

**Assessment of access and use of school library information resources by
Luhlaza High School learners**

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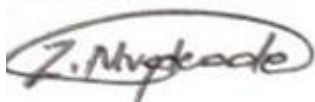
DECLARATION

I, **Zuthobeke Mvakade** declare this dissertation is my own work under the supervision of Professor Zinn, and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been duly acknowledged by means of references

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Date: 8 November 2022

Signed:



Abstract

This study seeks to assess the access and use of school library information resources by school learners and the teachers. The study was conducted at Luhlaza High School using a qualitative approach and case study design. Data collection instruments include interviews, observation, focus group discussions and document analysis. The population for the study was the learners, teachers, school librarian and principal. Data collected was analysed using thematic content analysis. Constructivist learning theory was the lens for this study. The study findings revealed that the school library was stocked with inadequate resources that are irrelevant to the curriculum. The school does not have a qualified librarian to teach information literacy skills. The school has budget constraints, and learners and teachers are dissatisfied with the information resources in the library. The recommendations include: the employment of a qualified librarian to be a priority; an acquisition policy to be formulated to guide the future librarians on purchases; computers in the library to be fixed and connected to the internet; library period to be honored so that the librarian can teach information literacy skills; and library should be stocked with relevant books that support teaching and learning.

Keywords

School libraries, school librarian, learners, teachers, information literacy, reading, access, library services, National School Library Policy, International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, Luhlaza High School.

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- Above all, I thank God, the Almighty for granting me the strength, energy, dedication, and resilience to start and finish this study “we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God”. Romans 8:28.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my husband Agbor Oben Eta and my four children, Theresia Iminathi; Chloe Indiphile; Charles Alizwa, and Aphelele for their encouragement throughout this course.

A special dedication goes to my mother Nobantu Zimela for her unconditional love, guidance, prayers, and support throughout my life.



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS



AASL - American Association of School Libraries
EDULIS - Education Library and Information Service
FGDs - focus group discussions
IBL - Inquiry-based learning
IFLA - International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions
IL – Information literacy
ISP - Information Search Process
LIS – Library and Information Services
LTSM - Learning and teaching support material
NCLIS – National Council for Library and Information Services
NEIMS – National Education Infrastructure Management System
NNPE - Nigeria National Policy on Education
OFSTED - Office of Standards in the Education
SADBE – South African Department of Basic Education
SASA - South African Schools Act (SASA)

SETA - Sector Education and Training Authority

SGB - School Governing Body

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UCT – University of Cape Town

UWC - University of the Western Cape

WCED - Western Cape Department of Education



CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institution's School Library Guidelines (IFLA, 2015, p.16) define a school library as a "school's physical and digital learning space where reading, inquiry, research, thinking, imagination, and creativity are central to students' information-to-knowledge journey and to their personal, social, and cultural growth". Ideally, school libraries should provide learners and teachers with access to a wide variety of curriculum support resources. The variety of information resources in a school library exposes learners to diverse ideas, and unlocks their minds to view the world from different angles, and instils a habit of reading to promote literacy standards (South Africa Department of Basic Education [SADBE], 2012.)

School libraries nurture and instill a culture of reading that promotes competent, self-directed learners who become aware of their own information needs. The SADBE states that its vision is to ensure that schools will have well-resourced and functioning school library services. The fulfilment of this vision will produce learners and teachers who are information literate and independent lifelong learners and readers (SADBE, 2012). Mojapelo and Dube (2014, p.8) state that "school libraries are repositories of information resources which play an important role in supporting learners with curriculum related tasks and activities". Learners need to have easy access to these resources in libraries and the resources need to be at the appropriate academic reading level.

Todd and Kuhlthau (2005) mention that these library and information services are based on the assumption that libraries contribute to societal well-being and to the development of a knowledgeable society. They further explain that there are no clear guidelines on how libraries help or add value to the well-being of users to enable them to become lifelong learners and readers. Therefore, librarians have a duty to constantly explain the library services of their school library programme, and that can be achieved by adopting an evidence-based approach to practice (Todd & Kuhlthau, 2005).

1.2. Background and motivation

One of the major functions of a school library is to provide access to information resources and to respond to the educational needs of the community that it serves. A school library plays a vital role in socio-economic development. Therefore, it is important to provide learners and teachers with access to a wide variety of curricular support resources, exposing learners to diverse ideas, experiences and opinions (SADBE, 2012). In 1994, the SADBE, formerly the Department of Education, and the Department of Arts and Culture were mandated by the South African government to address the inequalities of the past. The mandate included resolving the uneven distribution and quality of library and information services and access to library and information services for all South Africans (Paton-Ash & Wilmot, 2015, p.4). Given this mandate, this researcher wanted to assess the status of the school library and information services at Luhlaza High School.

1.3 A brief history of Luhlaza High School

Luhlaza High School is a co-ed public school that focuses on mathematics, science and technology. The school was established in Khayelitsha in 1989; it falls within the City of Cape Town Metropolitan Municipality. The school falls under section 21 of the South African Schools Act (SASA) 84 of 1996 (Luhlaza High School, n.d.). This means that the school is allocated finances by the department and given the responsibility of ordering stationery, textbooks, and paying electricity, water and maintenance. Luhlaza High School is classified under quintile 3, which means that it is a no fee-paying school.

1.4 Literature review

This brief review covers the status of school library infrastructure and resourcing in South Africa, and the literature on access and utilisation of school library resources and services. A more detailed literature review follows in Chapter Two.

1.4.1 School library infrastructure and resourcing

South Africa is a developing country in which the “haves and have nots” exist side by side. Libraries play a significant role in the development of communities in South Africa, and have a great impact on the struggle against poverty and inequality (Barnes, 1994). The socio-

economic challenges that are affecting the country and its education system date from the apartheid era's Bantu education policies, which were intentionally designed to drastically limit the resource of schools for black learners (Hart & Zinn, 2015). As a result, South Africa has a significant backlog in the provision of functioning school libraries in disadvantaged schools (Du Toit & Stilwell, 2012). A report by the National Education Infrastructure Management System in 2011 indicated that only about 21 per cent of schools had a library, and of these few had library collections (Hart & Zinn, 2015). The report tracks the state of infrastructure at every school. Mojapelo and Dube (2014) concur with Hart and Zinn (2015). They state that the research on the progress of school libraries in South Africa shows that there are few schools with well-equipped and functional libraries. The literature shows that most schools with fully functioning school libraries started off privileged; they are referred to as ex-Model C schools. These schools do not solely depend on government subsidies, for they are able to raise funds from their more affluent parent bodies by charging extra levies to supplement their budgets (Hart & Zinn, 2015).

1.4.2 Access and utilisation of school library resources and services

Gretes (2013, p. 2) describes state school libraries as “hubs of learning in public schools”. They provide access to books and other information resources, which lead to high standards of literacy that contribute to the wealth of knowledge in the society. This can be achieved by providing access to information resources during school hours or access to internet resources beyond the confines of the school premises (p. 8). A library's usefulness and success depend upon the availability and usability of its information resources. The role and functions of school libraries are well documented in the National Guidelines for School Library and Information services (SADBE, 2012), hereafter referred to as The National Guidelines. The National Guidelines (SADBE, 2012) and the IFLA School Library Guidelines (IFLA, 2015), hereafter referred to as the IFLA Guidelines, state that school library and information services should provide learners and teachers with access to a wide variety of resources for curriculum related tasks and activities such as homework, assignments, research projects, and leisure time reading. Mojapelo and Dube (2014) endorse the idea that school libraries are there to support the school curriculum by providing access to a wide variety of information resources, which will equip learners with lifelong learning skills. Accessibility and utilisation of library information resources are the key factors in the provision of quality services in libraries; therefore, a school library should provide learners, teachers, school management and the extended school

community with access to a library-based resource centre (SADBE, 2012, p. 9). Among the core school library service goals listed in the IFLA/UNESCO School Library Manifesto (IFLA, 1999), hereafter referred to as the IFLA/UNESCO Manifesto, this study concentrates on those goals that promote access to local, regional, national and global resources and opportunities that expose learners to diverse ideas, experience and opinions.

1.5 Theoretical framework

Constructivist learning theory provides a sound theoretical framework for this study. Constructivist learning theory explains how learners construct knowledge individually or socially in the process of learning (Harasim & Harasim 2018, p. 61). This suggests that during the learning process, learners construct meaning as they learn. Constructivist learning encourages learners to use information resources to inform themselves, so that they can construct meaningful ideas with the information that they acquire from the world around them.

Research shows that constructivist learning theory has broad applications, especially in the education field. Kuhlthau (2004) used the constructivist philosophical and educational theories of Dewey, Bruner, Kelly, Vygotsky and Piaget to inform her framework for investigating the information seeking behaviour of high school learners in a school library.

1.6. Research problem

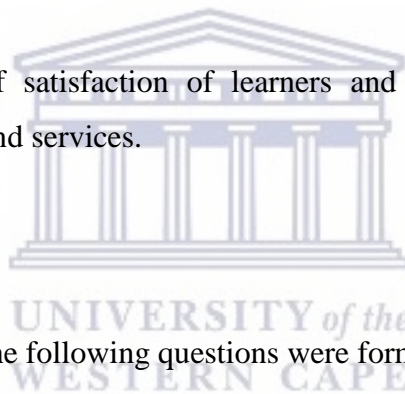
In South Africa, the school library system is underdeveloped; not all schools have functioning libraries. Some of the possible reasons are lack funds, lack of relevant and updated library resources, or absence of a qualified school librarian. The major issue, according to Paton-Ash and Wilmot (2015,) is the lack of a national policy which would force SGBs and principals to have a properly functioning library in their schools. The National Education Infrastructure Management System (NEIMS) of 2011 indicated that 13 per cent have a library room, and only 7.2 per cent of schools have functional school libraries (Hart, 2014, p. 3). While Luhlaza High School has a library, does it function according to the standards set out by the IFLA Guidelines (IFLA, 2015)? The school's parental demographic is mainly township communities. To maintain the school library requires funds from parents and governing bodies. Furthermore, without a school library policy, there is no implementation plan from government.

The purpose of this study is to establish the extent to which information resources and services are made accessible to learners and teachers at Luhlaza High School. Most importantly, the researcher is interested to find out if the school has a library with a wide variety of curriculum related information resources to execute curriculum related tasks and activities and to encourage reading to learn. Without a well-funded school library programme, the ideal of a Luhlaza library will disappear or the library will become a white elephant. This study, the first of its kind at the school, provides evidence-based research to inform the stakeholders at the school of the state of its school library programme.

1.7. Research objectives

The objectives of the study are to:

- Assess the school library's resources
- Investigate access to and use of school library information resources by the learners and teachers.
- Determine the level of satisfaction of learners and teachers with school library information resources and services.



1.8. Research questions

From the research objectives, the following questions were formulated:

- 7.1 What is the nature of the school library's information resources?
- 7.2 How are they accessed and used by the learners?
- 7.3 How are they accessed and used by the teachers?
- 7.4 How satisfied are learners with the assistance library resources provide for school projects?
- 7.5 How does the library add value to the well-being (personal and social) of learners in and out of school?

1.9. Research design and methodology

This study adopted a qualitative approach and a case study research design. Thomas (2010, p.32) explains that qualitative research involves an interpretive and naturalistic approach; a qualitative approach can be studied in the everyday life of different groups of people and communities in their natural setting. A qualitative approach is recommended as a useful tool

when studying educational settings and processes. It allows for the collection of rich data that can easily answer the “why” and “what” questions.

1.9.1 Population

Bless and Higson-Smith (2000, p. 84) explain that “population” refers to the entire set of people which is the focus of the research. The population for this study was 1 251 Luhlaza High School learners in grades eight to twelve, the principal, the teacher librarian and 38 teachers in 2022.

1.9.2 Sampling

This study employed a purposive sampling technique in selecting its samples. The sample for the learners was stratified according to grade level with ten volunteers per grade level, grades eight to twelve. Each grade level of ten volunteers formed a focus group. Teacher volunteers from each grade were selected. The principal and teacher librarian were also key informants.

1.9.3 Data collection instruments

This study collected data through interviews, observations, Focus group discussions and document analysis. Permission to record the interviews was acquired. The researcher used the library and borrower registers to gain insight into the library’s resources and library usage.

1.9.4 Data capturing, analysis and presentation

The data collected through focus group discussions, interviews, document analysis and observations were analysed for content. The researcher transcribed the interviews to gain a sense of the entire responses through listening to recordings several times. The researcher used thematic content analysis to categorise the data.

1.10. Significance of the study

The findings of the study provided a better understanding of the information needs and behaviour of the school library users. The findings recommended improvements to ease access to the library collection. The findings can be used as a tool to acquire a relevant library collection, adapt library services to suit the needs of the learners, and to identify strategies to encourage more learners and teachers to use the library.

1.11. Delimitation of the study

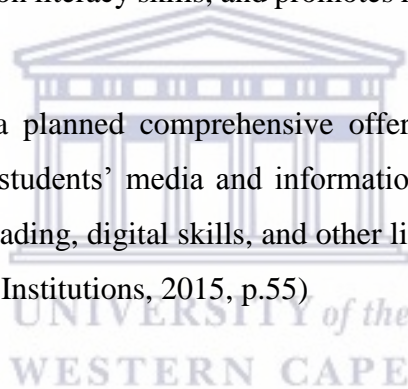
The study investigated access and use of school library information resources by Luhlaza High School. This study only focused on one school and its library.

1.12 Definition of terms

Information resources: include books, periodicals, newspapers, DVDs, three-dimensional models, posters, charts, slides, the Internet, online databases, e-books, and e-journals (SADBE, 2012, pp.37-38).

School librarian: variously known as a teacher-librarian or library media specialist, is responsible for managing the library resources, and leading the activities, programs, and services of a school library. A school librarian supports the curriculum through collection development, teaches information literacy skills, and promotes reading (IFLA and Institutions, 2015, p.55).

School library program: is a planned comprehensive offering of teaching and learning activities designed to develop students' media and information literacy skills, research and inquiry skills, engagement in reading, digital skills, and other literacy-related and curriculum-based competencies (IFLA and Institutions, 2015, p.55)



1.13 Outline of chapters

The thesis is structured as follows:

Chapter 1 provides the introduction and background of the study, including the problem statement and research objectives.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature pertaining to the access and utilisation of school library and information services.

Chapter 3 explains the theoretical framework for this study.

Chapter 4 offers the research methodology.

Chapter 5 presents the analysis of the data collected from interviews, observations, and documents.

Chapter 6 discusses and interprets the findings.

Chapter 7 summarises, and concludes the study, and offers recommendations for future studies.

1.14 Conclusion

This study has provided the basis of the study, giving particular attention to the background of and motivation for the study. A brief description of the research problem, objectives, questions, design and methodology was discussed. The conceptual analysis and theoretical framework that guided the study was introduced. The significance, limitations and ethical considerations of the study were discussed. The flow of the study was provided in the chapter outline. The following chapter provides an analysis of relevant literature to provide more insight into access of information resources in school libraries.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews literature pertaining to the access and use of school library and information services. The purpose of the literature review, according to Creswell (2014, p. 41), is to determine if the topic is researchable and to share with the reader the results of other studies that are closely related to the one undertaken. It illuminates how knowledge has evolved within the field, and gives insight into the methods and approaches in previous studies which could be used as a guide to what is generally accepted, and also to identify gaps in the literature. This chapter is divided into various segments in line with the research objectives. The research literature is discussed under the following topics:

- Importance of school libraries
- Access to and use of school library and information resources
- Satisfaction with library and information resources and services
- Challenges facing school libraries
- Library resources and infrastructure
- The role of the school librarian
- Collaboration between teachers and school librarians
- School libraries in South Africa
- School libraries in Africa

2.2 Importance of school libraries

The amount of research and literature on the importance of school libraries worldwide is substantial. Researchers who have written about school libraries confirm that school libraries play a unique role in promoting, protecting, and educating about intellectual freedom (IFLA and Institutions, 2006; Kachel, 2013; Lonsdale, 2003; School libraries work, 2008). The American Association of School Libraries (2014) states that school libraries promote the development of reading skills, and encourage long term planning habits through reading a variety of information resources. Mokhtar and Majid (2004, p.109) mentioned that school

libraries are required to provide access to physical and electronic information resources, while librarians are required to provide access to information effectively for the purpose of promoting information literacy (IL) to students. In addition, Hoskins (2006, p. 238) acknowledges that school libraries are responsible for providing access to a wide variety of resources which lead learners to become critical thinkers and lifelong readers.

Furthermore, Alman (2017, p.163) claims that school libraries play a significant role in dealing with marginalisation, assisting underserved populations, disrupting technological divides, and providing equal access regardless of circumstance. Similarly, Todd (2017, p. 161) emphasises that school “libraries must play a significant role in balancing the effects of poverty and socio-economic disparities and work concertedly in the future for diversity, inclusiveness, human rights and social justice”.

The IFLA/UNESCO Manifesto (IFLA 2015, p.15) emphasises the importance of creating effective school libraries to function successfully in today’s information- and knowledge-based society to equip students with lifelong learning skills. Furthermore, the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) developed standards for the 21st century learner. Since the focus of these standards is on the learner, equitable access to information resources and opportunities for learning is crucial. Two of the standards mentioned for the development of learning skills are the importance of reading and the ability to share knowledge and information with others (American Association of School Librarians, 2007, p. 23). Therefore, it is important for a school library to have an equitable physical and intellectual access to school library resources, and a qualified school librarian to nurture the culture of reading and learning.

2.3 Access and utilisation of school library and information resources

In order for a library to achieve these objectives, the library should acquire information resources that are relevant and accessible to teachers and learners. A school library encourages independent learning and instils habits of reading for the purpose of increasing a student’s knowledge, and promotes interest in lifelong learning (SADBE, 2012).

Dickinson et al. (2008, p.1) add that an accessible library is an open library which provides full access throughout the scheduled school day, and takes into consideration the needs and the demands during certain periods of the year. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the entire school community to ensure that these resources are equitably accessible.

