with them is helpful for building strong

partnerships with the community because they know the history of the community and what that community's needs are. This was explained by participant A3:

“...but the community partners are the trusted faces within the community, so they have an ear to the ground to the shifting needs of the community, so needs change over time and therefore the project needs to continue to shift over time, so if we don't have that ear to the ground, then the community will not feel comfortable sharing the information, then the project is going to become irrelevant and then you know, people won't continue to use the service and so then that won't be sustainable either” (A3).

One local host lead explained that her community had experience of previous projects coming into their community for short periods of time. As a trusted face in her community, she saw her role as ensuring that the community knows they can rely on the MFM as a consistent source for accessing food:

“A lot of times information—transformation of information doesn't always happen, so ensuring that people who come through my centre know that the bus is going to be there, when it's going to be there, that it's going to be consistent, 'cause one of the things is you know, in communities like this, things happen but for a short term so it's always a band-aid fix, and then it's gone, and then there's nothing. So really trying to promote the mobile market as a—as another access point to food on a consistent basis, so that people can rely on it, people can rely on that” (L2).

Trust was another way that people have built a community of appreciation within the MFM; as community members begin to trust the MFM, they are able to appreciate the positive impacts the MFM has on communities.

Success is dependent on community involvement. Lastly, but most importantly is that the success of the MFM is dependent upon having involvement from the community. This importance was described in various ways throughout this chapter and has been emphasized through the community of appreciation discourse. One core volunteer suggested that the reason for this was because the MFM is not a business, it is a community-run organization: “I think it's important because the market isn't—it's not a business. It's an organization, it's—it's for the community. And it is community-run and so I think it's very important to have different sort of levels of where people come in to give their ideas, their thoughts, and sort of what they want to see in the market” (CR2).

Many participants connected the success of the project with the involvement of the community. One participant believed that having community voices incorporated in the project helps make projects like the MFM more successful, compared to when people from outside the community design a project that will be implemented in communities:

“I think it's always good to have, communities driving the initiative. I think projects are more successful when—when they have community voices involved. And it makes sense that you know, if your project is coming from outside and bringing a model that like, maybe won't fit with the community then it's—it's probably not going to succeed, right? If you have community members saying like “these are our needs, we like doing it this way, this is where you should set up,” like I think you would have much more success with that” (A1).

Another advisory team member explained that the one of the objectives of the MFM is to make the initiative community driven and to build capacity among community members to play an active role in shaping the initiative that is being brought to their community. Negotiations and

shifting of power relations could be seen between individuals designing the MFM and the communities in which it operates as communities use their agency to shape and sustain the initiative on their own. This could be seen throughout this section and in the following quote:

“I mean the essence of it is supposed to be we don't have all the solutions, it's not that we have a cookie cutter model that we can bring into your community that's going to solve all your needs, it's that we have some capacity and some resources and some energy and knowledge that we've gained over the past three years that we can offer to a community to support it's—the people who already live there and who have a really good understanding of what the needs are to help co-create a solution that we can support. But really the solution needs to be community driven because especially as this project grows, we're going to have less resources to dedicate to these locations and so the idea is really about building the capacity of that community to sustain their own initiative and support them where they need support” (A3).

One community volunteer (CM1) described community volunteers as “a cog in a wheel ” and explained that a balance is necessary in terms of how much of their input is considered in decision making about the MFM. She stated that they should have enough input to feel they are contributing to the project for them to want to stay involved in the project. The individuals who work in the community markets use their agency to decide whose voice is heard and whose feedback is most highly considered. This was described by participant CM3:

“You walk a fine line. If we just feel that we're a cog in a wheel that shows up on alternate Wednesdays and does this and goes away, then it doesn't matter whether we come or not, you know, but then again, we are a cog in a wheel that shows up on alternate Wednesdays... But you give us too much clout and we're gonna push that particular

agenda over a balanced approach. On the other hand, I say if you don't give us any clout and we wander off. Because we don't feel like we are of any value, so who cares” (CM1).

Participants believed that it is important for community members to see that the project is coming from within their community and not being enforced from outside. Participant A4 explained that the project would not have been successful if it wasn't a collaboration among many people and if it was brought into communities without their input: “It was never going to work—it would never work if it was the Mayor's Mobile Market or if it was the NSHA's Mobile Market and we just plunked it down in the community. It would never have any—I don't think it would ever have had any staying power” (A4). This quote demonstrated that participant A4 valued partnerships and appreciated the current MFM model, believing that a top-down approach would not work for this type of project.

Another advisory team member believed that the MFM should be informed by individuals in the communities being served by the MFM, as the individuals on the advisory team may not be able to relate to the community partners:

“I think essential to a project like this which is really around addressing issues of inequality and like inequity in access to a vital resource as is often the case, the advisory team is made up of a very slim slice of—represents a very small demographic. Mostly university educated, white, mostly female. And so it's—and yeah, most of the folks on the advisory have not experienced the—the lack—the barriers that most of the demographic that we're aiming to serve does, so it's essential for the project to be informed—to have people involved in the project to make sure that we're shaping the project in a way that's actually achieving its mission” (A3).

Participant A3 recognized that the advisory team has been situated in a subjective position of power and that it was important for them to work to intentionally negotiate and equitably shift relations of power with the people they are aiming to serve. She went on to explain that having community members help shape the project has encouraged the project to succeed and that the advisory team would not have been able to do it on their own. This suggested that she valued working to equitably shift power relations between the advisory team and communities and that she believed working to find this balance impacted the sustainability of partnerships with communities. Members of the advisory team appreciated the involvement of community members. The community of appreciation discourse is evident in participant A3's quote below:

“...had we not had individuals right from the beginning from those communities shape the project and advocate for the project, I don't know that the project would have succeeded there because it would have very much been people from outside of the community saying that we have a solution and coming in and trying to institute the solution. Which to me is never the right way to go about it because we—we wouldn't have had the correct information on what the needs were in that community” (A3).

Funding. Many participants acknowledged the importance of finances and the fact that funding and funding partners are necessary for the project to continue and for many partners to continue to be involved in the project. One core volunteer stated that although she saw all partners as important, the market would not be able to operate without funding:

“They are all important I guess, but I feel like without [funding], the entire market wouldn't even be possible maybe because you know things would be more expensive and that, and like volunteers are important too because I mean labour is

expensive so to pay an employee or somebody to operate that business definitely would have an impact as well” (CR1).

One community volunteer valued continuing to receive funding because it allows them to provide affordable fruits and vegetables so that market customers can continue to buy them for a reduced cost without it: “we cannot continue to sell ten dollar produce packs indefinitely. You know, there will come a time if somebody, you're gonna have to ask for sponsorship for the subsidies, that would be a tough call, you would have to say "well look we're—it's unfortunate but we cannot provide the ongoing ten dollar subsidy, we're gonna have to change, it'll be seven, eight" we may have to do that” (CM3).

One local host lead (L1) had just gotten notice that the funding for her position with the MFM had been cut and shared her thoughts on the importance of funding partnerships in comparison to the other partnerships involved in the MFM: “I think they're all equally as important, unless you're talking about funding partnerships. Like the funding has to be a priority, right? And that's what happened here. The funding's gone so it's over. Well, it's changing, hopefully it's not over”. She suggested that it may be time to reassess how the market could look in her community: “Now that we're looking for a new home and we had our meeting... Maybe it's time to reassess, look at what we can do differently and get feedback from community members”. These quotes demonstrated how power operated through people as they decided how funding was allocated.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

The participants involved in this study discussed a variety of topics related to the operation of the MFM. This chapter will discuss the key findings in relation to the study questions, existing literature, and the implications for health promotion. Findings related to each research sub-question will be discussed to then answer the main research question, followed by implications for health promotion, study limitations and conclusions.

Sub-question 1: What does it mean to partners to participate in the MFM?

The purpose of this study was to explore the case of the MFM in Halifax. To begin building an understanding of this case, it was important to understand why the individuals who participate in the MFM as partners are involved in this initiative. The researcher asked the question “What does the MFM mean to you?” to participants to gain an understanding of this. Participants believed that the meaning of the MFM was more than just a place to buy food; it had many meanings. A community of appreciation discourse around the benefits and positive impacts the MFM brought to communities was constructed through answers to this question. As well, threads of this discourse were evident throughout other parts of participant interviews. It was found that answers to this question generally fell into two different categories: community impacts and impacts related to food awareness and accessibility.

The first category related to the impacts the participants saw within the communities in which the MFM operated. To participants, the MFM meant a place where community members could feel an atmosphere of community. Participants provided comments and examples related to creating an atmosphere of community among those who attend the MFM, which was interpreted as beneficial for the community. Previous studies have found several positive effects

of a sense or atmosphere of community such as increased community participation (Talò, Mannarini, & Rochira, 2014) and an association between sense of community and health, even when controlling for geography and socio-economic status (Kitchen, Williams, & Chowhan, 2012). Through analysis of participants' language, it was evident that participants worked diligently to negotiate power relations through the atmosphere of community so that community members felt comfortable in the environment of the MFM. As discussed by Weedon, working to balance or even shift power is not easy; it may take extreme efforts to achieve slight shifts toward a balance of power (1997, p.108).

The community participation opportunities that the MFM has provided to communities was also found to be meaningful for participants. Advisory team members valued creating opportunities for community participation as they were working to intentionally negotiate power relations through community participation opportunities, which contributed to the community of appreciation. Hoon Chuah and colleagues suggested that community participation is a complex process and that power relations and social forces are present throughout community participation activities (2018). The opportunities for community participation have allowed participants to use their agency to negotiate power relations with the individuals who make decisions regarding food systems and processes; this was expressed by participants as beneficial for the community. The declaration of Alma Ata, a significant document in Health Promotion declaring health for all, brought the importance of community participation to attention through a focus on the right of people to participate individually and collectively in the planning and implementation of their own healthcare (WHO, 1978). This sparked an understanding that providing opportunities to involve communities in health interventions has many advantages (Hoon Chuah et al., 2018).

A theme that was not recognized by all participants but was strong among those who spoke about it was practice of the MFM filling a different need in each community. The reason this may not have been recognized by all participants was likely because only certain participants have been actually involved in the process of customizing the individual community markets to fill the needs of each community. As described by Arnstein (1969) and found in other research (Cranshaw, Bunton and Gillen, 2003; Hoon Chuah et al., 2018), it is important for communities to truly participate in the designing of community and health promotion initiatives such as the MFM, rather than being involved in a tokenistic manner because they understand the needs of their community. This builds a sustainable, bottom-up solution to meeting the community's needs (Cranshaw, Bunton and Gillen, 2003).

The second category consisted of meanings of the MFM related to food awareness and accessibility. Analysis of participant language suggested that participants valued and appreciated what the MFM provided to communities with regard to food awareness and accessibility, and that they believed that communities valued this as well. These findings are another example of how people have created a community of appreciation through the MFM. This category included quotes related to knowledge sharing about food that happens at the MFM, that the MFM provides increased physical and financial access to fresh produce, and that the MFM has prompted a shifted focus on food access in broader systems and policies, challenging dominant discourses related to food accessibility.

Through analysis of participants' language, it was evident that a social discourse of food accessibility was shaping participant words as they described issues related to food access and insecurity in the HRM. Participants perceived individuals experiencing low income or food insecurity to possess less knowledge related to food purchasing and eating and cooking nutritious

meals than their high income, food secure counterparts. This discourse was similar to a discourse of stigmatization or victimization around food security which exists in Nova Scotia, marginalizing individuals based on their food insecurity (Andrée, Langille, Clement, Williams, & Norgang, 2016; Johnson, Williams, & Gillis, 2015; Knezevic, Hunter, Watt, Williams, & Anderson, 2014). As knowledge is associated with power and gaining knowledge may result in acquiring power (Arslanian-Engoren, 2002), the lack of food knowledge participants perceived individuals experiencing low income to possess suggested that a power relation exists between those who are experiencing low income and food security in comparison to those who are not.

The MFM meant a place where MFM customers could come to learn from each other. Based on analysis of participants words and stories, it became apparent that relations of power were negotiated through knowledge sharing in the MFM environment. The sharing of knowledge to balance power relations aligns with Foucault's work which explained that balancing relations of power requires distribution of knowledge (Hamilton & Sharma, 1997).

To all participants, the MFM meant a place where community members could come for increased physical and financial access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Many participants emphasized their appreciation through the community of appreciation discourse for the physical and financial ease related to attending the MFM, as well as for the freshness of the food provided through the MFM. As previously mentioned, fresh produce is less physically readily available and more costly in low income communities, compared to communities with higher average incomes (Moreland & Roux, 2006). One participant brought up the fact that her community is considered a food desert and how the MFM has helped ease access to fresh produce for community members as their main source of food purchasing directly in their community is a convenience store. Other research has also found that MFMs help facilitate healthy eating in

food deserts which are often low-income areas (Zepeda et al., 2014). Grocery stores and markets often offer healthy foods in a readily accessible manner but are not commonly found in low-income communities; lower income communities often have more convenience stores, which do not offer as many healthy food choices at an appropriate price (Larson, Story, & Nelson, 2009). Additionally, research has consistently shown that individuals with a low income have difficulty purchasing a basic nutritious diet in Nova Scotia (Andrée, Langille, Clement, Williams, & Norgang, 2016), making fresh produce less financially available in MFM communities. The MFM challenges these discourses by providing opportunities for individuals residing in lower income communities to purchase affordable healthy foods in their community.