There have been many studies on the utilisation of school library and information resources. For example, Clabo (2002) conducted a study in Tennessee counties, which revealed that students used library resources and services for reference purposes, recreational readings, doing their assignments and reading news from newspapers. On the other hand, teachers used school libraries to enhance the curriculum knowledge of their teaching subjects. Similarly, a study by Agyekum and Filson (2012) found that most of the students use library resources and services to supplement their class notes, assignments and to find information in preparation for school examinations.

The IFLA/UNESCO Manifesto suggests that a school library should offer “learning services, books and resources that enable all members of the school community to become critical thinkers and effective users of information in all formats and media” (IFLA, 2021). In order for a school to accomplish that, a school library should provide learners and teachers with access to a wide variety of curriculum support resources that will expose learners to diverse ideas, experiences and opinions. In other words, a school library is responsible for the organisation and provision of information resources for the purpose of students’ knowledge and integration of information skills into the curriculum (Mokhtar et al., 2007). The role of school libraries has been widely discussed in library and information science research. According to the International Association of School Librarianship, the role of a school library is to promote intellectual independence by adding value to the individual’s life as they acquire the critical thinking and problem-solving skills needed in society (International Association of School Librarianship, 2012 p.3). School libraries play an important role in the education process, which the American Association of School Libraries (AASL, 2018) has clarified. The AASL published six common beliefs based on the results of earlier surveys and feedback from over 1300 school librarians and stakeholders. The six common beliefs are:

The school library is a unique and essential part of the learning community; qualified school librarians lead effective school libraries; learners should be prepared for college, career, and life; reading is the core of personal and academic competency; intellectual freedom is every learner’s right; and information technologies must be appropriately integrated and equitably available (p.3).

The IFLA/UNESCO Guidelines (2015, p. 7) note that:

The goal of all school libraries is to develop information literate students who are responsible and ethical participants in society. Information-literate students are competent, self-directed learners who are aware of their information needs and actively engage in the world of ideas. They display confidence in their ability to solve problems and know how to locate relevant and reliable information. They are able to manage technology tools to access information and to communicate what they have learned. They are able to operate comfortably in situations where there are multiple answers or no answers. They hold high standards for their work and create quality products. Information literate students are flexible, able to adapt to change, and able to function both individually and in groups.

School libraries are governed by policies and regulations, and ideally access to services should be based on the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Right and Freedoms, according to the IFLA/UNESCO Manifesto (2006). The AASL (AASL, 2009) endorsed the idea that informed policies and procedures should be developed to support equitable access to services and collections. This shows that access to a wide variety of educational resources is required in all schools to unlock the potential of learners, so that they are able to source information to meet their own information and curriculum needs. This can only happen when learners are exposed to a wide variety of library and information material (Mojapelo, 2016 p. 413).

Towards the end of 2016, the National Council for Library and Information Services (NCLIS), the statutory body for library and information services, drafted a national policy that offers insights on the development of school library and information services (Hart & Nassimbeni, 2019, p.210). This happened after two years of national consultations, the policy was approved by NCLIS and is now considered by the government ministries responsible for LIS. The aim of the policy was to expand the LIS sectors' own capacity to address issues on the ground and to fulfil its social mandate in South Africa's developmental state.

Although the importance of school libraries with access to a wide variety of resources for curriculum related tasks is emphasised, unfortunately this is not the case for the majority of schools in South Africa. Lack of adequate resource provision in schools makes it difficult for teachers and learners to acquire the necessary IL skills required for independent study, leisure and lifelong learning (Mojapelo, 2016 p. 413). Pentland (2019) points out challenges that

hinder access to school library information resources. Jiyane and Jiyane (2019, p. 57) highlighted challenges that affect female learners in career choices due to lack of relevant information in the school library. In many cases, staff shortages restrict the number of services in the library. The lack of a standard library building and frequent changes in the curriculum, which affect collection development, also need to be addressed by the government. Learners with unpaid fines are not allowed to borrow books until the fine is paid, but this goes against the fundamental purpose of school libraries (Pentland, 2019).

2.4 Satisfaction with library and information resources and services

The essential task of a school library is to satisfy the needs of its users by providing information resources and services that meet the school curriculum. Tiemo and Ateboh (2016, p. 55) state that user satisfaction of library information resources and services is determined by the way in which users judge adequacy of services rendered to them. From the 1990s to the early 2000s, Lance conducted several seminal studies in Colorado that connected school libraries and student academic achievement (Scholastic Library Publishing, 2016). The findings of these studies showed time and again that the size of the library in terms of its staff and its collection is a direct predictor of reading scores. Other important factor for achievement were a professionally qualified librarian who could play an active instructional role, and higher levels of spending on the school library (Scholastic Library Publishing, 2016).

Effective school libraries also provide training and experience in research and information access skills, which are essential for higher education performance and lifelong learning. Following in the footsteps of Lance, but broadening their approach, Todd and Kuhlthau (2005) conducted a study involving 39 school libraries across Ohio on how effective school libraries can be in helping learners with their learning in and away from school. The researchers used an evidence-based approach with the concept “help” embedded in the focus question. The results of their study indicated that the help that learners received from the library boosted their confidence when doing their school projects. Learners valued the instructional intervention they received from the school library; it gave them a clear understanding of how to analyse and synthesise information and to express ideas when working on their school projects. Todd and Kuhlthau (2005) confirmed that school libraries are advocates for lifelong learning as a key outcome.

Similarly, Marino and Schultz-Brown (2020) adapted Todd and Kuhlthau's (2005) study in Swedish schools. Instructional interventions learners received from a school library helped them to develop skills for engaging with information outside school. They gained confidence in searching for information to expand their knowledge on the topics they learned at school, and discovered more information on their personal interests. However, the findings showed that school libraries "exist on a continuum of practice" (Marino & Schultz-Brown, 2020, p. 29). While the majority of students had positive experiences of their libraries, the study uncovered several shortcomings in school library practices which needed further investigation. Effective school library stories and studies need to be broadcast to decision makers, policy makers and important stakeholders, otherwise their significance is lost.

2.5 Challenges facing school libraries

Countless studies indicate that most school libraries experience various challenges in their efforts to provide information services to learners and teachers, and to serve as an educational support system to the school as a whole (Lonsdale, 2003, p.147). Shandu et al. (2016, p. 14) mention that these challenges differ from school to school, but they share common challenges, both local and international. For instance, Paton-Ash and Wilmot (2015, p. 4) reveal some of the challenges facing school libraries in South Africa. These include lack of national policy, lack of school library information resources, theft of computers due to lack of security, and the lack of understanding by teachers of the role of the library in teaching and learning.

All African countries, south of the Sahara face various challenges that affect school library development, and Nigeria is not exempt from those challenges (Olajide & Zinn, 2020). Research on the poor conditions of school libraries in Nigeria conducted by Ajegbomogun and Salaam (2011, p. 4), Aura and Chinaka (2011), and Olajide and Ariwodola (2009) highlights challenges such as declining government financial support, inadequate infrastructure and equipment, employment of unqualified personnel, inadequate venue, non-inclusion of school librarianship in the curriculum of teacher training, and low level of information technology development. Olajide and Zinn (2020, p. 4) conducted a study on "why school libraries remain underdeveloped in Nigeria". The study reveals that challenges facing school libraries in Nigeria do not differ much from other African countries, as their conditions are described by the researchers as pitiful. Among the factors that contribute to the poor state of school libraries in Nigeria are irrelevant library collections, lack of funds, and poor staffing. Furthermore,

Malekani and Mubofu (2019, p. 7) mention challenges facing secondary school libraries in Tanzania. They refer to inadequate funding, lack of well-designed school library buildings, lack of recognition by the head of schools, changes of curriculum that affect collection development, and inadequate staffing. All these challenges are cited in the World Bank's report (2008, p. xxii) on school library provision in Sub-Saharan Africa. Similarly, Hossain (2018) states that the importance of school libraries is overlooked by policy-makers as school libraries are not embedded in the teaching and learning system by the Bangladesh government.

2.6 Library resources and infrastructure

Adequate infrastructure is a key priority in a school set up. The resources of the school library include its physical facilities, equipment, collections of media and information materials, funds, budgets, and staff. The right to basic education is embedded in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. It is considered as one of the most crucial rights, because it promotes the economic and social well-being of the citizens (Mojapelo & Dube, 2014 p.12). Therefore, the post-apartheid government has a responsibility to equitably share educational resources and facilities among all learners irrespective of the socio-economic background (Mojapelo, 2018 p. 13). In order for the national government to close the gap of unequal resources in schools, the IFLA Guidelines (IFLA, 2015) suggest that the national government should develop a system of support for school library implementation (IFLA, 2015). In the same breath, the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 states that all schools must have a school library which is equipped with a suitable school library collection (Van der Merwe, 2013). In agreement, the LIS Transformation Charter states that if good school libraries and information services are essential to the transformation of the education system, then the redress and equity enshrined in the South African Constitution and education legislation mean that ways must be found to provide them to all schools (Mojapelo, 2018, p. 10). However, the socio-economic challenges that are affecting the country and its education system are the result of the inheritance of apartheid's Bantu education policies. Inequality of access to information resources in previously disadvantaged South African schools persists. A report in 2019 on school infrastructure by the National Education Infrastructure Management System (NEIMS) database (SADBE, 2019, p.5) stated that 74 per cent (14 726) of South African public schools did not have a library. Only 25 per cent (5 126) of schools had a library, and only a few of these had a library collection.

2.6.1 The role of the school librarian

The school library is the heart of the school, because it helps the educational system to achieve its goals. A school librarian plays a leading role in instructing teachers and learners to critically evaluate sources of information to solve their curriculum needs; therefore, school libraries should be staffed with a full-time qualified librarian and library assistants. School librarians perform at their highest level when they are supported by library support staff. The IFLA/UNESCO Manifesto (IFLA, 2021) provides a clear mandate for the instructional role of the school librarian. Their mandate is to provide information that will equip learners with lifelong learning skills and enable them to live as responsible citizens. In articulating the responsibilities that are mentioned in the manifesto, a school librarian should be competent in certain key roles. These are leadership, management of the school library facility and programme, literacy instruction, teaching evolving literacies, collaboration, and community engagement. The IFLA Guidelines (2015, p.8) point out that, “staffing patterns for school libraries vary depending on the local context, influenced by legislation, economic development, and educational infrastructure”. Staffing is a key factor determining the quality of the library provision; usually the staff in the library consists of a qualified librarian or a paraprofessional person who is appointed to look after the library. A school librarian is the professionally qualified staff member who is responsible for planning and managing the school library, supported by staffing that is as adequate as possible, who cooperates with all members of the school community, and liaises with the public library and others (IFLA 2015, p.7). Additionally, the American Association of School Libraries (AASL 2018, p. 14) recognises the roles of school librarians, which are crucial to the development and significance of an effective school library. These roles include teacher, leader, information specialist, instructional partner, and programme administrator.

The IFLA Guidelines also stress that the role of the school library is essential to the development of IL, teaching, learning, and culture (2015). The school library’s roles include developing the habit of reading in children; through access to resources worldwide, introducing learners to a variety of opinions; demonstrating that intellectual freedom and access to information are fundamental to active citizenship and participatory democracy (p.61).

Because a school library plays an important role in meeting the information needs of students, it should be staffed with a full-time professional librarian. IFLA’s Guidelines (2015) suggest

that school libraries should be under the direction of professional personnel with the same level of education as other leaders in the school. Gretes (2013, p. 2) agrees with the idea that a school with a well-equipped library, staffed by a full-time, certified librarian and appropriate support staff contribute constructively to the complex role of the position. The National Guidelines (SADBE, 2012) point out the importance of assigning the librarian position to qualified personnel, ideally a person with a dual qualification is recommended. The recommendation is that a person should have both a school librarianship and teaching qualification, and have experience in both fields. Todd (2002) endorsed the idea that the usefulness and success of school libraries in teaching and learning depend largely on the professional intervention of the school librarian to equip students with lifelong learning skills. A librarian is expected to help students to think, create, share, and grow. Most importantly, librarians are there to implement the school library and information service development plan (SADBE, 2012).

The role of the librarian is crucial to the effectiveness of school libraries. The report by the Office of Standards in Education-United Kingdom (OFSTED) confirms that the effectiveness of the school library depends on the librarian to make the library more welcoming to learners and teachers for their school work and recreational activities (OFSTED, 2006, p. 9). Since the school library provides a vital support to both teachers and learners, the school librarian is expected to understand their learning needs, and to provide them with relevant information that equips them with lifelong learning skills. A comparative study by Lo et al. (2014, p.52) between Hong Kong, Japan, Shanghai, South Korea and Taipei examined and compared the different roles and expectations of educators and school librarians in IL. The results indicated that the school librarians in both Taipei and South Korea performed better than the other regions. School librarians in Taipei collaborated with subject teachers and also contributed to curriculum development as information consultants and curriculum facilitators. School libraries in Japan focused more on advising learners and teachers in selecting appropriate resources for their school projects and teaching. They played more of a supportive role in executing the curriculum rather than serving as leaders; therefore, their IL skills were not yet fully integrated into the curriculum.

The changing information landscape of 21st century schools continue to redefine the role of school librarians. In the United States of America, school librarians have moved from the IL standards of 1998 to the standards for the 21st century learner (Reisz, 2013, p. 119). They have a strong command of 21st century pedagogies and curricula. Working with school librarians

strengthens the skills of classrooms and students as they are the experts in information science. They play an integral role in teaching and supporting 21st century skills. The role of a school librarian has changed considerably; they are more than the “keeper of the books”. The role is constantly evolving to meet modern teaching and learning needs. Studies have been conducted regarding how the role librarians play in a modern society has been redefined; therefore, the need to integrate the school librarian position fully into a leadership position is highly recommended (Johnston, 2012, p.2). The 21st century information landscape is being transformed by the digital revolution; therefore, teacher librarians are required to enhance digital and IL, and help students to become critical, creative and collaborative thinkers (ACT Education Directorate, 2019, p.2)

With increasing access to information technologies, the roles of school librarians have adapted and evolved; therefore, the need for continuous professional training and development is vital (Todd, 2002). There is a greater need for school librarians to render services to students that will lead the latter to become independent learners who are able to evaluate and manage unlimited access to information in their everyday life. Johnston (2012, p.3) is of the view that technology does not only transform access to information, instead it upgrades the skills needed to use it and interact with it. Therefore, school librarians use the latest technology to connect their school community to quality resources; they combine their information specialist roles with technology integration and innovation. They are trained to manage digital information systems that are used to create, store, analyse, organise, retrieve and disseminate digital information in digital libraries or any type of information (Hashim & Mokhtar, 2012, p. 153). Technology cannot work in isolation; it requires a professional to manage it. In the case of advances in information provision, libraries and librarians need to evolve and be innovative to meet the standards of 21st century information dissemination.

Some of the information dissemination techniques mentioned by Shonhe (2017, p. 9) are online reference service, personalised collections, SMS notifications, QR codes, social networks, websites, blogs, search engines like Google, mailing lists and the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC). Online resources are becoming abundant; anybody searching for information can get it anytime anywhere provided there is an internet connection. Here the role of librarians is to teach learners how to search and evaluate information sources. Therefore, librarians have to adopt some interactive technologies to successfully engage with 21st century learners.

2.6.2 Collaboration between teachers and school librarians

The concept of collaboration has become a 21st century trend. Collaboration is defined as a process in which two or more people work together to incorporate information to enhance student learning (Montiel-Overall, 2005, p 25). It is important for librarians to collaborate with teachers to have strong, efficient and effective library services. In Australia, school librarians collaborate across schools, sectors and systems to connect and build professional relations around the world. They connect using social media and email listservs to provide instant and direct connection with their colleagues (ACT Education Directorate, 2019, p5). Medaill and Shannon (2012, p.133) mention the importance of collaboration as one method of strengthening the teaching skills and confidence of librarians through collaborative instructions and co-teaching. School libraries contribute significantly to the process of empowering learners, particularly when school librarians collaborate with teachers. The AASL has emphasised the role of collaboration by saying that “the school library program promotes collaboration among members of the learning community and encourages learners to be independent, lifelong users and producers of ideas and information” (AASL, 2009, p. 19).

The power of collaboration between school librarian and teachers has been discovered as an effective tool to equip learners to become effective, ethical users of information (Latham et al., 2013). It is regarded as a way of improving teaching instruction, which will have a positive effect on student learning outcomes (Lance et al., 2001, 2002; Lance et al.,1993). Lance et al. (2000) conducted a study in Colorado where the results of collaboration between school librarians and teachers showed improvements in student academic performance (p.4). Collaboration between teachers and school librarians is mentioned in the IFLA Guidelines (2015, p. 35), as it strengthens the efficiency and quality of IL instructions which are in line with the school curriculum. In 2002 The Partnership for 21st Century Skills was formed between U.S. Department of Education, the National Education Association and several corporations. The idea of this partnership was for the teachers and school librarians to collaborate to educate students in the skills needed to be successful in the digital age (Greenhill, 2010, p. 31). Librarians can partner with teachers to equip learners with the critical skills necessary to become independent lifelong learners. In addition to collaborating with teachers, school librarians should also collaborate with instructional technology specialists. Wine (2016) states that

collaboration opens an avenue to combine the knowledge and experience of two unique members of the teaching staff to support classroom teachers and students to make learning highly engaging through the integration of technology and information literacy skills into content curriculum (p.209).

Establishment of functional school libraries in South Africa is critical, therefore, in order for libraries to be functional, intensive support is required. Silbert and Bitso (2015, p. 54) report on an ongoing study that focuses on building a collaborative mentoring and support model for library assistants in a group of schools in the Western Cape townships of Khayelitsha. This model was conceptualised as a community of practise through a university-community-school partnership by the University of Cape Town's school improvement initiative, UCT's Library and Information Studies Centre and the Bookery and a group of schools in Khayelitsha. The aim of this initiative was to employ the library assistants through the Bookery to manage and create functional school libraries and also play a key role in developing effective and functional libraries.

2.7 School libraries in South Africa

Before 1994, quality education for black learners was never a priority for the ruling National Party (Mojapelo, 2018, p. 3). The South African Schools Act of 1996 did not mention libraries. Instead, the responsibility was assigned to SGBs to improve the quality of education in their schools, and to ensure that they raised funds to supplement the government subsidy (Le Roux, 2003). The result was a pervasive lack of facilities, poor resources and untrained personnel in most schools. In an effort to remedy the situation, in 1998, the South African government released a draft National Policy Framework for school libraries which was well received and seen as a critical moment in South Africa's educational history (Du Toit & Stilwell, 2012). Unfortunately, the policy was not implemented. Hart (2014, p. 4) mentions that after the failed 1998 policy, there were three other school library policy "discussion documents" in 2000, 2001 and 2005. These also failed. Mojapelo and Dube (2014), as well as Du Toit and Stilwell (2012), confirm that even though several drafts have been generated since 1998, the SADB has failed to legislate a school library policy.

Research shows that the condition of school libraries in South Africa is unsatisfactory. For instance, the report by the National Education Infrastructure Management Systems in 2018

indicates that only 29 per cent of schools had a library, of which only 17 per cent of the total number of schools had a potentially functional library (Department of Basic Education, 2018, p.5). Mojapelo and Dube (2014) have similar sentiments to Hart and Zinn (2015). They say that the progress of school libraries in South Africa shows a few schools with well-equipped and functional libraries. These libraries are mainly in the former model C schools which can supplement their government subsidy by charging extra fees from the parents. Meanwhile, in historically disadvantaged communities school libraries are virtually non-existent (Mojapelo, 2008). Both Paton-Ash and Wilmot's (2015) and Mojapelo's (2016) studies identify the challenges in establishing and maintaining functional school libraries in South Africa. Both studies endorse the implementation of a library policy that would fast-track access to school library information services.

2.8 School libraries in sub-Saharan African countries

In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights announced that everyone has the right to education (Mutungi et al., 2014, p. 156). However, governments and ministers of education in many African countries have not recognised and prioritised the importance of libraries and book provisions in their communities (Rosenberg, 2001, p.37). Cramer (2012, p. 4) confirms that African governments do not prioritise libraries as much as they do other sectors such as health, education, securing necessities such as food, water and electricity. Within the African context, a substantial body of research, including studies and reports, cite similar reasons for the neglected state of libraries in Africa. They mention that most school libraries face many problems such as lack of funds allocated for the development of school libraries. There is an absence of relevant and adequate information resources, lack of qualified librarians, inadequate infrastructure, most importantly, lack of government input in the development of school libraries. In a study conducted by the World Bank in Africa published in 2008, only Botswana had a promising basic secondary school library system in all schools.

On the other hand, Omenyo (2016, p.20) mentions that various African governments acknowledge the IFLA/UNESCO Manifesto (2015), but are reluctant to prioritise budgets for school libraries. Therefore, the need to develop and establish school libraries remains a priority. The IFLA Manifesto (2015, p. 12) "urges government through their ministries to develop policies, strategies and plans to implement the principles of the manifesto". However, the objectives of school libraries expressed in the IFLA Manifesto seem to be irrelevant or moot

as most schools on the continent do not have libraries (Ocholla, 2009, p. 24. Although the Manifesto (2015) is understood by the authorities in African countries, the challenge is that there is no legislation that compels them to prioritise school libraries.

The Nigeria National Policy on Education (NNPE) (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013, p.13) supports schools having functional libraries in every school with weekly timetabled library periods. The policy recommends that every state ministry of education should prioritise funds for the establishment of school libraries, training of human resources, and adequate infrastructure (Ajegbomogun & Salaam, 2011, p.2). However, this laudable idea has not been fulfilled. Schools are still being built without functional libraries (Olajide & Zinn, 2020, p. 4). There is no government provision of funds allocated to support the libraries. The study conducted by Ajegbomogun and Salaam (2011, p 3) highlights the problems facing school libraries such as inadequate infrastructure, unqualified personnel, empty bookshelves, low levels of information technology, and lack of financial support. Adeyemi (2010) mentions that most school libraries in Nigeria are run by unqualified librarians. Funmilayo (2013, p. 104) agrees with other researchers that lack of financial support is the main hinderance to the development of school libraries in Nigeria. As a result, Oriogu (2015) points out that most secondary schools in Nigeria do not have good libraries or professional librarians to manage them.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the literature pertaining to school libraries and access to information resources. It is clear that school libraries in Africa face similar challenges and cannot live up to the IFLA/UNESCO Manifesto, which emphasises the importance of creating effective school libraries that will equip learners with lifelong learning skills. The research reveals that there is a lack of interest from governments to fund and implement policies needed to govern and guide development of school libraries in Africa. The state of school libraries has been analysed and most researchers agree that a lot needs to be done by the authorities to support library services in Africa. However, it also seems that some African countries support the idea of school libraries but lack commitment to invest in the development of effective school libraries. The research further shows that those in African countries who have power in government under the education ministry, are hesitant to take a stand to approve library school policies.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

Kivunja defines a theoretical framework (2018, p. 46) as a “structure that summarizes concepts and theories which you develop from previously tested and published knowledge”, while a conceptual framework is an “end result of bringing together a number of related concepts to explain or predict a given event or give a broader understanding of the phenomenon of interest of a research problem” (Imenda, 2014, p.189). The present study is guided by a constructivist learning theory and inquiry-based model applied in high schools, particularly in library and information services (Ayaz & Sekerci, 2015; Bada & Olusegum, 2015; Kuhlthau, 2004, Dube, 2004; Mojapelo & Dube, 2014; Omenyo, 2016; Semerci & Batdi, 2015).

3.2 Constructivism and inquiry-based learning

Constructivism is a very broad descriptive concept and has many definitions. Despite these multiple definitions, the essence of constructivism is the idea that learners actively construct their own knowledge and meaning from their experiences (Ultanir, 2012, p.196). This means that learners use their previous knowledge as a foundation and build on it with new ideas that they learn as they attempt to make sense of their daily experiences (Gonzalez-Dehass & Willems, 2013, p. 41). Constructivism is based on the premise that individuals learn by constructing new knowledge upon the foundation of previous learning (Bada, & Olusegum (2015, p. 66). It is therefore clear that learners build knowledge and understanding based on their past experiences, cultural background, knowledge, and skills acquired from situations and relationships in the world around them such as families, friends, environment, and libraries (Olajide, 2019, p. 41). A constructivist approach to learning underpins inquiry-based learning (IBL). It is an approach to teaching that enables learners to inquire into and evaluate the content of information resources that are accessed through the process of knowledge creation, thus promoting self-directed and active learning (Spronken-Smith, 2012, p. 183). For instance, the constructivist learning approach has demonstrated a positive impact on student learning in the library and information services literature, specifically in the context of information-seeking behaviour Vong & Kaewurai (2017, p.153). Bada & Olusegum (2015, p 67) explain that since the constructivist view of learning considers learners as active agents in the process of

knowledge acquisition, it is important to create learning environments that directly expose learners to the material being studied. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to ensure access to conducive environments with well-resourced and effective functional school libraries to enable the learners to construct new knowledge through interacting with library information resources (Gouws 2010; Lazarus & Lolwana 2010; Ormrod 2014; Woolfolk & Allen 2010). Inquiry-based learning is recognised as essential for teaching and learning across the disciplines as it promotes cognitive and analytical thinking skills. It focuses on moving learners beyond basic curiosity into a phase where they critically analyse new information with understanding. In other words, the inquiry approach is a learning theory that considers the learner as a responsible, active agent in their knowledge acquisition process (Loyens & Gijbels, 2008, p.352). Inquiry-based learning encourages learners to search, identify and evaluate information from various sources, to seek answers to questions, and to critically analyse the information resources accessed (Mojapelo & Dube 2014, p. 13). The theory of constructivism is a teaching and learning theory that affirms that knowledge is best gained through a process of action, reflection and active construction in the mind (Brau, 2020; Mascolo & Fischer, 2005). Lutz and Huitt (2004) mention that constructivist learning theory is connected with learning behaviour scientists such as Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, Jerome Bruner and John Dewey. Therefore, constructivism emphasises that “learners are not empty vessels waiting to be filled, but rather active organisms seeking meaning” (Woolfolk & Allen, 2010, p.256). Constructivism perpetuates self-directed learning, which is one of the outcomes of critical thinking and IL skills (Shantaram, 2012, p. 2). Viewed from this perspective, learning is a process of knowledge construction that depends upon both the tools and resources that the learner can access. This means the knowledge base of learners is enriched and expanded as they interact with library resources and functional school libraries to construct, acquire, and generate knowledge (Mojapelo & Dube, 2014, p. 34). The constructivist learning theory encourages interactive learning that supports learning by doing; therefore, a well-resourced school library under the leadership of a qualified librarian is vitally important. Constructivism has been widely adopted as a point of reference for curriculum development and recommended pedagogy in education. Du Toit and Stilwell (2012, p. 122) confirm that constructivist learning theory is at the core of South Africa’s curriculum, and school libraries are essential tools that provide the necessary resources required for constructing new knowledge while broadening pre-existing knowledge.

Researchers have found that constructivist principles are applied widely in teaching and learning in education. The inquiry approach to school library instruction, for example, is based on constructivist learning theory, according to Kuhlthau (2003). Olajide (2019) cites researchers such as Kuhlthau, (1993, 2010) and Todd (2002). Both have conducted several studies which provide the field of education with some valuable research on the nature and dynamics of inquiry-based learning by concentrating on the information search process. The constructivist approach helps learners through learning stages as they experience anxiety and doubt when discovering new information and initiating a search process (Kuhlthau, 2004). Kuhlthau (1993, p. 352) explains, however, that learners become aware of their information needs once they begin and continue to exercise their cognitive processes in learning situations, which allows them to think clearly and trust their actions after they have moved from a state of doubt to understanding. Furthermore, in the constructivist and inquiry-based learning environment, teachers and librarians are considered as facilitators and mediators who guide learners to discover useful information as the latter interact with library information resources to complete their academic tasks (Sternberg & Williams 2010). The emphasis is more on “how we come to know” and less on “what we know”.

The holistic view of the information search process emphasises the importance of school libraries in teaching and learning. Therefore, school libraries come in as centres of learning where learners are exposed and guided on how to use library tools to search for information to add to their pre-existing knowledge to supplement what their teachers give them (Mojapelo & Dube, 2014, p. 54).

An inquiry-based learning approach to teaching, and learning how to use the library, promotes self-motivated learning, develops critical thinking skills and fosters lifelong learning skills. An inquiry-based learning approach to teaching and learning is a pedagogical approach that is well integrated into curriculum standards. However, most teachers experience challenges in implementing those approaches, especially when the need to support learners with extra information resources arises (Lance & Maniotes, 2020, p. 48). At this stage, when guided through an inquiry process by school librarians, learners gain confidence when following the information search process guide on how to find relevant and credible information resources to carry on with their research topics. In order to achieve that, the importance of access to a well-resourced and functional school library cannot be overemphasised. Inquiry-based learning is an educational strategy that is learner centred and based on student interest and curiosity

(Lance & Maniotes, 2020, p. 48). Guided inquiry promotes independent learning, increases confidence in searching for information, enhances critical thinking skills and problem-solving, flexibility, collaborative learning and motivates learners to continue seeking information until they find answers. Learners gain a sense of ownership and develop confidence in the work they are producing while guided through an enquiry process by school librarians and teachers. They attach meaning to school library information resources they interact with, and construct new meaning, which leads to subject knowledge, IL and increased reading comprehension (Lance & Maniotes, 2020, p. 48)

In Ghana, Omenyo's (2016, p.27) study, grounded in constructivist learning theory, found that when teachers and librarians collaborate, they provide opportunities and encourage learners to construct knowledge to build their own meaning and understanding from the library resources at their disposal. Similarly, Montiel-Overall (2005, p. 4) suggests that teachers and librarians should collaborate to identify the needs of students, especially on IL. When both parties collaborate, it is easy to identify knowledge gaps when learners conduct information searches, and both parties create ways and guidance on how to access and select useful information from a wide variety of sources and formats. A shared sense of accountability and commitment to the instructional partnership has a positive effect on student learning achievement, and creates a conducive environment for all members of the school community.

Lonsdale's (2003, p. 1) research on the "impact of school libraries on student achievement" in Australia found that school libraries have a positive impact on student achievement, especially when constructivist and inquiry-based learning theory is applied. Therefore, school librarians are encouraged to adopt a more outcomes-focused practice as opposed to a collection-based practice, and to encourage students to take control of their own learning by exposing them to a variety of resources to construct new knowledge (Lonsdale, 2003, p. 8).

In Hong Kong, Chu and Chow (2011, p. 132) conducted a study on "using collaborative teaching and inquiry project-based learning to help primary school students develop information literacy and information skills". The findings reveal that learners lack crucial IL and information technology (IT) skills from primary school to postgraduates. Therefore, a collaborative teaching approach and inquiry-based learning between teachers and school librarian was recommended to improve the development of IL and IT skills.

Figure 3 1: Kuhlthau's Information Search Process Model (ISP) (Kuhlthau, 2005, p.231)

The application of the ISP model has been used to examine theoretical concepts within librarianship and information science. The application is mainly used to understand the feelings, thoughts and actions of the person searching for information, and it is usually used to describe high school learners (Kuhlthau et al., 2008, p. 4.) The model has been successfully used by a number of studies to understand the information-seeking behaviour of high school learners. Therefore, emphasising the importance of exposing learners to information search processes to gain confidence when searching for information cannot be overlooked (Kuhlthau, 2010, p.19). In fact, this shows that a functional school library is an important source in enhancing teaching and learning as prescribed by the curriculum.

3.4 Information Inquiry

The term “information inquiry”, also known as “guided inquiry”, is based on solid research findings grounded in a constructivist approach to teaching and learning (Kuhlthau, 2010, p.20). Using a wide variety of information resources, information inquiry integrates inquiry strategies in seeking answers to questions, raising new questions, and further challenging the content. Information inquiry promotes an effective learning environment that allows learners to understand the information inquiry processes that guide them on how to engage and interact with library and information resources to address a given topic. Information inquiry learning arouses curiosity to search for more information, which gives learners access to a wide variety of resources in different media and formats, and leads to new knowledge creation (Singman, 2017, p.33). The successful application of information inquiry boosts confidence and shows high levels of satisfaction when learners and teachers explore and learn more about the availability of information resources in the library, and their knowledge expands as they seek clarity on a given research topic. Information inquiry gives librarians the opportunity to guide teachers and learners to access the information resources, and to conduct the information search process.

Information inquiry involves the process of searching for information and applying information to answer questions of interest and questions that are addressed to us. It involves critical thinking skills in the selection and evaluation of information and resources (Callison & Baker, 2014). Five interactive elements are commonly found in models and strategies used by academic educators and researchers as well as school librarians to teach strategies for the search

and use of information. These elements of information inquiry are questioning, exploration, assimilation, inference, and reflection. Information inquiries can guide the process of searching for information needed, located, and selected for use. Teachers and learners can expand their knowledge base in the information age through these elements (Callison & Preddy, 2006).

The most important constructivist learning method is problem solving and the teaching methods are student-centred. Therefore, the inquiry-based learning method encourages librarians to work together with students to guide them on how to use library systems to search for credible information resources that are relevant to their topics. Inquiry-based learning equips learners with self-directed lifelong learning skills, while librarians offer support and guidance through the process of acquiring information, until learners accomplish their research (Kuhlthau, et al. (2007, p. 48).

3.5 Conclusion

Learners' academic achievement is positively influenced by the successful application of constructivism and the pedagogical method of inquiry-based learning, especially in libraries and information services. The inquiry-based learning approach engages learners in their own learning through questioning. Providing answers to questions encourages learners to raise new questions about the information resources they are able to access. This study adopted a constructivist learning theory and inquiry-based learning approach that was used to assess the access and use of school library information resources by Luhlaza High Schools learners.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter details the research methods that were used in the study. A method is a framework that is systematically used to solve the research problem in a scientific way. It provides an in-depth description of techniques, research design and methodology. This chapter focuses on the research paradigm, population, sampling procedures, data collection procedures, methods of data analyses and interpretation, validity and reliability, as well as research ethics (Schwandt, 2007, p.195). The main objective of this study was to investigate the access and use of school library information resources by learners and teachers at Luhlaza High School. The study addressed the following research questions:

1. What is the nature of the school library's information resources?
2. How are they accessed and used by the learners?
3. How are they accessed and used by the teachers?
4. How satisfied are learners with the assistance library resources provide with school projects?
5. How does the library add value to the well-being (personal and social) of learners in and out of school?

4.2. Research methodology

Research methodology is described as a systematic way to solve or answer the research problem (Kothari, 2004, p.8). In essence, one can understand research methodology as the process of studying how research is done scientifically (Patel & Patel, 2019, p.48). Research methodology is considered an approach or method focusing on the research processes and tools used to guide the study (Mouton, 2001, p. 56).

4.3 The research design

Research design is defined as a “type of inquiry within qualitative, quantitative and mixed approaches that provides specific direction for procedures in research” (Creswell, 2014, p.38). This study adopted a qualitative approach and a case study research design.

4.3.1 Case study

A qualitative case study approach is defined as a “research methodology that helps in exploration of a phenomenon within some particular context through various data sources, and it undertakes the exploration through variety of lenses in order to reveal multiple facets of the phenomenon” (Rashid et al., 2019, p. 2). Where a case study adopts a constructivist approach it “recognizes the importance of the subjective human creation of meaning, but doesn’t reject outright some notion of objectivity” (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p.544). Dooley (2002, p.338) mentions that cases studies usually employ various collection processes such as interviews, documents, observations, FGDs, archival records, participants observations and surveys. The purpose of using multiple data sources in a case study is to strengthen the credibility of outcomes and to allow different interpretations to be included in data analysis (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 554). This process is known as triangulation.

The researcher chose the case study approach to gain more detailed information when participants express their ideas, and perceptions about the study topic. This approach also grants the researcher an opportunity to have direct contact with the participants. There are several steps to be taken for the case study method to increase the reliability of the research outcomes. The researcher adopted the following steps (Omenyo, 2016 p.34): 1) Define the research question; 2) Select the case; 3) Prepare to collect data; 4) Engage in data collection; 5) Carry out data evaluation and analysis; 6) Prepare a report on the findings. At the time of the research, one of the reasons for selecting Luhlaza High School was the convenience and familiarity of the school.