Interviews with advisory team members revealed that it was meaningful to them how the MFM has allowed for a shifted focus on to food access and food security issues in broader systems and policies in the HRM, challenging dominant discourses related to food accessibility. As previously noted, many organizations in the HRM and throughout Nova Scotia have begun working to address food security and food accessibility issues. Other research has also found that initiatives with a similar goal of creating built and social environments to support healthy eating, and policy initiatives related to food environments are receiving attention in Nova Scotia (Andrée et al., 2016).

The institutionally derived community of appreciation discourse was apparent through quotes related to this shift; it appeared that the knowledge shared regarding food security and access issues in the HRM based on advisory team member's work with the MFM was being recognized and put into action by decision makers in the HRM. As Foucault stated that power and knowledge directly imply each other (Wetherell, Taylor, & Yates, 2001, p.76), advisory team members felt a shift in power as their knowledge was shared and their work was recognized by

decision makers who are subjectively positioned to appear to hold more power. Food security issues being brought to attention in the HRM through the community of appreciation created through the MFM has aided in balancing power relations throughout various levels of the food systems in the HRM.

Sub-question 2: How do partners view their role within the MFM?

To further build the case of the MFM in Halifax, the researcher sought to understand how participants perceived their contribution to MFM. To gain insight on this, the researcher asked participants to describe what their role in the MFM was and how they saw their role in the MFM fitting within the larger picture of the MFM in Halifax. Participants enthusiastically described the various tasks they engaged in related to the MFM operation as they described their role. It was evident that partners who valued their role supported the construction of the community of appreciation discourse.

Interestingly, all participants discussed what they do as part of the MFM in collaboration with others or with regard to their interactions with other partners in the MFM as they explained their role. Some participants even described their role as connecting and liaising with different groups of people within the MFM. This signified the collaborative nature of the MFM and that partnerships are recognized by participants as important for the functioning of the MFM.

These findings also suggested that relations of power within the MFM are not too strong or one-sided as most participants spoke about the value that each role contributes to the operation of the MFM and that the negotiation of power relations is common among MFM partners. Kinge (2014) stated that the nature and context of a partnership are important for its success and sustainability, so participants appearing to view the partnerships they're engaged in through a positive outlook is beneficial for the success of MFM partnerships.

Sub-question 3: What levels of participation are partners at on Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation? How does this affect the outcomes and sustainability of the MFM?

In the proposal for this research study, Arnstein's *Ladder of Citizen Participation* (1969) was planned to be used to understand participation in Halifax's MFM, however throughout data collection and analysis it was discovered that Arnstein's *Ladder of Citizen Participation* (1969) was not the best way to understand the participation levels of the partners in the MFM.

Participants had difficulty understanding and articulating where the different partners were situated on Arnstein's Ladder. Not all participants knew enough about the roles that other partners within the MFM had to speak to their participation level and their decision-making power within their role. Participants also explained that different people in the same role (e.g. two community volunteers) may participate in the MFM in different ways and at different levels, which made it difficult to describe different roles on different rungs of the ladder. Additionally, Arnstein's *Ladder of Citizen Participation* (1969) proved to be quite difficult to explain to participants so they could understand it and answer the related questions within such a short timeframe during the interview.

Sub-question 4: What power relations exist within the MFM partnerships? How do these affect the way the MFM runs?

This research study was conducted through a feminist poststructural lens to philosophically highlight the power relations that exist within MFM partnerships. Throughout chapter four, relations of power were highlighted and described.

Analyzing language related to the structure of partnerships within the MFM provided insight into the power relations that exist among MFM partners. Most participants described a hierarchy in MFM partnerships. When interpreting these findings the researcher kept in mind that as this

language was about relationships and not individuals, the researcher had to take into account the situatedness of the people involved in the hierarchy (Powers, 2001, p.39).

Interestingly, participants believed the hierarchy worked well for the purpose of the project. This aligns with Powers' work stating that power does not only proceed in a top-down fashion (2001, p.16), indicating that those viewed to be subjectively positioned at the top of the hierarchy do not necessarily possess all or most of the decision-making power within the MFM. Some participants described the hierarchy as "friendly" or that it does not seem "top-heavy", suggesting that the relations of power among partner types were appropriate for the purpose of this initiative. These findings are consistent with Foucault's view that there is not one perspective or position that is better or less oppressive than another (Powers, 2001, p.34).

Although it was evident that partnerships were valued since the beginning of the operation of the MFM, the partnership structure had shifted over the course of the operation of the MFM. Advisory team partnerships were vital from the beginning of the project and necessary throughout the growth of the market. As Foucault described power as a shifting web of tension between power and resistance where positions are being created, dissolved, reversed, and reshuffled (Powers, 2001, p.15), the leadership of the advisory team has facilitated a shift in power to other partners within the communities in which the MFM operates. Analysis of participant interviews suggested that the construction of the community of appreciation encouraged this shift in power relations as individual community markets became more established.

Based on analysis of participant stories and language, it appears that the MFM has a structure of decentralized decision-making where decisions are made simultaneously by multiple people in different positions within the MFM. Decentralized decision making has been found to

positively influence role clarity and job satisfaction (Rosenberg Sansen & Høst, 2012) which is consistent with results of this study as participants expressed that they were pleased with their role and they appeared to be confident in their role duties.

A major theme related to power was how decisions were made within the MFM among MFM partners. As previously noted, understanding power in terms of having the ability to influence others (Aston, 2016) was necessary for the researcher to comprehend how decisions made by MFM partners affected the outcomes of the MFM and experiences of all partners involved. The decisions discussed by participants were generally within one of three categories: logistical decisions in the overall operation of the MFM, operational decisions in individual communities, and decisions about what the MFM brings to each community. Foucault's view of power is that it can be exercised by groups of people who have common points of interest in a specific social outcome (Cleary & Hogan, 2016) such as the mission of the MFM, therefore it makes sense that the negotiation of power relations was evident in discussions about decision making.