4.3.2 Qualitative approach

Qualitative research focuses on the process and experience rather than quantifiable outcomes, and it seeks to answer the “how and “why” questions of a phenomenon instead of “how many” or “how much” (Lloyd-Jones, 2003, p.35). In-depth interviews, case studies, focus groups and open-ended questions are usually employed in qualitative research (Sullivan & Sargeant, 2011, p. 449). Most importantly, a qualitative research approach was chosen to get a clear understanding of how Luhlaza High School learners and teachers access and use school library resources. The strength of qualitative research is its ability to provide clear answers to a specific

research question and the ability to explain processes and patterns of human behaviour (Cleary et al., 2014, p. 473).

The characteristics of qualitative research are (Creswell, 2014; Kumar, 2005, p.12; Leedy & Ormrod, 2010, p. 94) as follows:

- Natural settings. Researchers collect data in the field where participants are familiar with the setting (such as classrooms, schools and library).
- Researchers as a key instrument. Researchers collect data themselves through observing behaviour, document analysis, and interviewing participants.
- Multiple sources of data. Data is collected in many forms such as interviews, observations and documents.

4.3.2.1 Disadvantages of qualitative approach

Choy (2014, p.102) mentions that participants have more control over the content of the data collected; therefore, particular issues of interest could go unnoticed while sharing personal experience and knowledge about the phenomenon. Atieno (2009, p.13) raises the point that one cannot extend the findings of a qualitative approach to a wider population with the same confidence that one can with quantitative analyses. The limitations of a qualitative research approach (Anderson, 2010, p.2) are as follows:

- The process is time-consuming.
- It relies upon the experience of the researcher
- It is a labour-intensive approach.
- It is difficult to investigate causality.
- Qualitative research is not statistically representative.

4.4 Population of the study

Here the term “population” refers to the entire set of people which are the focus of the study from which the sample is properly selected (Pickard, 2013, p.60). The population target in this study comprised the 1 251 Luhlaza High School learners in 2022, the principal, teacher librarian and 38 teachers.

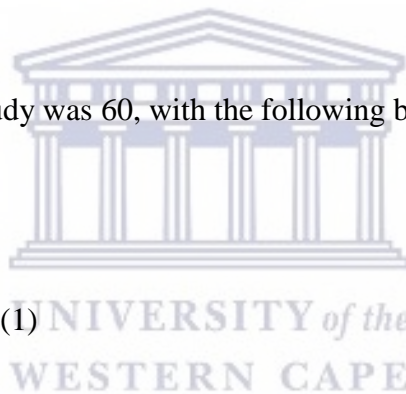
4.5 Sampling procedure

It is not possible to acquire information from the total population, and the solution is to select a number of people who meet the characteristics representative of the population. This small group of people is referred to as a “sample”. There are mainly two types of sampling: probability and non-probability sampling (Showkat & Parveen, 2017, p. 1). Within the latter, this study employed a purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling involves the selection of individuals or groups who are knowledgeable and experienced with the phenomenon of interest (Palinkas et al., 2015, p.544). The learner sample participants were stratified according to grade level (10 learner volunteers per grade level from grade 8 to 12), but teacher volunteers were selected according to subject (IsiXhosa, History and life orientation). Teachers were selected because their views on the use of the school library information resources in their teaching were important.

4.5.1 Sample size

The total sample size for the study was 60, with the following breakdown:

- Learners -Fifty (50)
- Principal – One (1)
- Teacher Librarian -One (1)
- Teachers -Eight (8)



4.6 Data collection instruments

Creswell (2009, p.175) mentions that in qualitative studies, researchers gather several kinds of data and spend considerable time in gathering information. This study collected data through interviews, observations, FGDs and document analysis. During all the interview sessions the researcher requested permission from the participants to record the discussion. The researcher also used the library register and borrower register to gain insight into the library’s resources and library usage.

4.6.1 Focus group discussions

A “focus group discussion” is commonly defined “as a method of collecting research data through moderated group discussions based on the participants’ perceptions and experiences

of a topic decided by the researcher” (Carlsen & Glenton, 2011, p. 3005). FGDs are composed of small groups (usually 8-10 respondents) with a similar background who meet for about one or two hours to discuss a specific topic of interest (Patton, 2002, p. 385). The discussion is often led by a trained moderator or interviewer and the data collected has high “face validity” (Dilshad & Latif, 2013, p. 192). Typically, focus group participants are homogenous, and have background prior knowledge of the topic of interest. For example, participants in this study are familiar with the library in their school. The participants in the FGDs were volunteers, ten learners from each grade (grade 8-12). There were open-ended questions for the focus groups. See Appendix F for the interview schedule for the focus groups.

4.6.2 Interviews

The purpose of personal interviews is to obtain information about the participants’ experiences and knowledge about a specific subject, and the interviews enable the researcher to have human contact with the interviewees (Gill, et. al., 2008, p. 292). Interviews eliminate late responses and misunderstandings. Therefore, the interviewer needs to be skilled to successfully carry out an interview. The researcher used semi-structured interviews to provide reliable, comparable, qualitative data from participants to satisfy the research objectives. This kind of interview creates room for additional probing questions during the interviews. It allows participants to express their opinions and ideas without restrictions. The researcher designed four interview guides, one each for the principal, teachers, and library assistant, and one for the focus groups. The principal and teacher librarian have a direct influence on the effectiveness of the library. The interviews lasted up to 40 minutes for teachers and 60 minutes for learners. See Appendices G, H, and I for the interview schedules. This time is considered a suitable duration for semi-structured interviews (Jamshed, 2014, p. 87).

4.6.3. Observation and document analysis

Observation is a “scientific tool and method of data collection used by researchers to gather descriptive texts which are used to unpack the formulated research purpose. It is systematically planned and recorded and is subjected to checks and controls on validity and reliability” (Ciesielska et al., 2018, p, 34). The researcher prepared a checklist to observe the environment and documents in the library. “Document analysis” is defined as a systematic procedure to present accurate and reliable data for both printed and electronic data (Dalglish et al., 2020, p.

1425). This study employed a structured observation method to collect data, and traditional metrics were used to keep count of registered users, loans and the state of library resources. The observation checklist to observe the physical appearance of the library and assets was prepared. The checklist included the quality of the book stock (e.g., check if non-fiction books are still relevant and up to date and if fiction books are attractive for high school learners), school library building, loans and returns records, accession register of school library, accessibility to information resources, and library attendance register for the users.

4.7 Triangulation

The term “triangulation” in social science refers to the use of multiple methods or data sources to enhance the validity and credibility of the research study (Noble & Heale, 2019, p.67). In most cases, triangulation tests the consistency of findings obtained within the same study by using different methods of collecting data. In this study triangulation of data collected from different sources ensured the quality and credibility of the study. Chapter Six offers the triangulation. Table 4.1 shows a number of different data sources that were triangulated to address the research questions.

Table 4 1: Research questions and method of data collection

	Research questions	Data sources
1.	What is the nature of the school library’s information resources?	-Inventory of library resources (e.g., accession register, library system and observations) -all interviews and FGDs
2.	How are they accessed and used by the learners?	- All interviews and FGDs
3.	How are they accessed and used by the teachers?	-Interviews with the teachers, librarian, principal
4.	How satisfied are learners with the assistance library resources provide with school projects?	- All interviews and FGDs

5.	How does the library add value to the well-being (personal and social) of learners in and out of school?	-Interview with the librarian -FGDs with the learners
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4.8. Validity and Reliability

Qualitative validity is about trustworthiness, and this is gained by employing what Creswell (2014, p.251) calls “validity strategies”. One of the strategies is triangulation which in this study involves the data collected using different instruments (interviews, observation, document analysis), and from different groups of participants (learners, teacher-librarian, teachers and school principal). The idea is to build a cogent argument for the themes identified in the data analysis (Creswell, 2014). Since this is a case study, the research offers a “thick” description of the study setting, which lends further credence to its findings.

For qualitative research to be reliable, it must be transparent and credible. Creswell (2014) suggests that the study should contain a clear and systematic description of the research path, including research design, the collection of data and the steps taken to analyse and report data to enhance its credibility. Interviews and FGDs were recorded to ensure that all data was correctly captured. The researcher ensured objectivity by taking down notes of anything relevant to the study. Transcripts were rechecked to avoid mistakes and coding (of themes) continuously monitored to ensure there was “no shift in the meaning of the codes” (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 202).

4.9 Data capturing, analysis and presentation

The process of qualitative data analysis is “labour intensive and time consuming” as it produces “large amounts of contextually laden, subjective, and richly detailed data” (Ngulube, 2015, p. 131). The data collected through FGDs, interviews, document analysis, and observations were analysed for content. The researcher transcribed the interviews to gain a sense of the entire responses through listening to recordings several times, so as to ensure that they reflected the views of the participants. The researcher used thematic content analysis with the aid of software (ATLAS.ti) to sort, manage, organise, locate words, phrases and segments of data extracted from interview questions. Thematic analysis is generally described as a method of identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within data (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). One of the

benefits of thematic analysis is its flexibility; it helps by reducing and simplifying data that is collected.

4.10. Ethical implications

The researcher obtained permission from the University of the Western Cape (UWC) to conduct the study. All participants were provided information consent letters about the study. The researcher obtained the permission of the Western Cape Education Department to conduct the research at Luhlaza High School. The anonymity and confidentiality of all participants was maintained throughout. Personal information was kept strictly confidential, as only the researcher had access to the information. Pseudonyms were used for all participants who participated in the interviews to ensure anonymity. Participants were informed that their participation was voluntary, they could withdraw any time and the data collected from them was strictly to be used for research and academic purposes. Data collected from the participants was stored in a safe place. The purpose of the study was communicated to the participants. The researcher assured the participants that individual respondents would not be identified. Permission to use a recording device in interviews and focus groups was requested. Consent letters were sent to the relevant stakeholders for approval to conduct the research. Children's safety was of high priority in this research; they would not be exposed to danger or harm. The parents or caregivers of the children were informed of the study and their consent requested and obtained.

4.11 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the different methods and approaches employed to guide the study. A case study approach with an emphasis on qualitative research was adopted, and the research methodology, design and sampling procedures were discussed. Data collection tools such as documents, observations, interviews and FGDs were used. A purposive sampling procedure was used to select the principal, the teacher librarian and five subject teachers. The purposive sample for the learners was stratified according to grade level. The researcher adhered to the UWC ethical protocols.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

Vosloo (2014, p. 355) describes data analysis as the “process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data”. This chapter presents the outcome of data obtained from the instruments – semi-structured interviews, FGDs, observations, and document analysis. The purpose of the study was to investigate the access and use of school library information resources by learners and teachers at Luhlaza High School.

The research findings of this study are presented in the following sequence. Firstly, the total number of responses and background information about Luhlaza High School’s library. This is followed by observations and document analysis. Next is the information gathered from interviews with the library assistant, followed by data collected from the interviews with the school principal. An analysis of the interviews conducted with the teachers follows, and lastly the analysis of the FGDs is presented. To avoid contextual confusion, learners in the FGDs were assigned numbers (e.g., grade 8 learner#9), teachers are described according to the subject and grade they teach in the school (e.g., History teacher G12).

5.2 Responses

The volunteers who participated in this study were, ten (10) learner volunteers per grade from grade level 8 to 12 inclusive, four teachers instead of eight; the principal and library assistant (there was no school librarian) also participated.

5.3 Interview process

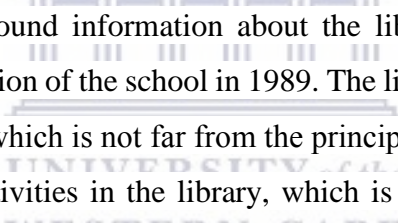
The interviews took place on the premises of Luhlaza High School. Separate semi-structured interview questions were asked during the interviews; one for FGDs, one for the principal, one for the school librarian and one for teachers. The researcher visited the school for seven days, the interviews started on the 22nd of March to the 5th of May 2022. The time that was scheduled for the learners was 45 minutes and 30 minutes for the teachers. The school principal was interviewed last due to her busy schedule. At the beginning of the interviews, the researcher introduced the topic and explained the objectives of the study. During the first visit to the school, the researcher met with the school principal to explain the purpose of the study, and what would be required from all parties. The principal explained that the learners were under

her supervision, and their parents her entrusted with the custody and care of their children. Therefore, the teachers involved in the study would stand “in loco parentis”, and that the parents and the school governing body (SGB) would be aware of the research happening at the school. All the teachers agreed to act in the place of parents. On the first day, therefore, the researcher explained the details of the consent form to the participants and they all volunteered to participate in the study. The researcher asked permission to record the interview with a personal cell phone. Consent to participate in an interview while recorded was granted by all the participants. During the interviews, the researcher took notes for reference purposes.

5.4 Background information about the school library

This section presents an overview of Luhlaza High School library, including location, environment, space and furniture.

5.4.1 Location



The principal provided background information about the library. She mentioned that the library was built from the inception of the school in 1989. The library building is located closer to the administration building, which is not far from the principal’s office. This makes it easy for the principal to monitor activities in the library, which is in a place that is easy for the learners to access for study groups when they have free periods. This was confirmed by grade 10 and 11 learners who participated in the FGDs:

Grade 10 learner#9 - The library is closer to our class; we usually go to the library to do our work when there is no teacher in the class

Grade 11 learner#4 – We use the library as a meeting point because [it] is central to all of us.

This is in line with the IFLA Guidelines which mention the accessibility and proximity of the school library to teaching areas (IFLA, 2015, p.32). However, responses from grade 8, 9 and 12 FGDs mentioned the high level of noise during break time. They would have preferred the library to be further away from the classrooms.

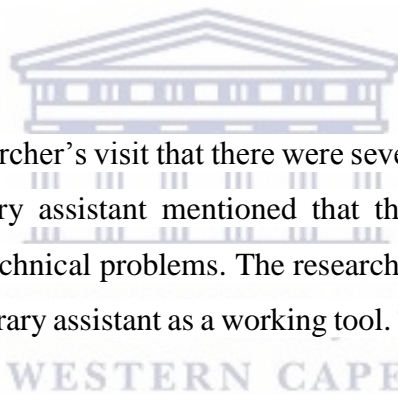
5.4.2. Environment, space, technology and furniture

The surroundings of the school library are well maintained. However, the school library can only accommodate one class of 45 learners at a time. Considering that the school has a population of 1 250, with limited space in the library, this means that there will be learners sitting and chatting outside the library during break period, which makes the environment noisy. The researcher witnessed the high level of noise around the library. Learners use the library as a study space, and for group discussions or school projects. The library has four big tables and 30 chairs. Respondents from grade 9 FGDs pointed out that:

Grade 9 learner#5 - The library space is not enough to accommodate a big number of learners, there is a shortage of chairs, as a result, the library becomes chaotic which is why I do not bother going to the library.

Grade 9 learner#9 - There is too much noise in the library, some learners are there to chat loudly while others are discussing school projects so there is no control.

5.4.2.1 Computers



It was observed during the researcher's visit that there were seven computers in the library. See Figure 5.1 However, the library assistant mentioned that there were only two functional computers; the other five had technical problems. The researcher also observed that there was no computer dedicated to the library assistant as a working tool. The library assistant mentioned that:

I use one of the computers when I need to help the learners to search for information for their school work. Sometimes I send them to the computer lab because there are only two computers working in the library, the other five have technical issues.

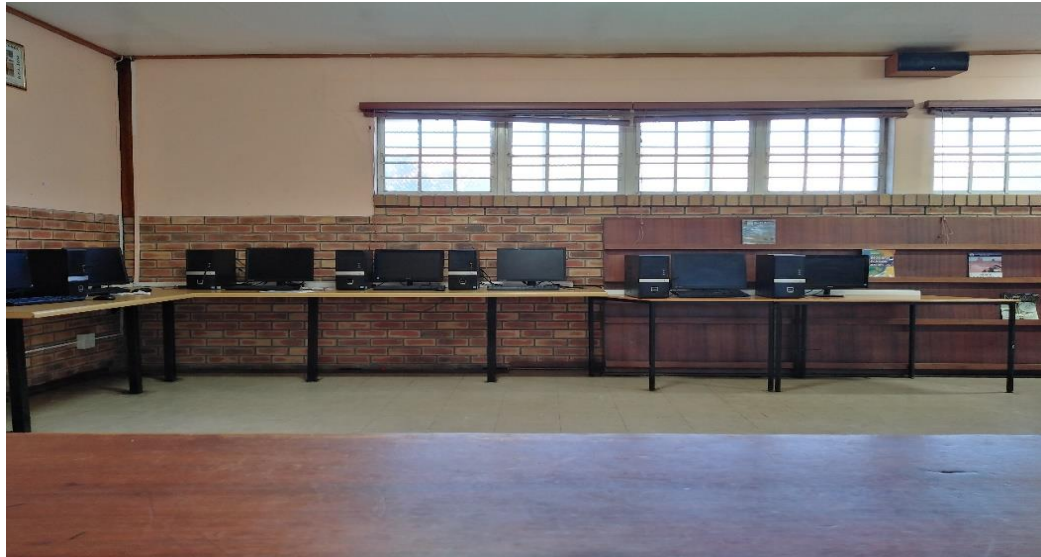


Figure 5 1: Library computers

Source: The picture was taken by the researcher with permission during school visit

5.4.2.2 Internet connection

The library assistant confirmed that the school had Wi-Fi connectivity. It was revealed that learners mostly use computers in the computer laboratory to search for information and to type their assignments. During the visit, the researcher met with the school intern who looked after the computer laboratories. He mentioned that there were three computer laboratories in the school. The first lab had 54 computers, the second lab had 34 computers and the third lab had 19 computers. In total, the school had 107 computers in the laboratories. Furthermore, he mentioned that all the computers were working and connected to the internet. He also mentioned that his responsibilities included: providing basic ICT skills training; guiding learners through the information search process; ensuring that they understood how to properly use the computers.

Learners were asked if they used the computers in the labs to do their school work. Here are some of their responses:

Grade 8 learner#9: I use the computers to type my assignments and search the internet for more information about the topic.