Throughout analysis it became evident that participants believed that not everyone involved in the MFM operation wanted to be involved in the project-wide logistical decisions made by the advisory team regarding MFM operations. However, if they wanted to provide input on these decisions, their voice would likely be heard and considered. This finding suggested that relations of power in the MFM are constantly shifting and highly flexible, consistent with Foucault's view that power is not something that a person can hold on to or let it slip away, it is embodied in their actions within specific contexts (Powers, 2001, p.16). The advisory team members made it clear that they value community participation; they practiced demonstrating this value by working on negotiating the relations of power between them and those involved in the community markets.

Consistent with work by Jason (2006), advisory team members showed an understanding that community participation increases the quality of an initiative.

Local host leads were identified to be in a position of power within their community as they were in charge of making the decisions about how the MFM operated in their community. Through analysis it became clear that the local host leads valued involving other people who volunteered or attended the MFM in their community in the decisions they made. This was consistent with what the advisory team valued. As discussed in Chapter three, Foucault's work communicated that it is important for individuals in positions of power to understand the consequences of the misuse of their power (Niesche & Haase, 2012). It was evident that the participants did not see or engage in the misuse of power in the MFM among local host leads or advisory team members. Individuals in these positions intentionally worked toward negotiating relations of power through shared and decentralized decision making so that all partners were positioned equitably in decision making processes. The way local host leads and advisory team members used their agency to exercise power positively impacted partnerships.

The individuals operating the markets within each community create opportunities to allow community members to exercise their agency regarding what the MFM brings them and value their input. Participants demonstrated how these individuals work diligently to ensure that communities are served based on their needs. Cleary and Hogan found that it is important to understand who is involved in community decision making rather than a focus only on how decisions are made or how many people are involved in making decisions (2016). Participants expressed that not all feedback can realistically be considered so the people operating the market need to use their position of power to make decisions on whose voice gets heard and which feedback is operationalized.

Sub-question 5: How can partnerships within the MFM become sustainable in the long term?

To answer the main research question for this study, it was necessary to gather an understanding of what participants perceived to be factors that influenced partners to become and stay involved in the MFM.

Many participants described the belief that being involved in a MFM partnership should provide mutual benefit for the partner and the MFM operation. Based on participant stories, it became apparent that the advisory team ensured all partners benefitted from their involvement in the MFM by purposefully negotiating and shifting power relations to establish equitable positioning of all MFM partners. In 2016, Andrée and colleagues found that there was potential for organizations in Nova Scotia working on food access issues and policies to work toward mutually beneficial goals; the MFM appears to be acting upon this potential. Ensuring both parties benefit from their MFM partnership equitably shifts relations of power that exist between the partner and the MFM operation. This essence of negotiating power relations through mutual benefit positively impacts the sustainability of the partnership. The finding of mutual benefit importance aligns with research conducted by Kinge stating that mutual benefit stabilizes the partnership as this reciprocal relationship builds trust and motivates the partners to continue to cooperate (2014). Similarly, Gouldner (1960) believed that without a reciprocal relationship between partners, the partnership would break down.

Participants also believed that it was important for partners to be able to relate to the purpose of the MFM for their MFM partnership to be sustainable. If partners are not passionate about the mission of the MFM then they are likely to lose interest in their partnership within this initiative. It was also identified by participants that partners should enjoy the work they are involved in to

want to continue to be involved in this work. These findings are similar to research studies comparing personal values and job satisfaction; if an individual's personal and work values align or they see their job as their 'calling', they are more likely to enjoy and continue the work they do (Bouwkamp-Memmer, Whiston, & Hartung, 2013; Lan, Okechuku, Zhang, & Cao, 2013; Ravari, Bazargan-Hejazi, Ebadi, Mirzaei, & Oshvandi, 2013).

The theme of relation to purpose and enjoyment was expressed as especially important when discussing the sustainability of volunteer partnerships as volunteers generally have less formal responsibilities within the MFM in comparison to other roles. This means that they are more readily able to use their agency in comparison to other MFM partner positions to decide whether they want to leave their volunteer role or continue to be involved with the MFM. Other research has found that volunteer satisfaction, values, motivation to become involved in the organization (Garner & Garner, 2010), perceptions of organizational support (Walker, Accadia, & Costa, 2016) and how they are treated by leaders in the organization play a role in volunteer retention to the initiative or organization (Senses-Ozyurt & Villicana-Reyna, 2016).

Capacity was also an important sustainability factor recognized by participants. All participants described the capacity required to support the project in relation to partnerships by talking about the importance of having many people contributing as the project would not be able to operate without many partnerships. Participants also discussed the importance of finding partners who have the capacity in terms of time and resources contribute to the MFM. Kochan et al. explained that it is advantageous to build capacity at all levels of an organization because it strengthens partnerships and the organization in general (2008).

Being able to see tangible results from their work was also expressed as a sustainability factor for partners. Participants valued feeling like the work they were doing was being

appreciated by MFM customers through their words and actions. It was found that experiencing the institutional community of appreciation discourse related to benefits the MFM provides is an important sustainability factor for MFM partnerships. This finding is consistent with research by Kochan and colleagues who explained that a partnership needs to produce tangible outcomes to be successful (2008). Experiencing the community of appreciation discourse in action positively impacted MFM partners' practices by motivating them through a tangible outcome of their work. Similar to this finding, Senses-Ozyurt and Villicana-Reyna found that partners or volunteers in an organization like the MFM are more likely to stay engaged with the organization when they feel valued and useful in their work (2016).

As previously mentioned, it was identified that there needs to be community voice represented in the MFM structure and throughout the project. To do this, trust needs to be built with the communities in which the MFM operates. In a review conducted by Hoon Chuah et al., trust was found to be a key construct identified for tackling power imbalances in community participation initiatives; they found that trusting relationships are formed by learning about the community including their strengths and weaknesses (2018). To build trust with communities, it was identified that first building a relationship with well-known individuals who are trusted in the community helps to construct a relationship with the community and allows them to open up. This aligns with other research which has found that effective leadership can promote trusting relationships (Hoon Chuah et al., 2018).

It is important to note that the communities involved in the MFM are often labelled as 'vulnerable communities'. Communities and individuals experiencing food insecurity are often experiencing other hardships (Loopstra & Tarasuk, 2013), therefore it is important to be sensitive to and work to understand their experiences through trusting relationships.

Described throughout chapters four and five is the importance of having the project come from the community and be shaped by the community. Active efforts to listen to, understand, and incorporate community input positively impacts the outcomes of community initiatives (Jason, 2006). Participants believed that having community members help shape the project has allowed it to succeed. This aligns with previously mentioned findings from Cranshaw and colleagues which state that for an initiative to succeed, it is crucial to meaningfully involve community members and allow them to shape a community initiative to fit their needs (2003). Participants valued negotiating and shifting power relations between the advisory team and communities. As noted previously, this practice of negotiating relations of power positively impacts the sustainability of partnerships with communities.

Participants discussed the importance of funding for the MFM as it would simply not operate without funding. Many participants valued all partners and partnerships within the MFM, expressed through the community of appreciation discourse, but stated that the funding partnerships had to be the most important partnerships for this reason.

Finally, it was recognized that MFM staff occupy a critical role in building and maintaining partnerships, as well as connecting different partners within the MFM. The project could not operate without the dedication and commitment of these individuals and there was no doubt that participants appreciated their work. To the researcher's knowledge, the importance of having paid staff in a community health promotion initiative such as the MFM is a unique finding from this research project.

Sub-question 6: How are social and institutional partnership discourses constructed within the MFM?

Throughout chapters four and five, one main partnership discourse and its construction has been described. The main discourse related to partnerships was the community of appreciation discourse. It became clear through analysis that this discourse was constructed through participant words and actions related to the shared value of the benefits the MFM brings to communities and partners and value for the structure of the current MFM model including the structure of partnerships, decision making processes and the project as a whole. This community describes the group of people and organizations who are involved with the operation of the MFM and those who use it. The community of appreciation discourse was evident throughout all interviews with all types of MFM partners as they shared their MFM-related experiences. Participants experienced this discourse differently depending on their role and level of participation in the MFM.

It became clear through analysis that this discourse has been strengthened by the positive outcomes experienced by the people in this community and that this discourse reinforced participant's reasoning for continuing to stay involved with the MFM. This is an important finding of this research as it demonstrates that creating a community of appreciation among MFM partners and customers around the MFM model and the benefits it provides is a critical success factor for the sustainability of an initiative such as this.

Main research question: How do partnerships operate within the MFM and how are they sustained?

The following section combines and summarizes the previous sub-questions to answer the main research question for this project. It also provides context for the graphic created to answer

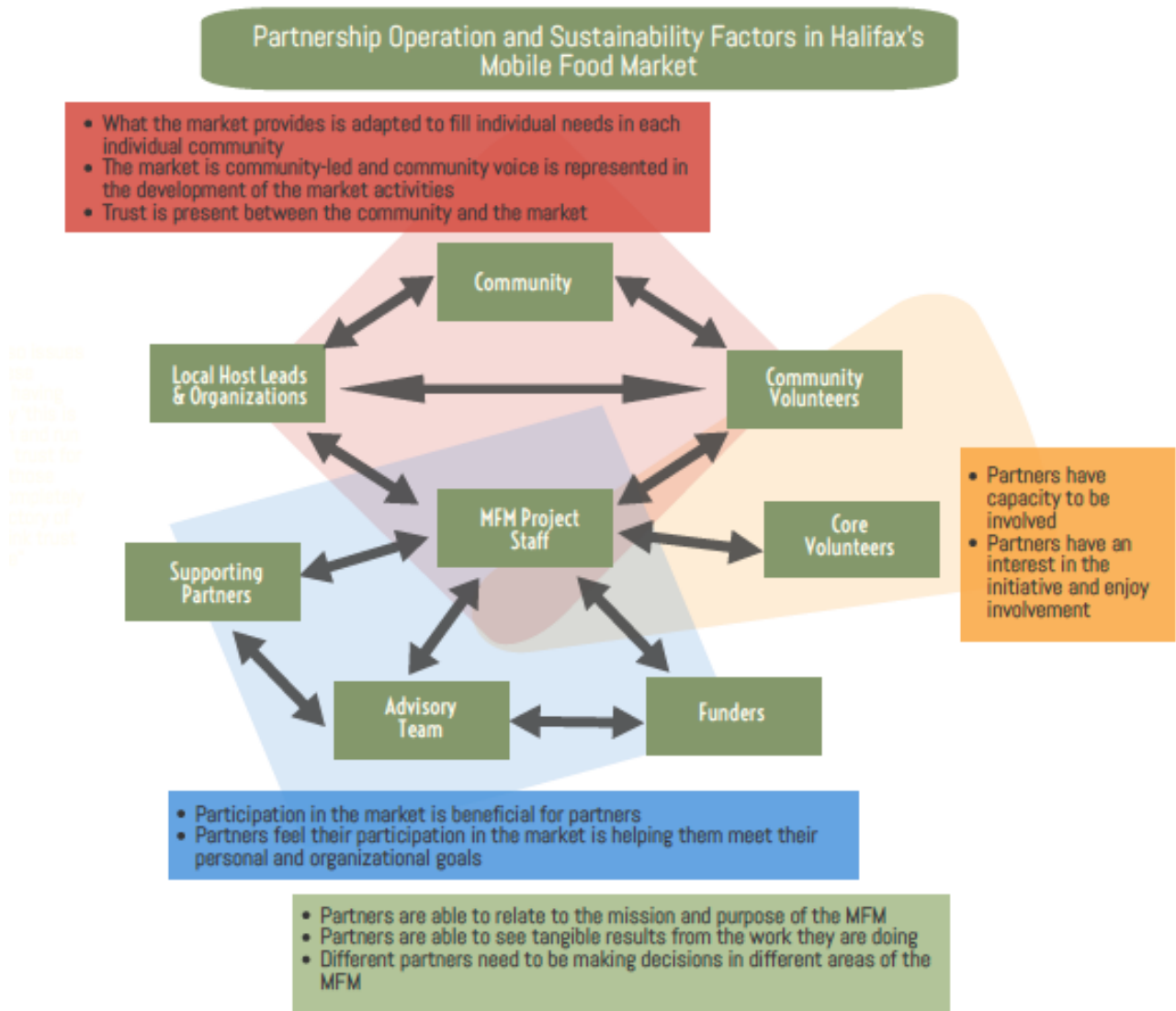
this question (Figure 1). Generally, participants believed that the structure of the MFM was working well in its current format and valued the MFM model. Participants recognized a hierarchy within the MFM partnership structure but felt that this was still an efficient and fair way of operating the MFM, as partners and community members had the opportunity to participate in the MFM to the extent to which they pleased. The provision of these participation opportunities helped negotiate and shift relations of power between partners. Participants perceived incorporating community voice into the structure of the MFM as essential for the success of the MFM. Through the incorporation of community voice, power relations were balanced between the community and the people operating the MFM. These factors together contributed to the construction of the community of appreciation discourse.

Figure 1 below represents how the partnerships in the MFM operate and how they can be sustained. The arrows represent the partnership relations that occur between the different MFM partners. The factors listed within the coloured text boxes represent the sustainability factors most strongly identified as important for the sustainability of the MFM partnership for the type of MFM partner or partners within the associated coloured shape.