Grade 8 learner#6: Besides doing my school work, I also use the computers to search for music trends.

5.4.2.3 Printers

The researcher noticed that there were no printers in the library. The library assistant was asked if there were printers allocated to learners in the school. Her response was, “no, there are no printers allocated for learners in the school, instead, there is a container outside school premises where they do their printing”. She explained that it is a private business owned by a community member. However, she revealed that there were printers in one of the offices in the administration building, but those printers were used by teachers and administration staff for work purposes.

5.4.2.4 Projector

It was observed that there was a projector in the library. However, the projector was used by teachers to teach their subject lessons in the library. The library assistant mentioned that there was only one projector in the school, and it was used for teaching purposes.

5.5 Observations and document analysis

This section presents a review of documents that the researcher observed during the school visit. Those documents are: the school’s timetable; book checkout slip; old books; old video cassettes; projector and computer laboratory.

5.5.1 School Library

During the course of school visits, it was observed that the library opened at 8 am and closed at 5 pm. However, it was not open to perform library duties. It was either opened to accommodate teacher assistants or to provide shelter to learners on cold and rainy days. There was no system that managed the use of the library, learners came and went as they pleased. There were a few learners who were spotted doing school work in the library. As previously mentioned, the school library was not big enough to accommodate more than one class of 45 learners at a time. See Figure 5.2.



Figure 5 2: School Library

Source: The picture was taken by the researcher with permission during school visit

5.5.2 Library rules and regulations

The researcher observed that there were rules pasted on the shelves but they were not clearly visible. The library assistant was asked if the learners and teachers knew the rules and regulations in the library. She mentioned that, although, some of the rules were printed and pasted on the shelves, unfortunately, the learners disobeyed them. As a result, learners used the library as a meeting space for chats, as an eating space, and as shelter on rainy days. See Figure 5.3.

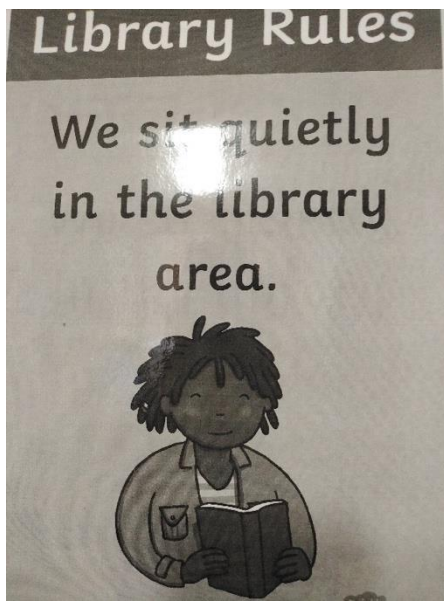


Figure 5 3: Library rules

Source: The picture was taken by the researcher with permission during school visit

5.5.3 Library study period

The researcher observed that there was a timetable showing that class visits were from 11:00 to 11:50 and that two grades visited at the same time. For clarity, the researcher asked the library assistant to explain the time slots in the timetable. She mentioned that classes used to alternate weekly; for example, if one grade visited this week then the following week it would be the other grade's turn. She explained that she had not designed the timetable, and that she had never used it because learners had stopped using the library during the library period. Refer to Figure 5.4.

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
07:30- 08:00	Library Admin	Library Admin	Library Admin	Library Admin	Library Admin
11:00- 11:50	Grade 12,11	Grade 10,9	Grade 8	Grade 12,11	
14:45- 17:00	Afternoon Reading	Afternoon Reading	Afternoon Reading	Afternoon Reading	

Figure 5 4: Luhlaza High School’s timetable

Source: The picture was taken by the researcher with permission during a school visit

5.5.4 Loan records

It was revealed during interviews with the library assistant that the school did not have a lending policy. The library assistant explained that she designed a book checkout slip so that learners could borrow the books. She mentioned that she usually loaned books for 2 to 3 weeks at a time. The time period to keep the books was given by the library assistant at her discretion. Although it was written in the slip that after filling in details, the slip should be placed in a box, the researcher did not see the box and there were no learners borrowing books during the visit. See Figure 5.5.

BOOK CHECKOUT SLIP

First name _____

Last name _____

Teacher _____

Title of Book: _____

Barcode number: _____

Please leave this slip in the box.
Thank you for checking out your book!

Figure 5 5: Book checkout slip

Source: The picture was taken by the researcher with permission during a school visit



5.5.5 Library books

During the school visit, the researcher observed that the library was stocked with few textbooks on subject disciplines. It was discovered that a good number of the books in the library were old and no longer relevant to the curriculum. The books were not catalogued or classified; as a result, they were not properly shelved. In this situation, learners were encouraged to use their community library for further readings and also to use the internet to search for more information.

5.5.6 Audio visual equipment

It was observed that the library had old video cassettes and a projector in the library, which the library assistant confirmed. She mentioned that she had tested the cassettes and none of them worked. See Figure 5.6.

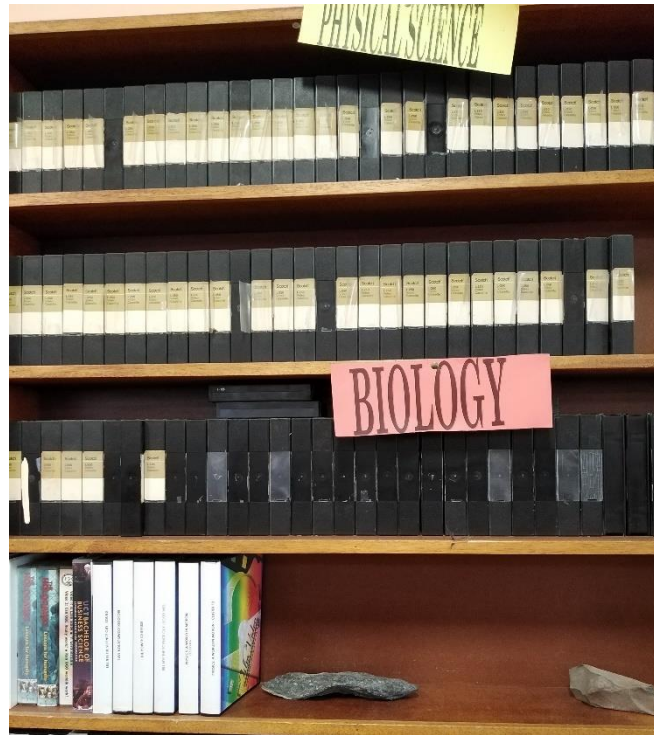


Figure 5 6: Old video cassettes

Source: The picture was taken by the researcher with permission during a school visit

5.6 Interview conducted with the library assistant

The responses of the library assistant were helpful in answering some of the research questions because she had an overview of the library operations. The research questions included: How do learners and teachers access library resources in the school library? What is the nature of the school library's information resources? Do you think learners and teachers are satisfied with the information resources that the library has? Appendix G lists the semi-structured interview questions put to the library assistant.

5.6.1 Introduction

The literature confirms that qualified school librarians are recognised as leaders in supporting literacy initiatives in schools. Based on this assumption, the researcher wanted to find out if the school library was staffed with a qualified librarian. It was revealed during interviews that the library was staffed with one person who reported to the school principal. The person in charge had a national diploma in architecture and a Bachelor of Technology in construction. She did not have any previous experience in librarianship. She worked as a tutor for a non-profit

organisation called “help2Read”, that promoted literacy development in schools. However, the person was employed as a library assistant through a programme directed by the Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) in partnership with the Western Cape Department of Education (WCED). The aim of the programme was to revive school libraries that had not been functioning in the past five years. The library assistant had been in this position for a year. Fortunately, the researcher met with the library assistant a week before the end of her contract.

5.6.2 Nature of the school library’s information resources

During the school visit, the researcher observed that the library was stocked with a few textbooks on the subjects offered in the school. In response to a question about the school library information resources, the library assistant mentioned that:

The books in the library are very old, most of them are outdated and irrelevant, but I encourage the learners to borrow the books for reading purposes to improve their vocabulary. We sometimes get book donations from the community but they are also old books. We do have a handful of relevant books that learners use for assignments and project work but they are not enough to cater for all. We also have old videos ... which are no longer working but they are just kept in the library.

To check if the library had an accession register, the researcher asked the library assistant if the library had a record of the number of library items in its collection. The library assistant mentioned that:

Unfortunately, there is no accession register that I know of that shows the number of the books in the library. I have not done stock-taking due to COVID-19 interruptions and there was no accession register given to me when I started working in the library. I cannot really tell the number of books we have in our library.

Nonetheless, the library assistant confirmed that the library had fiction and nonfiction books. The fiction included a few novels while the non-fiction comprised mostly textbooks, periodicals and reference books. See Table 5.2.

Table 5. 2: Material available in the library

Subject text books	Reference & leisure books	Audio
Home economics	Encyclopaedia	CD-ROM/DVD-ROM
History	Dictionaries	
Mathematics	Britannica Science Exploration	
Life orientation	Personal and social education	
Business management	Communication	
English	Fiction books	
Political science		
IsiXhosa		
Economics		
Biology		

5.6.3 Accessibility and utilisation of school library information resources

For an effective learning process, it is vital that learners have access to a well-resourced and effective, functional school library to construct new knowledge. In view of this, a question was put to the library assistant: how do learners and teachers access library resources in the school library? In responding, the library assistant mentioned that:

I understand that access to information resources is vital, however, we do not have a proper system in our library. Learners use the library during break time, either to do academic work, meet with friends or for leisure. Most of them lack knowledge of the use of the library. They struggle to get necessary resources that are relevant to their subject topics. This is due to, poor arrangement of books on shelves, poor labelling of books and a non-existing library system. My challenge is that I am not a qualified librarian, therefore I struggle to do proper shelving. The library is accessible to teachers although they only use it when they want to use the projector for teaching purposes, they don't really know what we have and how to access the resources. However, some teachers browse through our collection, and that is only if they are interested in a certain book.

5.6.4 Library budget and acquisition of library resources

Ideally, a school library should provide access to a wide range of physical and online resources to meet the needs of the users. The IFLA Guidelines (2015) stipulate that “a school library should include a collection of professional resources, both for the school library staff and for the teachers”. Based on this, a question about the method of selection and acquisition of library resources was posed. In response, the library assistant mentioned that:

Our school library does not have a budget to purchase information resources, we depend on donations. We receive donations from individuals or members of the community. One of our responsibilities as library assistants employed by the Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) was to work or assist the librarian. Unfortunately, I work alone with no guidelines or policies. Therefore, I do what I think is best for library users. We did a programme with the Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) which taught us strategies for sourcing resources from other organisations. However, as mentioned before, those avenues are supposed to be led by a teacher librarian or qualified librarian. In most cases, school librarians borrow books from Education Library and Information Service (EDULIS) in the Western Cape Education Department. However, you must be a registered member to qualify for that service, preferably a teacher or school librarian. Teachers are allowed to borrow 10 books for a duration of 28 days and [these] may be extended twice for a period of 28 days each time. As for me, I do not qualify to borrow books from EDULIS because I am not a teacher nor a librarian. Those are the challenges I am faced with at the moment.

5.6.5 Library study period

The researcher noticed that there was a timetable posted on the library door with time slots for each grade. However, during the visit to the school, the researcher did not witness learners coming to the library during those time slots. Therefore, a question to the library assistant was asked for clarity. Her response was that:

Learners told me that they used to have a library period for each grade, but that stopped before my arrival at the school. Instead, I started reading sessions during lunchtime and

after school. The time to interact with the learners is limited; I find it difficult to design library programmes such as information literacy, spelling bee and reading competitions.

5.6.7. Loan records of the library

The researcher enquired about the lending process of the information resources. The library assistant mentioned that:

First of all, we do not have a library system to perform library services, the school does not have a budget for that. When I started here a year ago, I created a form or book checkout slip whereby learners fill in their personal details and the details of the book they wish to borrow from the library. I do everything manually. There is no lending policy, therefore, learners are allowed to keep the books for two weeks, I do that at my discretion. However, there is a fine if a book gets lost, learners are required to replace the book either by buying it or paying the market value to the school.

5.6.8 Collaboration between teachers and school librarian

The National Guidelines (SADBE, 2012) recognise the importance of collaboration between teachers and librarians. Therefore, the services and activities of the school library should be under the direction of professional staff with the same level of education as the classroom teacher. However, Luhlaza High School library was staffed with one person who had no professional qualification in librarianship. During the interview the library assistant mentioned that she had previously worked with learners, running a programme that promotes reading. That was before she assumed the position at the school as a library assistant. The researcher wanted to find out from the library assistant if she collaborated with the teachers in the school. The library assistant mentioned that the teacher who involved her when preparing for her lesson was the history teacher. Other than that, she would correspond with other teachers only when they wanted to use the library for their teaching lessons.

5.7 Interview with the school principal

This section presents the findings of the interview with the principal of Luhlaza High School. See Appendix I for the interview questions. The school principal is seen as having a direct

influence on the effectiveness of the library. Principals serve as instructional leaders of their schools; therefore, the interview was important in answering key areas such as: the budget; importance of a school library; employing a qualified librarian; information resources; acquisition; access.

5.7.1 Background information

The principal mentioned that the library was built from inception of the school in 1989. Some of the books were donated on the opening day of the school by various donors. The school once had a partnership with Nampak. It was from that partnership that they had a librarian in charge of the library. It was not clear whether the person in charge had been a qualified librarian. Nampak was responsible for paying a stipend to the person in charge of the library. Some of the book collections were donated by Nampak. Unfortunately, Nampak had financial constraints, the organisation had to retrench some of its employees, and therefore they had to end the partnership with the school.

5.7.2 Library budget and acquisition of library resources

The researcher asked the principal if there was a budget allocated for the acquisition of library resources. Contrary to what the library assistant said, the principal mentioned that the norms and standards provide a budget for the acquisition of library material. However, it was not clear if the budget was enough to cater for the needs of the library. According to the framework for the supply and management of learning and teaching support material (LTSM), “[s]chools are required to use their full LTSM allocation to purchase LTSM and library items to create a text-rich environment that will support and strengthen curriculum implementation in the classroom” (Western Cape Education Department, 2021, p. 20). When asked whether the budget was used to purchase library resources, the principal mentioned that the school did not have a qualified librarian to take over that responsibility. She further mentioned that the librarian employed by Nampak used to advise on the collection and other library materials to purchase. Unfortunately, since the end of the partnership, the school had not been purchased new resources. As a result, the library contained inadequate and outdated books. When the researcher asked the principal what could be done about buying new information resources for the library, the principal responded that:

The school is in need of a qualified librarian that is going to take care of the library's needs. I would like to have eBooks and relevant research books so that the learners can sit, read and do their research work. Unfortunately, there is nobody to carry that task at the moment and the school is not in a position to employ one due to financial constraints.

5.7.3 Importance of a school library

The IFLA/UNESCO Manifesto (International Federation of Library Association (IFLA, 1999) emphasises the importance of creating effective school libraries to function successfully in today's information and knowledge-based society in order to equip students with lifelong learning skills. The school principal agreed with the manifesto, and she acknowledged the importance of the school library. She mentioned that the school library was there to provide access and support to teachers and learners with a variety of information resources. She further mentioned that access to library information resources was key in the teaching and learning environment. Although the library faced some challenges that hindered its effective use, she understood the value and importance of having a functional school library. Some of the major challenges were lack of funds, absence of a qualified librarian and inadequate information resources. Otherwise, the principal had a clear understanding that equitable access to information resources and opportunities for learning was crucial.

5.7.4 Nature of the library's information resources

The purpose of the school library has been to support teaching and learning with access to information resources throughout the school community. Therefore, the resources should cater to and fulfil the needs of library users. The researcher observed that the library was stocked with few textbooks on the subjects that the school offered. In terms of the nature of the school library's information resources, the principal mentioned that:

Some of the books in the library are old but there are relatively new books as well. The challenge is that the school does not have a qualified librarian or a dedicated person that is looking after the library at the moment. The school does not have the budget to hire a librarian or a person to look after the library. For that reason, purchasing new books has not been taking place for quite some time. The library resources are not enough to cater for the needs of learning and teaching in the school.

5.7.5 Accessibility and utilisation of school library information resources

The researcher observed that the books were shelved in a disorganised manner with no catalogue to facilitate access to information or the retrieval of information resources. The researcher wanted to find out from the principal if the resources were easily accessible and fully utilised by the learners and teachers. The principal confirmed that resources were disorganised. They were supposed to be arranged on the shelves according to subject discipline for easy retrieval. However, it was observed that when learners returned the books, they put them in any available space regardless of the subject or shelf number. The principal acknowledged the need to update the information resources for easy retrieval to support learning and teaching. She agreed that the library was not fully functioning according to the National Guidelines (SADBE, 2012). She acknowledged that the library needed intervention, and added that:

Our library is accessible to learners and teachers although it is not fully functioning and is faced with some challenges that hinder the effective use of the library. Nonetheless, learners use the library for their school work with the few available resources. They use it to conduct research for their projects. Teachers use the library for online teaching. Our books are not accessioned and classified, which makes it difficult for teachers and learners to access them.

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5.7.6 Library staff

The role of the librarian is crucial in the effectiveness of school libraries. The researcher wanted to find out if the person in charge of the library was a qualified school librarian. In her response, the principal mentioned that the school did not have a qualified librarian, the library was managed by a library assistant with a national diploma in architecture and a Bachelor of Technology in construction. In addition, the principal further explained that:

We used to have a librarian that was employed by Nampak, who was a funder and a partner to the school. The librarian provided support to the learners, they used to have a library period during school hours. The librarian supported information literacy initiatives, there were a lot of activities happening in the library. Learners were guided on how to search for relevant information for their school projects. Unfortunately, the partnership ended due to financial problems. Nampak was no longer in a position to

support the partnership, that was the last time the school had a librarian. The school cannot afford to employ a librarian, there is no budget for that. Nampak was paying a stipend to the person in charge of the library. We then received help from the department of education, library assistants were employed to assist in school libraries. Unfortunately, the term for the library assistant we had has come to an end. That means we do not have anybody assigned to look after the library at the moment. I asked the teacher assistants to be in the library when they have free periods. However, the library became chaotic, learners go to the library to sit and eat their lunch or make noise. I have noticed that the learners do not respect teacher assistants. Therefore, I decided to lock the library till I figure out what to do or how to manage the situation.