The yellow shaded shape groups together the different types of volunteer partners. For these partners, it is important for them to have the capacity to be involved in the MFM, and to have an interest in the project, as well as enjoyment in their involvement in the initiative. The red shaded shape groups together the partners who are involved in the individual community markets. Generally, they are members of the community in which they work or volunteer through the MFM in. For these partners, it is important that the MFM fills needs within their community, that the MFM is community-led and community voice has been represented, and that trust is present between the community and the MFM. The blue shaded shape groups

together the partners who are involved in MFM activities on a higher level. They are involved in MFM planning and operations activities and less involved in the day-to-day running of the MFM. For these partners, it is most important that participation in MFM partnerships is beneficial for them in terms of helping them meet their personal and organizational goals.

Figure 1. Partnership Operation and Sustainability Factors in Halifax’s MFM



The green box at the bottom of the diagram indicates factors important for the sustainability of all partnerships. These include that partners are able to relate to the mission and the purpose of the MFM, that they can see tangible results of the work they are doing, and that they are involved in decision making processes within the MFM. The MFM project staff are situated in the centre of the diagram and fall into all silhouettes as all sustainability factors have an impact on the partnerships they are involved in. Participants discussed the importance of their job and how a major part of their role in the MFM is to build and maintain partnerships with the rest of the MFM partners. They were identified as a critical success factor for the sustainability of MFM partnerships.

Implications and Opportunities

This study contributes to the health promotion literature by qualitatively exploring partnership sustainability factors, providing an opportunity to better understand these factors within the context of the MFM in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Using discourse analysis allowed for the experiences of MFM partners to be portrayed from the perspective of the participants. This contributes knowledge to the current gap in the literature regarding how partnerships operate within MFMs and MFM partnership sustainability factors. The findings from this research also contribute to the literature regarding MFMs as health promotion interventions and building research on the relatively new concept of MFMs.

Additionally, this study adds to the feminist poststructural literature in the unique context of a MFM case study. Lastly, this study adds to the collection of research around community capacity building strategies for improving local food systems.

The findings from this study describe the significance, operation and sustainability factors of the community health promotion initiative of the MFM in Halifax. Many similarities exist

between the findings of this study and the current literature in terms of the importance of community led initiatives for communities. While these themes have been observed in previous literature, they have not before been studied in the context of a MFM case study or through a feminist poststructural lens with a focus on understanding relations of power.

Interestingly, the findings of this study were overall mostly positive. Participants were generally happy with the MFM model and how partnerships operated within the MFM. There were two potential challenges reported in this study. First was ensuring consistent and sufficient funding for the project was a concern expressed by many participants. Secondly, a few participants stated that ensuring that local host leads and MFM project staff have enough capacity to keep on top of the many responsibilities involved with their jobs could be a challenge for.

Health promotion implications. This research has several health promotion implications. First, the practice of working to negotiate power relations was found to have a positive effect on not only partnership sustainability, but the atmosphere of community, opportunities for community participation, and the environment in which community members shared knowledge about food with each other. Second, the MFM was found to have had several other food access and community related impacts such as allowing for a shifted focus on food systems, food security and food access in the HRM. The previously mentioned themes relate to community capacity building, a third implication, because it positively impacts communities' ability to improve the health of community members (Nickel, Süß, Lorentz, & Trojan, 2018). Previous research has recognized the importance of community capacity building strategies for improving food security and local food systems through opportunities for community participation so that

residents can build support networks and talk about food security and access issues and join forces to create change (NSNC & AHPRC, 2005).

One of the areas mentioned in the Ottawa Charter to implement health promotion strategies is to strengthen community action through planning and implementing strategies based on local priorities, giving communities the opportunity to take ownership over their local endeavours and community actions (WHO, 1986). This study found that the MFM has provided a positive way for community members to become involved in their community and to exercise their agency to shape the food system in their community. MFMs and other similar health promotion initiatives are important to continue to implement as they provide communities with meaningful opportunities to support change to improve their health (Laverack & Mohammadi, 2011).

Social ecological model (SEM). Although not all findings from this study directly aligned with the levels outlined in the SEM, this framework helped organize findings under the theme regarding the significance of the MFM. The SEM helped frame the importance of sustaining complex health promotion interventions like MFMs as they address many levels of the SEM through one endeavour.

At the intrapersonal level, participants reported an individual behaviour change of increased fruit and vegetable intake, facilitated through increased access to affordable produce provided by the MFM. At this level, participants also discussed an increase in knowledge about food. This appeared to affect individual behaviour through an increase in perceived capability regarding purchasing and preparing food. The intrapersonal and interpersonal levels of the SEM overlap through this theme as the increase in knowledge was through knowledge sharing interactions with other MFM customers. Additionally, at the interpersonal level, participants described how

their social network has expanded as a result of the MFM, as the MFM creates a space and opportunity for community members to gather and interact.

At the institutional level, participants described the MFM to provide opportunities for community organizations and community members to contribute to, participate in, and shape an initiative in their community. Community level factors described by participants included how the participants saw the MFM as a community intervention which has taken an individualized approach to meet the needs of communities in which the MFM operates. Lastly, at the policy level, advisory team members expressed the important role the MFM plays in raising awareness about food insecurity and accessibility, and food systems among decision makers and policy makers in Halifax.

Future research. As a follow-up to this study, several opportunities exist for further research. First, as this study was a unique case of the MFM in Halifax, other partnership experiences of MFM partners in different areas could be explored in other contexts. For example, partnerships in MFMs in other areas of Nova Scotia or Canada could be explored. Or, partnerships in a rural MFM could be explored and compared to the findings of this study. Additionally, a further in-depth study exploring the partnerships in one of Halifax's MFM communities would be interesting.

Secondly, further exploration of individual themes could be undertaken. For example, this study found that MFM staff play a critical role in the operation of the MFM. Further study might focus on their role specifically, looking at what makes their role critical to the MFM operation.

Lastly, this study had six sub-questions and one main research question. Further research could focus on one of the research sub-questions. For example, the second research question about how partners of the MFM view their role within the MFM could be further explored as this

question was largely added to build the case of the MFM in Halifax. Understanding partners' perceptions of their role in the MFM would provide an interesting perspective on the operation of MFMs.

Limitations

The primary limitation of this research is the scope of the study. As this is a Master's research study, not all partners within the MFM could be interviewed, so findings are based on partnerships and experiences of the MFM partners who participated in this study. To address this limitation, the researcher has identified whose voice was represented, and that the voice of many partners as well as community members' voices were missing.

Community members who were customers of the MFM but were not MFM partners were not interviewed as part of this research study. Their voice was represented by community volunteers and local host leads as these types of partners generally come from the communities in which they volunteer or work. The choice not to interview MFM customers may have impacted the findings of this study as customers may have described how their voice was heard in the decision making process differently to other partners. MFM customers would have also been able to share a unique perspective of how MFM partnerships operate from an outside perspective since they were not involved in these partnerships.

Another limitation is the lack of generalizability of this study. This was a case study of the MFM in Halifax, Nova Scotia. MFMs in other areas may operate in a different manner, there may be a different structure, and partners may have different roles. The results of this research may provide insight for the development of partnerships within future MFMs, but generalizability of findings cannot be guaranteed.

A third limitation is the role of the researcher. As an outside researcher who has not been immersed in the MFM since it began, it was difficult to pick up on all discourses that might exist within the MFM. The researcher worked to gain as much background knowledge as possible through relations with the MFM manager and coordinator, and by keeping up to date on the literature throughout the entire research study.

Finally, although certain discourses are presented based on the analysis of findings, there is no claim made for the absolute truth so competing claims could be made for the same discourse (Powers, 2001, p.64). Additionally, because discourse analysis was used, it must be understood that the results of this study are not generalizable to other situations, discourses, or people (Powers, 2001, p.64).

Conclusion

This research study has demonstrated the importance of partnerships within the MFM and the factors necessary for the sustainability of these partnerships. The literature review revealed that there are many gaps in the research surrounding MFMs, power relations among partners within MFMs, and the effect that partnerships and MFM sustainability have on municipal food security. This research has also contributed to the current body of literature, working toward addressing these gaps.

Guided by feminist poststructural methodology, the case study of Halifax's MFM was used to paint a picture of the power relations that exist within partnerships in one MFM that functioned successfully. A dominant institutional community of appreciation discourse was found through participant language around the collectively valued positive impacts and aspects of the MFM.

This study found that the MFM meant more to participants than just bringing food to communities. It had positive community-related impacts and impacts related to food awareness and accessibility in communities. The MFM was described to operate efficiently in terms of the structure of the project in general and the partnership structure. Partnerships were described to be fundamental to the operation of the MFM and a few factors were described that may influence the vulnerability of the MFM project. Three types of decisions were found to guide decision making processes by partners: logistical decisions, operational decisions, and decision about what the MFM brings to each community.

In terms of partnership sustainability factors, it was identified that the partnership should benefit the partner and the MFM, the partner should be able to relate to the purpose of the MFM and enjoy their involvement, they should have the capacity to be involved and they should be able to see the results of their work. It was found that sustainability of relationships with communities was facilitated by trusting relationships and community involvement in the development of the initiative. Finally, to sustain the MFM, it was found that funding for the project is essential.

The results from this research have implications for the field of health promotion. Findings may be used to inform similar research studies in other MFMs and potentially to understand the sustainability factors important for building effective partnerships for current and future MFMs. However, it must be understood that as this is a case study, the experiences described of the partners in Halifax's MFM may not be transferrable to a different context.

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Appendix A: Partners

Pre-pilot partners

Partner organization type	Number of Partner organizations
Elected officials	2
Organizations & government stakeholders	11
Local producers and food suppliers	6
Launch team	12
Community stakeholders	35

Partners During Pilot

Partner organization type	Number of Partner organizations
Host organization	1
Advisory team	4
Local producers & food suppliers	2
North Preston Local Host Team	6
East Preston Local Host Team	14
North End Halifax Local Host Team	9

Fairview Local Host Team	7
Spryfield Local Host Team	11

Appendix B: Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation

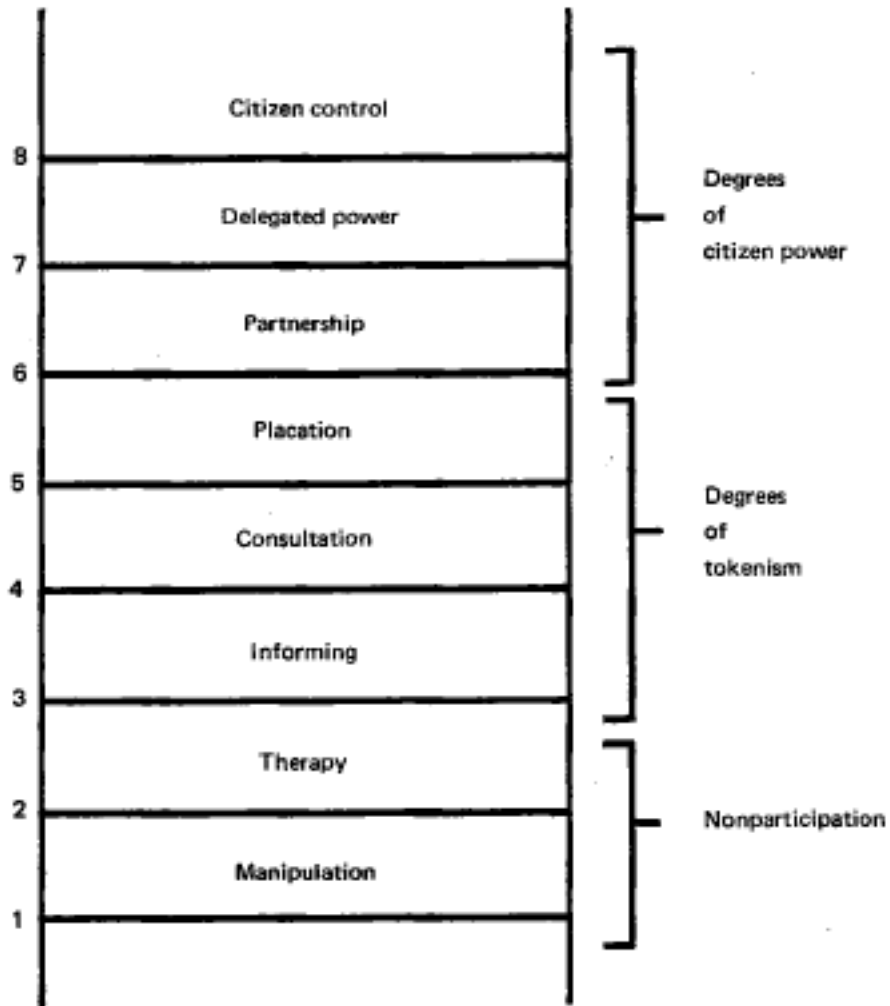


FIGURE 2 *Eight Rungs on a Ladder of Citizen Participation*

(Arnstein, 1969)

Appendix C: Letter to Participants

[Date]

Project Title: The Power of Participation: How Might Community Partners Sustain Halifax's Mobile Food Market

Dear potential participant,

My name is Madison MacQuarrie and I am a Masters in Health Promotion student at Dalhousie University. I am conducting a research study about partnerships and participation in Halifax's Mobile Food Market to gain an understanding of how partnerships can be sustained long-term within the Market. I would like to invite you to participate. I believe that you have an important perspective on the market and have great stories to tell about your experiences within the Mobile Food Market.