5.7.7 Library study period

The researcher observed that there was a timetable posted on the library door. For clarity, the researcher wanted to find out whether the learners used the time slots. In her response, the principal mentioned that previously the school used to have a librarian who took care of the library operations. Learners used to visit the library during the allocated time, unfortunately, there was no librarian to carry out that task at the moment. Then the school principal was asked about her plan to ensure that learners had time to use the library during those allocated timetable slots. Her response was that in order for the school to fulfil that task, a qualified librarian was needed to manage the library on a daily basis.

The researcher also wanted to find out if the principal used the school library information resources when preparing for lessons, if yes, how often and for what purpose. The principal mentioned that she did not necessarily visit the library all the time. This means she did not use the library information resources to prepare for her lessons. She mentioned that she used the library when she wanted to use the projector, not the physical books. However, she mentioned that she encouraged the learners to use the few resources in the library.

5.7.8 User satisfaction with library information resources

The goal of a school library is to provide information resources that satisfy the needs of an information seeker. Therefore, it is important that the library is equipped with resources that support the academics of the learners. The researcher wanted to find out from the principal if she was satisfied with the state of the library. She mentioned that she was not satisfied with the

state of the school library at the moment. She mentioned that more relevant books were needed in the library, especially e-books and research books in line with the curriculum. She also mentioned that she would like to see the library fully functioning so that the learners could be exposed to a variety of information resources that would contribute to their general well-being.

5.8 Interviews with the teachers

This section presents the findings of the interviews with the teachers (see Appendix H for the questions). Generally, teachers play a major role in empowering learners to become critical thinkers and they impart knowledge that equips learners with life learning skills. Therefore, teachers were purposely included in the study to clarify some research questions.

5.8.1 Role of a school library

The researcher wanted to know the views of the teachers on the role and importance of the school library, and also know if they thought it necessary for a school. All the teachers interviewed expressed their views. They mentioned that it was important to have a school library, especially if it was equipped with necessary resources that enhanced teaching and learning. Although they understood that their school library faced challenges that hindered effective use of the library, and they agreed that those challenges did not detract from the importance of a school library. Some responses from the teachers:

Life science teacher G12 - mentioned that:

It is necessary for the school to have a fully functioning library, however despite the challenges I still give learners some tasks that need to be researched so I encourage them to use it as much as possible.

Life Orientation G12 -

It is necessary to have a school library, especially a fully functioning library. It is very useful because whatever topic you teach; you can always refer learners to the library for further readings.

5.8.2 Use of school library

The researcher wanted to find out from the teachers if they visited the library when preparing for their lessons, and to find out if they took their classes to the library. Responses from the teachers were:

Life orientation G12 teacher –

I visit the library often; I take the learners to the library when I want them to watch some videos. Sometimes I visit the library when they are doing their assignments to guide them when they are searching for information on the internet. I don't really use the library to prepare for my lessons, I use the information that is loaded on our laptops by the department.

History teacher G12 -

As a history teacher, I visit the library once a week, to use the projector. There are lots of documentaries to watch that are in line with the curriculum, therefore I take the learners depending on the topic we are busy with. However, I don't use the library when preparing my lessons.

IsiXhosa teacher G8 -

It is necessary to have a school library, it contributes to teaching and learning. However, due to a lack of information resources in our school library. I only visit the library when I want to use the projector, other than that, there is no information that I can use that is in line with the subject I teach.

Life science G12 –

I do not visit the library, there are no books relevant to my subject. I don't take the learners to the library, if I need to use the projector I use the portable ones, so there is really nothing for me to use in the library.

5.8.3 Seeking information resources beyond the school library

Teachers in schools are the ones who deal directly with students during the course of teaching and learning. Therefore, the researcher wanted to know from the teachers if they sent the learners to seek information beyond the school library.

Life science G12 teacher mentioned that:

I encourage the learners to go and seek more information in the community library to expand their understanding of the subject.

I don't send the learners to our school library because the library does not have relevant books for my subject, instead, I encourage them to search the internet for further reading.

IsiXhosa teacher G8 -

I encourage my learners to use the local library because there are no resources that cater for their studies in our school library.

I don't even know what is in the library because the last time I checked there were old books that are irrelevant to the curriculum.

History teacher G12 –

I encourage the learners to make use of the books we have in the library; however, I also encourage them to use the public library so that they get information about the topic from different sources.

Life Orientation teacher G12 –

As a teacher, I encourage the learners to make use of the Wi-Fi to search for more information about the subject, I also encourage them to use their public libraries for further readings.

5.8.4 User satisfaction with library information resources

User satisfaction with the library is key. Teachers were asked if they were satisfied with the information resources in the library. All four teachers interviewed mentioned that they were dissatisfied with the resources in the library. They also voiced concern that the resources in the library did not contribute to teaching and learning in the school.

5.8.5 Accessibility and utilisation of school library information resources

Teachers were asked how they accessed the library's resources. Usually, teachers use school libraries to enhance the curriculum knowledge of their teaching subjects. In responding to this

question, three teachers (IsiXhosa, Life Sciences and Life Orientation) shared the same sentiment, that the school library was not equipped with information and resources that supported effective teaching and learning. Therefore, they only accessed and used the library for teaching purposes, and not necessarily for library activities. However, the history teacher mentioned that she often accessed and used the library and information resources. She also mentioned that she encouraged learners to use history books available in the library. Life Orientation teacher G12 mentioned that it was difficult to access the books in the library because they were not classified and there was no library catalogue or system to help the learners to locate the books on the shelves.

5.8.6 Necessary information resources to facilitate school work

Generally, school libraries play a unique role in promoting and supporting teachers and the curricula as they navigate the system in search of useful information. The researcher asked the teachers if the library had the necessary materials to facilitate their work. There was nothing much said by the teachers in their response. In separate interviews, they all mentioned that the library did not have the updated resources to match the changes in the curriculum.

5.8.7 School libraries add value to teaching and learning

During a visit to the school, the researcher did not witness teachers bringing learners to the library for further reading. That is why the researcher wanted to find out if the teachers thought that the library added value to student life, if yes, did they see any improvement in students' learning if they used the school library's information resources? Responses from the teachers were:

IsiXhosa teacher G8- I see improvement when they use the library for group discussions not necessarily using information resources.

History teacher G12 – The library adds value to student life because when I send them to the library for further readings, that boosts their confidence especially if they find the information that they were looking for. I also see improvement in marks for those learners that use the library for their school projects.

Life Orientation teacher G12 – The library adds value to the student life, I also see improvement in those learners that use the internet in the library to search for more information.

Life Science teacher grade 12 – A fully functioning library add value to the student’s life, I see improvement for those who use the internet to search for more resources.

5.8.9 Collaboration between school librarian and teachers

The power of collaboration between school librarians and teachers has been discovered as an effective tool to equip learners to become effective, ethical users of information. The researcher wanted to find out from the teachers if they collaborated with the library assistant. Three teachers admitted that they did not collaborate with the library assistant. Only one teacher indicated that she sometimes collaborated with the library assistant. Verbatim responses from the teachers:

Life orientation teacher G12

At the moment we do not have a school librarian but we used to have a librarian so when I gave learners assignments, I used to collaborate with the librarian. I used to check the information that is available and requests that she makes those resources available for the learners. Unfortunately, that stopped when the librarian left.

The researcher asked for clarity from the life orientation teacher when she mentioned that she used to use the resources available for her subject in the library. The researcher wanted to know what happened to those resources. Her response was that:

The library had few books that were relevant with the curriculum at that time, unfortunately, curriculum changes so we don’t have relevant books at the moment.

IsiXhosa teacher G8 – mentioned that:

Ever since I came to this school, I have never seen or been introduced to a librarian so there is no one to collaborate with. However, I once checked the books that are in the library, I found out that they are not relevant to my subject.

History G12 – mentioned that:

I collaborate with the library assistant, when I give learners assignments and projects, I go to the library to check which books are available for the lesson I am busy with, then

I asked the library assistant to keep those books aside and direct the learners when they go to the library for further reading.

Life sciences G12 – mentioned that:

Unfortunately, I do not collaborate with the library assistant because I do not even know her role in the library. I do not use the library at all because there are no resources that are relevant to my subject.

From the responses of the teachers, it was not clear why the other teachers mentioned that they did not have any idea that the school had a library assistant or someone looking after the library.

In conclusion, responses from teachers during the interviews revealed that they acknowledged that fully functioning school libraries generally contribute to teaching and learning. However, they also acknowledged that their school library was faced with some challenges that hindered its services, though this did not diminish the important role of the school library in teaching and learning.

5.9 Interviews with the focus groups

This section presents findings from the interviews with the learners in the focus groups. The interview questions (see Appendix 1) focussed on questions related to the value of a school library, accessing the information resources, class visits and contribution to their well-being personally and socially.

5.9.1 Importance of a school library

The amount of research and literature on the importance of school libraries worldwide is substantial. School libraries are crucial as they provide learners with lifelong learning skills needed to succeed in life. The researcher wanted to find out from learners in FGDs if they knew the importance of the library and also to find out if they thought it necessary for their school. Here are some responses from the participants in the FGDs:

Grade 8 learner#2 –

It is necessary because I use the library to do my school work after school before I go home.

Grade 9 learner#5 –

School library is important; I have an understanding of how libraries operate from our community library.

Grade 9 learner 1#

It is necessary because we use the space for our group projects, we meet in the library to discuss and also help those that are struggling with the subject.

Grade 9 learner2#:

It is necessary because some of us do not always have data to search for information, so when we are doing our school work we sit in the library and connect to the Wi-Fi.

Grade 10 learner#8 –

The school library is important because we search for information to enhance our learning and do our school homework. However, our school library does not support us with the information resources we need for our projects. Instead, we search the internet and use the library for group discussions, or spend time when we do not have classes.

Grade 11 learner#2 –

The library is important because we get books to read, there are few novels, and we use what is available to us to improve our communication skills.

Grade 12 learner#7 –

Some of us do not have support in our homes, therefore we use the library to do our homework before we go home, to avoid noise in our home environments.

5.9.2 Accessibility and utilisation of school library information resources

The utilisation of information resources depends on the availability of resources in the library. Availability of information resources is of the utmost importance to the learners as it provides them with the necessary IL skills for academic success. Learners in the FGDs were asked about the tools or methods used to access and utilise library resources. In response to the question, the majority of learners from the focus group, grades 8,9,11 and 12 mentioned that they were unaware of the tools used to access the information resources in the library. Some of the learners mentioned that they did not have access to books, and they were not allowed to borrow

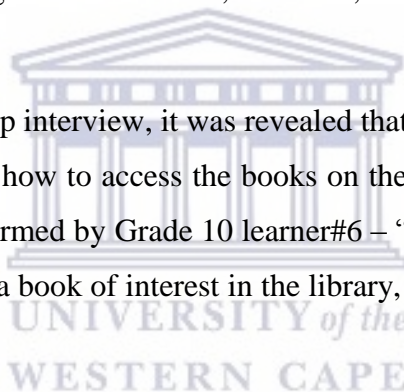
them. During the FGDs, they said that they did not have access to the library resources because there was nobody to guide them in the library. They also mentioned that they wished that the library assistant could have IL sessions with them to explain how to access and utilise the information resources in the library, and to explain the meaning of the numbers on the spine of the book.

However, learners who attended the book club had a different view. They mentioned that they had access to the resources in the library, and they were allowed to borrow the books. It was not clear if the process of access was communicated to all the learners.

Further, some of them who belonged to the book club (Grade 10 respondents) mentioned that Grade 10 learner#2 -We have library book slips that the library assistant created for us for the purpose of borrowing the books.

Grade 10 learner#7 - We belong to the book club; therefore, we are allowed to take books out for reading.

However, during the focus group interview, it was revealed that even those who belonged to a book club, did not really know how to access the books on their own without the help of the library assistant. This was confirmed by Grade 10 learner#6 – “I only borrow the books when we are in the book club if I see a book of interest in the library, however, I do not really know the process”.



5.9.3 User satisfaction with library information resources

The purpose of school libraries is to provide useful and relevant resources and services that satisfy the information needs of the learners. Therefore, the availability and accessibility of information resources influence user satisfaction. In this regard the researcher wanted to find out if the learners were satisfied with the library’s information resources and services in their school library. Responses from the learners in the FGDs revealed that they were not satisfied with the information resources in their library.

Some of the responses from FGDs were:

Grade 9 learner#8 - We are not satisfied with the books in the library. There are few library books that are relevant to our studies.

Grade 10 learner#2 – I wish that the library is stocked with a variety of resources that we need for our class work and project.

Grade 8 learner#1 - We wish to have more novels and magazines to read to improve our reading habits and expand our vocabulary.

5.9.4 Library study period

Despite a timetable posted on the library door, the researcher did not witness any class visits. It is for that reason that the researcher asked the participants in the focus groups if they had scheduled class visits. In response, Grade 11 focus group discussants, agreed unanimously that they used to have a library period once a week when they were in grades 8 and 9, but from grade 10 they stopped going to the library during teaching hours although there was a time slot for a library visit. Some of the responses from other grades were:

Grade 8 learner#4

Time table at the door has been there but we are not really allocated time to go to the library and the reason was never communicated to us.

Grade 9 learner#2

We use the library during break time to finish our school work and discuss the project with other learners.

Grade 11 learner#3

The timetable at the door has been there but we are not really allocated time to go the a library like before. We used to have a library period to go to the library either to finish our projects or school work.

Grade 12 learner#7

We used to have a library period when we were doing grades 8 and 9, so from grade 10 we stopped going to the library during teaching hours although there is a time slot for a library visit.

Learners were asked if they used the computers in the library to search for information for their school work. Responses from the grade 8 and 10 FGDs:

Grade 8 learner#7 - There is a shortage of working computers to accommodate all the learners in the library, as a result, we have to wait in line for a long period of time.

Grade 10 learner#3 – Some of us use the computers in the library after school when most learners [are] not around.

However, FGDs from grades 10 and 11 mentioned that:

Grade 10 learner#5 - We do not have access to the computers in the library, they are used by teacher assistants.

Grade 11 learner#6 - You need to have login details to use the computer, unfortunately not all of us have those details.

However, it was revealed during FGDs that learners who belonged to the book club were allowed to use the computers; they asked for login details and the library assistant would log in for them. They also mentioned that most learners in the school did not use the library; they did not even know if they were allowed to use the computers to search for information for their projects.

5.9.5 School library support for student's well-being

Libraries in general are regarded as spaces of safety. They also play a critical role in addressing young people's health and well-being by providing access to information resources that support mental and emotional health. That means reading material in the library should provide information about life events that affect learners in their daily lives, information that will help them to cope with and recover from emotional traumas they encounter. Sometimes, information needs are influenced by social and cultural backgrounds.

The researcher asked learners in the focus groups: How does the library add value to your well-being (your life and happiness)? Responses from focus group discussants follow:

Grade 12 learner#4: I use the library for peace of mind, I like a quiet space to focus on my daily challenges.

Grade 9 learner#3: I use the library to read books to improve my vocabulary so that I can communicate better.

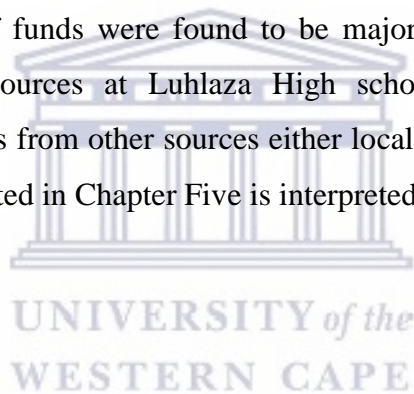
Grade 12 learner#5: The school library does not add any value to my well-being because there are no books that motivate me about life challenges.

Grade 8 learner#3 – There are no books that I can read that motivate me through the life struggles I am faced with

Grade 9 learner#4 - I wish our library can have books that will help us cope with the difficulties we have as teenagers.

5.10 Conclusion

The findings gathered from interviews with the principal, teachers, library assistant and focus groups are presented in this chapter. This chapter has shed light on the challenges that the school faced in terms of managing the operations of a school library. The absence of a qualified librarian, inadequate and irrelevant information resources, absence of a library system, lack of adequate furniture and lack of funds were found to be major factors affecting access and utilisation of information resources at Luhlaza High school. However, learners were encouraged to use the resources from other sources either local libraries or from the internet. In the next chapter, data presented in Chapter Five is interpreted and discussed.



CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the research findings are discussed and interpreted. Babbie and Mouton (2007, p. 101) mention that interpretation of findings helps to make sense of the data collected and to draw inferences that reflect the interest, ideas, and theories that initiated the research inquiry. Additionally, interpretation of findings provides meaning to the study by connecting the research objectives, research questions, theoretical framework, and existing literature (Chawinga, 2019, p. 176). The discussion of the findings is based on the main aim of the study: to assess the access and use of school library information resources by Luhlaza High School learners. This study is guided by a constructivist learning theory and an inquiry-based model. The research questions were answered using the lens of this framework.

6.2. Luhlaza High School library – location, operations, collaboration

This section discusses Luhlaza High School library in terms of its location within the school; library staff and library operations; collaboration between teachers and school librarian.

6.2.1 Location of and accommodation in the school library

The majority of focus group respondents indicated that the library was in a convenient location, and that they found it easy to access for their study needs. The principal also agreed with this opinion. The location of the school library enabled her to monitor activities happening in the library. However, with a seating capacity of 30, the library could not accommodate a large class of learners, resulting in learners overflowing outside the library building. This undermined effective usage of the library by learners. The respondents voiced their frustration regarding the shortage of furniture; they wanted more chairs to accommodate more learners in the library. The National Guidelines (SADBE, 2012, p.18) recommend that the instructional area should have sufficient space with seats that cater for small and larger groups, as well as for all aspects of the library programme.