If you are interested in participating, please contact me at (902) 802-5828 or madison.macquarrie@dal.ca. You may also notify the MFM Manager, Julia Kemp, if you are interested in participation and she will put you in contact with me. Participation is voluntary, and the interview may be held in a quiet space that is most convenient for you. The interview will likely last 60-90 minutes and can be held at a time that works best for you. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Madison MacQuarrie

Appendix D: Consent Form

Project Title

The Power of Participation: How Might Community Partners Sustain Halifax's Mobile Food Market?

Lead Researcher

Madison MacQuarrie, BSc

Graduate Student

Masters of Health Promotion Program

School of Health and Human Performance

Dalhousie University

Halifax, Nova Scotia

(902) 802-5828

Research Supervisor

Dr. Sara Kirk

Professor

School of Health and Human Performance

Dalhousie University

Halifax, Nova Scotia

(902) 494-8440

Funding Source: None

Introduction

You are invited to take part in the research study titled, ‘The Power of Participation: How Might Community Partners Sustain Halifax’s Mobile Food Market?’, being conducted by Madison MacQuarrie, a Masters in Health Promotion student. The information below explains why the study is being done, what it involves and what is expected of you. Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Please take your time to review the information below carefully to decide whether you wish to take part in this study. You should discuss any questions you may have about this study with Madison MacQuarrie, please ask as many questions as you like.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to explore and understand partnerships within the context of Halifax’s Mobile Food Market. This research provides an opportunity to better understand how the positive impacts the Mobile Food Market has on its communities can be sustained long-term through effective partnerships. The researcher is conducting this study to complete the requirements of the Masters in Health Promotion program at Dalhousie University.

Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest on the part of the researcher or her research supervisor. The researcher is not affiliated with the Mobile Food Market.

Participation in the study

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You do not have to participate if you do not wish to. If you decide to participate, you must sign the informed consent signature page. You

have the right to withdraw from the study at any time you wish, up until the time the data is analyzed.

What you will be asked to do

If you agree to participate, you will be involved in a 60-90 minute conversational interview at a time and place that is convenient to you and to the researcher. The conversation will be in English and will be about your experiences with the Mobile Food Market. You do not have to answer any questions you are not comfortable with answering. The interview will be audio-recorded and transcribed, word-for-word. A portion of your interview may be cited in the study report without revealing your identity.

How your privacy will be protected

Participation is confidential. Your identity and privacy will be protected throughout the study as your name and any identifying information will not be used in the study or written report. What you say will be kept as confidential as possible, but as only a small number of participants in the niche community on Halifax's Mobile Food Market will be interviewed, full confidentiality will not be able to be guaranteed. All study information will be kept in a locked drawer, only accessible by the researcher and her supervisor. All study information will be destroyed after a period of five years following completion of the study.

Risks, Benefits and Possible Discomforts

Although there are no direct benefits being provided to you, participation in this study may allow you to better understand and appreciate your experiences with the Mobile Food Market. Study

findings will be used to form a report that is intended to benefit the Mobile Food Market by providing suggestions for improving sustainability of partnerships. Potential risks and discomforts are minimal. If any question makes you feel uncomfortable, you are free to bypass that question.

Results of the Study

Results of the study will be published in a report as part of the researcher's Masters of Health Promotion program requirements. The results of the study will also be used in a brief report for the Mobile Food Market, focusing on partnership sustainability. Results may also be used in articles or presentations by the researcher. In all cases, the researcher will keep information as confidential as possible. A summary of study findings will be provided to you following the completion of the study if you wish.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the researcher, Madison MacQuarrie by phone at (902)802-5828 or by email at Madison.macquarrie@dal.ca. You may also contact Catherine Connors (Director of Research Ethics) at (902)494-1462 or at ethics@dal.ca.

Appendix E: Signature Page

Project Title: The Power of Participation: How Might Community Partners Sustain the Halifax’s Mobile Food Market

Lead Researchers:

Madison MacQuarrie, Graduate Student, Dalhousie University, Madison.macquarrie@dal.ca, (902) 802-5828

Dr. Sara Kirk, Research Supervisor, Dalhousie University, sara.kirk@dal.ca, (902) 494-8440

I have read the explanation about this study. I have been given the opportunity to discuss it and any questions I had have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I have been asked to take part in a 60-90 minute interview that will occur at a time and location convenient for myself and researcher. I realize that my participation is voluntary and I may withdraw from the study at any time, until the data is analyzed. I agree that my interview may be audio-recorded and that any direct quotes may be used without identifying me.

_____	_____	_____
Name	Signature	Date

Appendix F: Interview Questions

1. Can you tell me about your role in the Mobile Food Market (MFM)?
 - Prompt: How long have you been involved with the MFM?
 - Prompt: Has your role shifted at all over this time?

2. What does the MFM mean to you?
 - Prompt: What does it mean to you to participate in the MFM?
 - Prompt: How do you see your role supporting the entire MFM project?
 - Prompt: How do you see your role fitting within the larger picture of the MFM?

3. How would you describe the impact the MFM has on your community or city?
 - Prompt: Has there been an impact on community partnerships (new and existing)? What about with community involvement?

Show and explain Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation in plain language.

4. How do you see partners of the MFM laid out on this ladder?
 - Prompt: Where do you see yourself fitting on the ladder of participation?
 - Prompt: Where do you see other partners of the MFM fitting on the ladder of participation (i.e. the MFM Advisory, Local Host Leads, Community Volunteers, etc.)?

- Prompt: Which partners do you see at the top of the ladder? Bottom of the ladder?
5. Do you think partnerships are important to the MFM?
- Prompt: Why or why not?
 - Prompt: Are there any particular partnerships you feel are more important than others? Which? Why?
6. How do you think having different partners on different rungs of the ladder impacts the way the MFM operates?
- Prompt: How do you think this might impact the outcomes of the market?
 - Prompt: How do you think this might impact the sustainability of the market?
7. How do you think the MFM can retain their partners in the longer term?
- Prompt: Over the next year?
 - Prompt: Over the next 5 years or longer?