6.2.2 Library staff

School librarians are regarded as information specialists and instructional leaders of both learners and teachers, because they equip library users with lifelong learning skills through IL skills (AASL, 2018, p.223). At the time of the research, Luhlaza High School library was staffed by a non-qualified librarian who did not have the necessary skills and knowledge to teach IL skills. Numerous studies have demonstrated the positive impact that qualified librarians have on teaching and learning, as the librarians engage in inquiry-based learning experiences that designed to encourage learners to think critically, identify problems and develop strategies for solving problems.

In the constructivist and inquiry-based learning environment, librarians are regarded as facilitators and mediators who guide learners to discover useful information as they interact with library information resources to complete their academic tasks (Sternberg & Williams 2010). Therefore, school librarians are encouraged to adopt a more outcomes-focussed practice that encourages learners to take control of their own learning by exposing them to a well-resourced school library to construct new knowledge. Unfortunately, that was not the case at Luhlaza High School. Learners did not have proper guidance on how to use library services such as access and utilisation of information resources in the library due to the lack of a qualified librarian. The National Guidelines (SADBE, 2012, p.19) state that a school library should be under the management of a qualified teacher librarian, a person with a dual qualification (library science and teaching qualification). In that way, the role of a school library, which is to facilitate teaching and learning, will be fulfilled. Numerous studies across Africa have identified the issue of recruiting unqualified personnel as a hindrance to implementing services that allow learners to think critically, evaluate and construct new knowledge. Both Shonhe (2019, p.4) and Olajide and Zinn (2020, p.174) discuss the challenges and constraints faced by school libraries in developing countries.

6.2.3 Operations and effective use of school library

In order to test whether the school library was effective, the researcher gathered and analysed data on library operations such as library rules and regulations, operating hours, book loans, and library study periods. Almost all the respondents in the FGDs stated that the rules were not visible in the library; therefore, most learners did not even know that they existed. In this

regard, the participants wished to have library orientation to explain the rules and guide them on what is expected when they use the library. There are learners who attended a book club. They had a slightly better understanding of library rules and regulations. However, from the responses, it was clear that there was a lack of communication within the entire school community.

The school library opens at 8 am and closes at 5pm. However, it was not necessarily open for library operations. Rather, it accommodated other school activities. There was a timetable on the library door with time slots for each grade. However, during the visit to the school, the researcher did not observe learners coming to the library during those time slots. The library assistant indicated that the library did not have a library system to perform library functions such as book loans. Lack of library policy affected the lending services because there were no guidelines stating lending periods and fines if the book exceeded the lending duration.

6.3 Collaboration between Teachers and School Librarians

The National Guidelines (SADBE, 2012, p. 18) mention that collaboration between teachers and teacher librarians strengthens the quality of IL skills across the school curriculum. Research shows that when librarians and teachers collaborate, they provide opportunities and encourage learners to construct knowledge to build their own understanding and meaning from the available library resources. The power of collaboration between school librarians and teachers has been shown to be an effective tool to equip learners to become effective, ethical users of information (Kachel, 2017). Unfortunately, during the interviews with the teachers, it was revealed that most of them did not understand the concept of collaboration, which could be attributed to the absence of a qualified librarian. Only the grade 12 history teacher indicated that she sometimes liaised with the library assistant to direct learners to the books that they should be looking for in the library for their project work. When collaboration takes place, it is easy to identify knowledge gaps when learners conduct information searches; then both parties create ways and guidance on how to access and select useful information from a wide variety of information resources. Therefore, collaboration with teachers can create an environment that allows students to inquire, participate and create new information (Kuhlthau, 2010, p. 3).

6.4 Nature of the school library's information resources

The information resources at the school are inadequate, and are not in line with the curriculum. Various researchers agreed on the importance of adequate information resources that would meet the needs of the users and support the school curriculum (Usman, 2016, p.30). However, at Luhlaza school library the majority of the books were old and irrelevant with only a few textbooks relevant to the curriculum. This is contrary to the IFLA Guidelines (2015) which state that school library information resources should be updated to meet the needs of the learners and teachers, and to enable both to select from a wide variety of relevant resources for the school curriculum. Despite the recommended guidelines, most of the information resources in Luhlaza High School library were irrelevant to the curriculum, and did not support teaching and learning. That was confirmed by the teachers. Due to this challenge, learners and teachers were discouraged from seeking information resources in the library. School libraries are expected to provide adequate information resources that support teaching and learning according to constructivism and inquiry-based learning theory. It was worrisome to note that the school had a well-built library structure, but contained few useful resources. The principal acknowledged the status of irrelevant information resources, and she also mentioned that the person temporarily assigned to look after the library did not have clear knowledge of the resources that an effective library should contain.

6.5 Acquisition of library materials

The library did not have enough budget to acquire information resources. The principal claimed that the school still had old books due to the absence of a qualified librarian to carry out the responsibility of ensuring that the library was stocked with relevant books that would enhance learning and teaching. However, the library assistant mentioned that while the school was faced with budget constraints, there was a way of borrowing books from the Education Library and Information Services (EDULIS) of the WCED. However, there were limitations, because service was only available to a qualified librarian or a teacher. The researcher noticed lack of communication between the principal and library assistant. It was not clear whether the principal knew about the process of borrowing books from EDULIS, as mentioned by the library assistant.

From the interview with the principal, it was clear that there was no school library policy in place that could guide the school on how to acquire and develop a collection relevant to the

curriculum. However, it was confusing, because the framework for the supply and management of learning and teaching support material (LTSM) mentions that schools are required to use 10% of the LTSM allocation to purchase library resources such as fiction and non-fiction books, reference books, posters, DVDs, CDs and multi-media (Department of Education, 2021). The framework further mentions that every school must have a policy stating when and how the annual stock-take will be conducted, and these policies should be kept in the principal's office.

School librarians have special expertise in the guided inquiry. They are expected to formulate the policy that caters for the improvement of information resources that are well organised and relevant to the entire school community. In view of this, it would be ideal if the government could provide school libraries with adequate funding to buy relevant information resources that meet the academic needs of the learners. It is also advisable that the school should have a plan about how to implement educational policy goals by providing adequate and relevant resources through selection, acquisitions and processing of information resources for the school community (Olajide, 2019, p. 177).

6.6 Access and use of resources by the learners and teachers

The researcher observed that the books were shelved in a disorganised manner, and without a catalogue to facilitate access and retrieval of information resources. One of the responsibilities of the school librarian is to guide learners through the inquiry process when they are looking for information resources. Learners from the FGDs mentioned that they did not know how to easily access books in the library. Instead, they would go shelf by shelf to check if there were any interesting books. Learners develop confidence and a sense of ownership when they are guided through the enquiry process. They learn the underlying concepts of locating, evaluating and using information resources (Kuhlthau, 2010, p.23). This process facilitates easy retrieval of information needed by the learners and the teachers. In order to achieve that, the importance of access to a well-resourced and functional school library is critical. However, absence of a professional librarian affected access and use of information resources at Luhlaza High School. There was no proper shelving of the books in the library which made it difficult for the learners to search and locate information resources. The principal confirmed that learners found it difficult to locate and access books in the library because they were neither classified nor

catalogued. Cabonero and Dolendo (2013, p.2) confirm that cataloguing is an essential process to provide access to all information resources of the library.

6.7 Satisfaction with library resources for school projects

Satisfying users' needs is the primary objective of school libraries. This requires providing the information resources and services that are relevant to the curriculum. However, the majority of participants in this study were dissatisfied with the information resources housed in their school library. This corroborates the finding of the study conducted by Benard and Dulle (2014, p.7) on the assessment of access to and use of school library information resources in Tanzania. They revealed that learners were not satisfied with the school library information resources. The shortage of books in the library affects learners' academic progress. Learners require relevant information resources that add value to their academic needs and leisure reading. This shows that it is necessary to improve school libraries in secondary schools by providing of sufficient quantity and quality of materials to meet the information need of students.

6.8 The library and learner well-being (personal and social)

Merga (2020, p. 660) defines learner well-being as “a sustainable state of positive mood and attitude, resilience, and satisfaction with self, relationships and experiences at school”. Learner well-being is regarded as an important approach to developing the students' emotional, social and academic abilities. Participants in the FGDs were asked if the library added value to their well-being (personal and social). The majority of the learners mentioned that the library did not add any value to their well-being. However, the researcher noticed that the learners did not understand the library's contribution to their social and personal life besides providing access to academic information resources. The researcher explained to the learners in the FGDs that libraries generally operate as learning and safe spaces that contribute to the well-being of learners. School librarians create an environment that promotes mental health and well-being initiatives. This was explained because learners were not clear about the question. The researcher further explained that, in an effective library, librarians and teachers work together and prepare lessons that touch on areas of healthy minds and bodies such as: ways of dealing with bullying; media and online safety; how to make responsible choices; how to build healthy relationships. That means reading material in the library should provide information about life

events that affect learners in their daily lives, information that will help them to cope and recover from emotional traumas they encounter. In some cases, information needs are influenced by social and cultural backgrounds. In response to the explanation, the learners mentioned that they would appreciate it if the library could stock resources that provided information on how to cope with teenage struggles. They also mentioned that they also wanted the library to stock books about family dynamics because some of them were growing up in toxic environments.

6.9 Challenges affecting effective utilisation of the school library

Challenges participants mentioned prevented the services and operations of the school library from functioning according to acceptable practices (National Guidelines for School Library and Information Services (SADBE, 2012). Some of the challenges mentioned by learners and teachers were: inadequate information resources; poor shelving arrangements; absence of a library system; no library periods; inadequate furniture. The study also revealed that barriers that hinder effective use of school libraries include the lack of a national policy, school library information resources, as well as the lack of understanding by teachers of the role of the library in teaching and learning. The principal and the library assistant mentioned the lack of funds and the absence of library personnel. Lack of a full-time librarian seemed to be a major challenge because a school library without useful resources becomes a wasted space, the school ends up with a range of outdated books, lack of reading space, inadequate furniture, and a non-functioning library system. The school library becomes dysfunctional with nobody to guide learners on how to search for information resources relevant to their school projects. Learners in the FGDs were unaware of the budget constraints the school faced. Learners' and teachers' views on challenges affecting the effective utilisation of the school library are presented in Figure 6.1

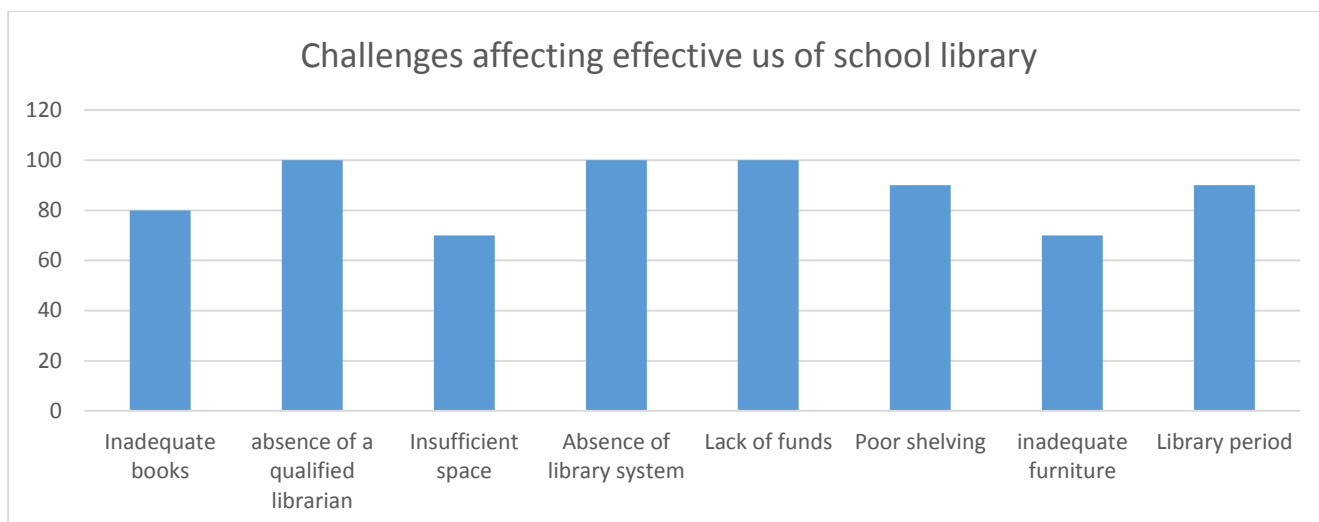


Figure 6 1: Challenges of effective utilisation of the school library

6.10. CONCLUSION

This chapter has interpreted and discussed the findings from qualitative research underpinned by constructivism and inquiry-based learning. The study has established that at the time of the research information resources at Luhlaza high school were inadequate and irrelevant to the current curriculum. The information resources did not support teaching and learning. Learners were discouraged from using the school library, because there was no one to guide them, since the school lacked a qualified librarian. The inadequacy of information resources discouraged the teachers from using the school library to prepare for their teaching lessons. Although the library was accessible as a building, it was not used to teach IL or offer library-related sessions.

The next chapter summarises and concludes the study.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study was to assess the access and use of school library information resources by Luhlaza High School learners. This chapter presents a summary of the findings, answers the research questions, formulates conclusions and recommendations, and recommends areas for further research.

7.2 Summary of research findings

Access to information resources was a challenge to the learners. The resources were outdated and inadequate for the curriculum, and learners were not oriented on how to locate and access the few books available in the library. There was no guidance on how to effectively use the library, because there was no qualified librarian. Some learners were unaware that they could borrow books of interest; only a few learners used that service. The majority of teachers did not use the library because the resources in the library did not support teaching and learning. Lack of funds added to the school's challenges. The school library was not promoting IL. There were no funds to employ a qualified school librarian.

7.3 Answering the research questions

This section answers the research questions of this study, such as the nature of school library information resources, how they were accessed and used by learners, whether the learners were satisfied with the information resources in the library, and whether or not the library added value to the well-being of the learners.

7.3.1 What is the nature of the school library's information resources?

Most of the books in the library were outdated, subject-based text books. The majority of the books were not curriculum related. The fiction books were too few to accommodate the school community. In conclusion, the majority of the books in the school were inadequate and irrelevant to the curriculum.

7.3.2 How are they (information resources) accessed and used by the learners?

The books were not classified; it was difficult for the learners to access them as they were shelved in a disorganised manner. Learners who belonged to a book club could borrow the books using the slip created by the library assistant. However, they would randomly select the books as they saw them on the shelf as there was no library system. The information resources in the library were hard to access.

7.3.3 How satisfied are learners with the assistance library resources provide with school projects?

The study participants were not satisfied with the information resources in the library as they did not support their academic needs. The resources were inadequate and irrelevant to their academic work.

7.3.4 How does the library add value to the well-being (personal and social) of learners in and out of school?

Initially, the learners misunderstood the concept of the library adding value to their wellbeing. Once the concept of well-being was explained, learners mentioned that there were no resources that they could use to cope with their life challenges.

7.4. Conclusions

School libraries are regarded as repositories of information resources, and they should play a significant role in supporting learners with curriculum-related information resources. Therefore, access to school library is vital. Key findings revealed that the school library was stocked with inadequate and irrelevant resources. Learners relied on internet searches for information to complete their school projects. Learners faced many constraints in using the library. This included lack of furniture, especially chairs to accommodate the majority of learners, lack of a professional school librarian to teach IL, lack of relevant information resources to complete their school projects and homework, and dishonouring a library period to learn about library services. Conclusively, learners and teachers were dissatisfied with the information resources available in the library. In view of this, the school management should find ways to ensure that the library is stocked with resources that support teaching and learning

and are in line with the curriculum. The lack of a qualified librarian in the school has had a bad impact, for there is nobody to guide the learners and equip them with useful resources that will help them in school, life and beyond.

7.5 Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered based on the findings of the study:

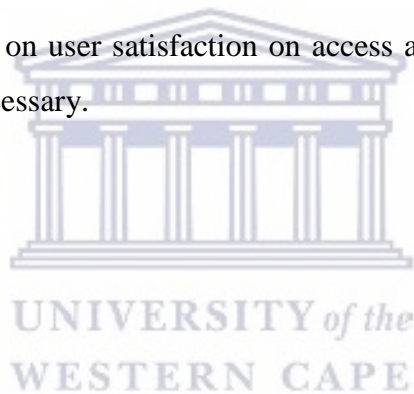
- Employment of a qualified librarian should be prioritised; learners need somebody to guide and teach them IL skills.
- An acquisition policy should be formulated to guide the future librarian on how to buy books and other information resources that cater for the needs of the entire school community.
- Government should prioritise the provision of funds so that the school libraries can obtain current and updated information resources in line with the curriculum.
- Collaboration between teachers and a librarian should be prioritised so that acquisition of information resources is in line with the curriculum.
- All computers in the library should to be fixed and connected to the internet to accommodate learners.
- The library needs more chairs and tables to accommodate more learners at any given time.
- Teachers should encourage learners to use the library even if it is for leisure reading since it has had few subject based books.
- The Librarian or a person in charge should conduct library orientation every year to teach IL skills so that teachers and learners understand the services offered in the library.
- Library period should be honoured so that the librarian can teach information searching to the learners.
- Books need to be classified for easy access.
- The library should be stocked with relevant books that support teaching and learning.
- The principal should ensure that the library period is observed by the teachers and learners.

7.6 Recommendations for further research

Initially, the study sought to discover if learners and teachers at Luhlaza High School had access to and used the school library's information resources.

Based on the research findings of this study, further research is suggested in the following areas:

1. The study only considered one high school. Examining more high schools will provide more insight into the nature of information resources stocked in high schools.
2. Since there was little collaboration taking place between teachers and the library assistant, it is suggested that similar research be conducted to find out if the collaboration yields positive results in making sure that learners' needs are catered for.
3. Further research on whether the library adds value to the well-being of the learners should be conducted.
4. Lastly, further research on user satisfaction on access and use of library information resources is deemed necessary.



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LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Interview schedules

Date	Participant	Venue	Time
22 March 2022	Library assistant	School library	30 minutes
23 March 2022	Grade 11 focus group#1	Classroom	45 minutes
4 April 2022	Grade 9 focus group#2	Library	45 minutes
4 April 2022	Grade 8 focus group#3	Classroom	45 minutes
20 April 2022	Grade 10 focus group#4	School Hall	45 minutes
21 April 2022	Grade 12 focus group#5	Classroom	45 minutes
28 April 2022	Teacher - Life Orientation G12	Classroom	30 minutes
29 April 2022	Teacher – History G12	Staff room	30 minutes
29 April 2022	Teacher - IsiXhosa G8	Classroom	30 minutes
5 May 2022	Teacher – Life Sciences G12	Classroom	30 minutes
5 May 2022	Principal	Principal's Office	30 minutes

APPENDIX B



Directorate: Research

meshack.kanzi@westerncape.gov.za
Tel: +27 021 467 2350
Fax: 086 590 2282
Private Bag x9114, Cape Town, 8000
wced.wcape.gov.za

REFERENCE: 20210914-5892

ENQUIRIES: Mr M Kanzi

Ms Zuthobeke Mvakade
25 Pinetree Avenue
403 Lynwood Gardens
Claremont
Cape Town
7708

Dear Ms Zuthobeke Mvakade,

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: ASSESSMENT OF ACCESS AND USE OF SCHOOL LIBRARY INFORMATION RESOURCES BY LUHLAZA HIGH SCHOOL LEARNERS.

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **1 April 2022 till 30 September 2022**.
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Mr M Kanzi at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number.
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10. The approval of your research request does not imply a promise of any data from the WCED. Should you require data, you will have to request it from the participating schools where it will be possible to secure parental consent.
11. Please note that POPIA prohibits the sharing of personal information without parental consent.
12. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
13. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:
**The Director: Research Services
Western Cape Education Department
Private Bag X9114
CAPE TOWN
8000**

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Meshack Kanzi'.

Meshack Kanzi
Directorate: Research
DATE: 3 May 2022

1 North Wharf Square, 2 Lower Loop Street,
Foresore, Cape Town 8001
tel: +27 21 467 2531

Private Bag X 9114, Cape Town, 8000
Safe Schools: 0800 45 46 47
wcedonline.westerncape.gov.za

APPENDIX C



27 May 2020

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Letter to the teachers

Dear Sir/ Madam,

My name is Zuthobeke Mvakade. I am a Masters student in the Department of Library and Information Science at the University of the Western Cape. I would like to invite you to participate in my research. The topic of my research project is **Assessment of access and use of school library information resources by Luhlaza High School learners**. The proposed research will take the form of the interviews. Participation in the research is completely voluntary. Should you decide to participate, the interview will be arranged at your convenience, time and place to ensure no disruption of the smooth running of the school. Upon completion of my study, the report will be made available to your school.

As no names are required, your identity will remain anonymous. As the consent form indicates, your participation is completely voluntary, your identity remains anonymous, your responses will be kept confidential, and you may withdraw from the study at any time. If you agree to participate, please read and confirm your participation by ticking the consent box.

If you have any questions or concerns or wish to know more about this study, please contact me, Zuthobeke Mvakade at zuthobekem@gmail.com or you could contact my supervisor, Prof Sandy Zinn at szinn@uwc.ac.za. If you have questions about your role as a research participant, you could also contact University of the Western Cape, Office of the Director: Research (Research and Innovation Division), Tel: (021) 959 2988 / 2948, Email: research-ethics@uwc.ac.za

I will appreciate your support

Yours truly,

Zuthobeke Mvakade

Cell: 0730212062

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APPENDIX D



27 May 2020

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Letter to the Librarian

Dear Sir/ Madam,

My name is Zuthobeke Mvakade. I am a Masters student in the Department of Library and Information Science at the University of the Western Cape. I would like to extend an invitation to you to participate in my research. The proposed research will take the form of an interview. The topic of my research project is **Assessment of access and use of school library information resources by Luhlaza High School learners.**

The objectives of my research are to:

- Assess the school library's resources
- Investigate access and use of school library information resources by the learners and teachers
- Determine the level of satisfaction of learners and teachers with school library information resources and services.

Participation in the proposed research is completely voluntary. Should you decide to participate, the interview will be arranged at your convenience, time and place to ensure no disruption of the smooth running of the school. Upon completion of the study, the report will be made available to your school. As no names are required, your identity will remain anonymous. As the consent form indicates, your participation is completely voluntary, your identity remains anonymous, your responses will be kept confidential, and you may withdraw from the study at any time. If you agree to participate, please read and confirm your participation by ticking the consent box.

If you have any questions or concerns or wish to know more about this study, please contact me, Zuthobeke Mvakade at zuthobekem@gmail.com or you could contact my supervisor, Prof Sandy Zinn at szinn@uwc.ac.za. If you have questions about your role as a research participant, you could also contact The Office of the Director: Research (Research and Innovation Division), University of the Western Cape, Tel: (021) 959 2988 / 2948, Email: research-ethics@uwc.ac.za

Your participation in this study is greatly appreciated.

Kind regards,

Zuthobeke Mvakade

Department of Library & Information Science
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Private Bag X17 Bellville 7535 South Africa
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APPENDIX E



27 May 2020

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Letter to the principal

Dear Sir/ Madam,

My name is Zuthobeke Mvakade. I am a Masters student in the Department of Library and Information Science at the University of the Western Cape. I would like to invite you to participate in my research. I have requested permission from the Western Cape Education Department to conduct the research with Luhlaza learners and educators.

The topic of my research project is **Assessment of access and use of school library information resources by Luhlaza High School learners**. The proposed research will take the form of an interview with you. Participation in the research is completely voluntary. Should you decide to participate, the interview will be arranged at your convenience to ensure no disruption of the smooth running of the school. Upon completion of my study, the report will be made available to your school.

As no names are required, your identity will remain anonymous. As the consent form indicates, your participation is completely voluntary, your identity remains anonymous, your responses will be kept confidential, and you may withdraw from the study at any time. If you agree to participate, please read and confirm your participation by ticking the consent box.

If you have any questions or concerns or wish to know more about this study, please contact me Zuthobeke Mvakade at zuthobekem@gmail.com or my supervisor, Prof Sandy Zinn at szinn@uwc.ac.za. If you have questions about your role as a research participant, you could also contact University of the Western Cape's Office of the Director: Research (Research and Innovation Division), Tel: (021) 959 2988 / 2948, Email: research-ethics@uwc.ac.za

I will appreciate your support.

Yours truly
Zuthobeke Mvakade
Cell: 0730212062
Email: zuthobekem@gmail.com

Department of Library & Information Science University of the Western Cape

Private Bag X17 Bellville
7535 South Africa

T: +27 (0) 21 959
2137/2349

jcalvertwood@uwc.ac.za/
szinn@uwc.ac.z



APPENDIX F

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

1. What are your names and in which class are you? (NB! All names will be anonymised in the study)
2. Do you think it is necessary to have a library? Clarify your answer.
3. Do you use the school library? If yes, how often? When do you usually visit the library? Is there a scheduled class visit once a week?
4. Do you use the school library resources to do your project work? How does it help you?
5. Does your teacher normally direct you to the library for further reading? Can you think of an example (a time when this happened)?
6. What else do you use the library for?
7. What type of books do you usually look for in the library? Are you allowed to borrow books? If yes, for how long?
8. What other resources do you usually search for in the library? Are you allowed to borrow these resources?
9. How do you access school library information resources? Is there a catalogue? Do you ask the librarian? Or?
10. Are you satisfied with the library's information resources and services? Elaborate.
11. Do you have access to information resources when you not at school? If yes, how and where do you access these resources?
12. How does the library add value to your well-being (your life and happiness)?
13. What role does the librarian play in your reading habits and school assignments?
14. Which challenges can you identify in using the library?
15. Do you have any other comments regarding your school library? Spell them out.

APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE LIBRARIAN

1. Please state your name and your qualifications.
2. How many years have you been in charge of the school library?
3. Have you had any previous experience in running a school library? Yes [] No []
If yes, how many years? Which school?
4. What are your roles and functions as a librarian?
5. How do you help students when they visit the library?
6. How many students can the library accommodate at a time?
7. What types of books are stocked in the library?
8. Apart from books what other learning materials can be found in the library?
9. How do learners and teachers access library resources in the school library?
10. Do you provide remote access to learners?
11. What is the library budget?
12. How are library resources acquired?
13. Are there other means by which the library is stocked?
14. How often do the students use the library?
15. Are they allowed to borrow the books? If yes, for how long, and how many?
16. What are the opening and closing hours of the library?
17. What do students mostly do when they visit the library?
18. Do you plan programs for students? Yes [] No []
If yes, what programs do you plan for the students?
19. Do teachers use the library?
If yes, for what purpose do teachers use the library?
20. Is there any collaboration between you and the subject teachers?
If yes, what do you collaborate on?
21. In your opinion, do you think learners and teachers are satisfied with the information resources that the library has? Elaborate.
22. In your opinion do you think the library plays a significant role in the teaching and learning process in this school? Explain.
23. What challenges do you face as a librarian in this school?
24. Any comments regarding the school library?

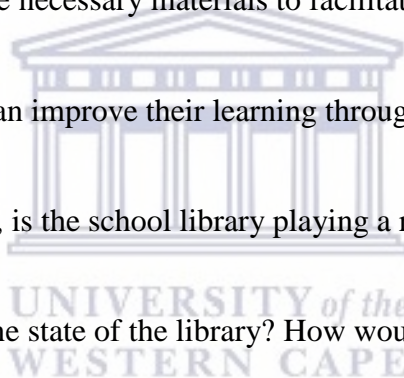
APPENDIX H

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

1. What is your name? [Please be assured that your real name will not be used]
2. What subject/s do you teach?
3. What in your opinion is the role of the school library? Do you think it is necessary?
4. Do you visit the library? If yes, how often? If no, why not?
5. Do you ever take your classes to the library? If yes, for what purpose?
6. Do you use the school library when preparing your lessons?
7. What else do you use the library for?
8. Does the library have the necessary materials to facilitate your work? Elaborate.
9. How do you access the library's resources? Is there a catalogue or do you ask the librarian?
10. What are the types of information resources in the library?
11. Do you refer students to use materials in the library for further reading in your Subject or to complete projects and assignments?
12. Do you see any improvement in students' learning if they use the school library's information resources? Or, do you think the library adds value?
13. Are you satisfied with the information resources and services in the school library?
14. Do you collaborate with the school librarian in your teaching?
15. In your own assessment is the school library playing any role in teaching and learning at this school?
16. Any other comments about the school library?

APPENDIX I
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE PRINCIPAL

1. Do you think it is important to have a library in this school? Elaborate please.
2. Can you tell me about the genesis of this library?
3. What is the budget for the school library?
4. Does the school employ a qualified school librarian? Full time or part-time?
5. Who does the selection of material for the library's collection?
6. Do you visit the library? If yes, how often and for what purpose usually?
7. What kinds of materials are stocked in the library?
8. Do you yourself use the school library information resources and services?
9. Does the school timetable include a regular visit to the library for each class?
10. When are the library resources accessible by the learners and teachers?
11. Does the library have the necessary materials to facilitate academic work in the school?
12. Do you think students can improve their learning through the use of the school library?
13. In your own assessment, is the school library playing a role in teaching and learning of this school?
14. Are you satisfied with the state of the library? How would you like to see the library grow?
15. Any other comment about the library?



APPENDIX J



Consent Form Focus Group

University of the Western Cape

11 June 2020

Dear Participant

I am doing a min-thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master's Degree in Library and Information Science, Department of Library and Information Science at the University of the Western Cape. My study is about assessing access and use of school library information resources by Luhlaza high School learners. The main objectives of this study are to:

- Assess the school library's resources
- Investigate access and use of school library information resources by the learners and teachers.
- Determine the level of satisfaction of learners and teachers with school library information resources and services.

To fulfil the above, I request your assistance to participate in the focus group interview to be conducted at a date to be confirmed. If you agree to voluntarily take part in the above study, please fill in the following form:

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and have understood the information sheet explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline. (If I wish to withdraw, I may contact the lead researcher at any time)
3. I understand my responses and personal data will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymized responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the reports or publications that result for the research.
4. As a focus group discussion participant, I will not discuss or divulge information shared by others in the group, or the researcher, outside of this group.
5. I agree to have the interview or group discussion audio-recorded.
6. I agree that the data collected from me may be used in future research.
7. I agree to take part in the above research project.

[Since this is a sample form, you do not need to get it signed for the purposes of ethics clearance. It will have to be signed when you actually do your interviews.]

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

(or legal representative)

Name of person taking consent
(If different from lead researcher)

Date

Signature

Lead Researcher
(To be signed and dated in presence of the participant)

Date

Signature

Copies: All participants will receive a copy of the signed and dated version of the consent form and information sheet for themselves. A copy of this will be filed and kept in a secure location for research purposes only. [Enter full names and contact details in the blocks below.]

Researcher:

Zuthobeke Mvakade
Contact: 0730212062
Email: zuthobekem@gmail.com

Supervisor:

Prof Sandy Zinn
University of the Western Cape
, Dept of Library & Information
Science, P/Bag X17, Bellville, 7535
Tel: 021 9592349
szinn@uwc.ac.za

HOD:

Dr Lizette King
University of the Western Cape,
Dept of Library & Information
Science, P/Bag X17, Bellville, 7535
lking@uwc.ac.za



APPENDIX K



Consent Form: Librarian

University of the Western Cape

27 May 2020

Dear Participant

I am doing a Mini Thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master's Degree in Library and Information Science, Department of Library and Information Science at the University of the Western Cape. The topic of my research is **Assessment of access and use of school library information resources by Luhlaza High School learners**. The main objectives of this study are to:

- Assess the school library's resources
- Investigate access and use of school library information resources by the learners and teachers.
- Determine the level of satisfaction of learners and teachers with school library information resources and services.

To fulfil the above, I request your assistance to participate in an interview that will be conducted at a date to be confirmed. Your input is very important in this research. If you agree to voluntarily take part in the above study, please fill in the following form:

Please initial box

8. I confirm that I have read and have understood the information sheet explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.
9. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline. (If I wish to withdraw, I may contact the lead researcher at any time)
10. I understand my responses and personal data will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymized responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the reports or publications that result for the research.
11. I understand that I may decline to be audio-recorded at any point.
12. I agree that the data collected from me may be used in future research.
13. I agree to take part in the above research project.

Name of Participant
(or legal representative)

Date

Signature

Name of person taking consent
(If different from lead researcher)

Date

Signature

Lead Researcher
(To be signed and dated in presence of the participant)

Date

Signature

Copies: All participants will receive a copy of the signed and dated version of the consent form and information sheet for themselves. A copy of this will be filed and kept in a secure location for research purposes only. [Enter full names and contact details in the blocks below.]

Researcher:

Zuthobeke Mvakade
Cell: 0730212062
Email: zuthobekem@gmail.com

Supervisor:

Sandy Zinn
Tel: 021 9592349
szinn@uwc.ac.za

HOD:

Dr Lizette King
021 959 2137
lking@uwc.ac.za



APPENDIX L



Consent Form: Teacher

University of the Western Cape

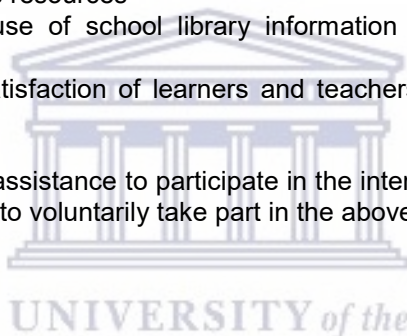
27 May 2020

Dear Participant

I am doing a min-thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master's Degree in Library and Information Science, Department of Library and Information Science at the University of the Western Cape. The topic of my research is **Assessment of access and use of school library information resources by Luhlaza high School learners**. The main objectives of this study are to:

- Assess the school library's resources
- Investigate access and use of school library information resources by the learners and teachers.
- Determine the level of satisfaction of learners and teachers with school library information resources and services.

To fulfil the above, I request your assistance to participate in the interviews that will be conducted at a date to be confirmed. If you agree to voluntarily take part in the above study, please fill in the following form:



Please initial box

14. I confirm that I have read and have understood the information sheet explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.
15. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline. (If I wish to withdraw, I may contact the lead researcher at any time)
16. I understand my responses and personal data will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the reports or publications that result for the research.
17. I understand that I may decline to be audio-recorded at any point.
18. I agree that the data collected from me may be used in future research.
19. I agree to take part in the above research project.

Name of Participant
(or legal representative)

Date

Signature

Name of person taking consent
(If different from lead researcher)

Date

Signature

Lead Researcher
(To be signed and dated in presence of the participant)

Date

Signature

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Researcher:

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Sandy Zinn
Tel: 021 9592349
szinn@uwc.ac.za

HOD:

Dr Lizette King
021 9592137
lking@uwc.ac.za



APPENDIX M



Consent Form: Principal

University of the Western Cape

27 May 2020

Dear Participant

I am doing a min-thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master's Degree in Library and Information Science, Department of Library and Information Science at the University of the Western Cape. My study is about assessing access and use of school library information resources by Luhlaza high School learners. The main objectives of this study are to:

- Assess the school library's resources
- Investigate access and use of school library information resources by the learners and teachers.
- Determine the level of satisfaction of learners and teachers with school library information resources and services.

To fulfil the above, I request your assistance to participate in an interview to be conducted at a date to be confirmed. If you agree to voluntarily take part in the above study, please fill in the following form:

Please initial box

20. I confirm that I have read and have understood the information sheet explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.
21. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline. (If I wish to withdraw, I may contact the lead researcher at any time)
22. I understand my responses and personal data will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the reports or publications that result for the research.
23. I understand that I may decline to be audio-recorded at any point.
24. I agree that the data collected from me may be used in future research.
25. I agree to take part in the above research project.

Name of Participant
(or legal representative)

Date

Signature

Name of person taking consent
(If different from lead researcher)

Date

Signature

Lead Researcher
(To be signed and dated in presence of the participant)

Date

Signature

Copies: All participants will receive a copy of the signed and dated version of the consent form and information sheet for themselves. A copy of this will be filed and kept in a secure location for research purposes only. [Enter full names and contact details in the blocks below.]

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