



Investigating barriers in accessing and utilizing of public library services by learners at Tsakane Public Library

L Shandu



orcid.org 0000-0002-2880-2430

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Supervisor: Dr Y Davids

Graduation: October 2020

Student number: 13109200

DECLARATION

I L.Z.Z. Shandu declare that this dissertation is my original work and all the sources used upon completion of this study has been referenced and cited in the text. This dissertation has not been presented for any degree at any other university.

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Date.....

L.Shandu

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Date.....

Supervisor

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my son Thabo Serame Bonga, for your understanding that your mom was always a student and you have to stay without me from your younger age.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACRL	Association of College and Research Libraries
ANA	Annual National Assessment
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CDs	Compact Discs
CDROM	Compact Disc Read Only Memory
CV	Curriculum Vitae
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
ICT	Information Communication and Technology
LIASA	Library and Information Association of South Africa
LIS	Library and Information Services
N	Population
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
PC	Personal computer
PL	Public Library
OBE	Outcome Based Education
OPAC	Online Public Access Computer Systems
RDP	Reconstruction Development Programme
SANL	South African National Library
SPSS	Social Package for Social Science

ABSTRACT

This study sought to investigate barriers and challenges in accessing and utilising library services by learners at Tsakane public library (Gauteng Province). Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used to conduct this study. Target population included learners who were using the library for their academic school work, who were part of the Focus Discussion Group and also administer questionnaires and the library staff who also administer the questionnaires. Additionally convenience sampling was used to select the learners, while purposive sampling was used to select the staff participants in the study. The study revealed that Tsakane library lack to provide relevant information resources due to limited budget which results into inadequate information resources, strict policies and regulations, operating hours, limited time in using computer and unawareness of the services the library offers. These challenges resulted in learners not having access and use the library. The study indicated that some learners were not given individual attention and proper assistance they require, when it comes to information need and usage due to the shortage of staff. It was recommended that more trained staff should be hired to avoid long wait to be served while staff are busy servicing other patrons. More budgets should be allocated so that more books and other library resources should be purchased.

Keywords

Public library, Tsakane, access, utilization, public library services, learners, information need, usage, staff

CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

Public libraries play an important role in creating literate surroundings and in promoting literacy by offering relevant and attractive reading resources for all ages and all literacy levels and by offering adult and family literacy classes (Krolak, 2010:3). A Public library is defined by Mugwisi, Jiyane and Fombad (2016) as a suitable and appropriate space that is free of charge, conducive to study, creates a learning environment for students and learners and others in order to access information and may be used for group discussions, school assignments and projects (Mugwisi et al., 2016:3).

A public library (PL) is established to make resources available, offer access to information materials and other resources to its users, and make them freely and easily available to all people. According to Omotosho and Okiki (2012:np) library materials in the PLs whether are in the form of hard or soft copy are significant in assisting the patrons. Barriers may differ from learner to learner, but some of the usual barriers identified in the literature that hinder learners from accessing and utilising resources, include physical, geographical, technological, cultural, socio-political and economic factors. Although the PL is the most freely accessible and available place to help learners to access information resources; usage of the PL space is limited. This research seeks to investigate the barriers to access and use of the Tsakane Public Library services by learners in the surrounding areas.

1.2 Problem statement

The problem being investigated in this study is that the public library facilities are available but are underutilised by learners. The PL faces some barriers of its own, which makes the provision of sufficient access to its users impossible. The researcher has observed that the learners do not fully utilise the services provided by the Tsakane Public Library, and seeks to investigate/identify the barriers to full access and utilisation. Despite the fact that the PL has all the resources needed by learners for their school work, the library resources seem to be inaccessible to and underutilised by learners.

The researcher, therefore, wanted to investigate why this is the case and to determine how these barriers can be controlled.

1.3 Research aims, questions and objectives of the study

The aim of the study is to investigate the barriers learners face in accessing and utilising public library services (PLS). For this study, the researcher has opted to formulate both research objectives and research questions. There is one main research question that guide this study namely: -

- What are the barriers encountered by learners in using the library?

Based on the main research question the following sub-questions were formulated: -

- Are the learners aware of the resources available at Tsakane Public Library?
- How often do learners use the library?
- How satisfied are learners with the services they get from library?

1.3.1 Primary objectives

- To investigate if the learners are aware of the resources available at Tsakane Public Library
- To investigate/assess whether the library provides any form of user education to its users
- To determine what information services are currently offered to learners
- To examine the accessibility and usage of PLS by learners

1.3.2 Secondary objectives

- To establish the level of learners' satisfaction with the services rendered by the library

- To determine how learners understand the role of the PL and of librarians
- To make suggestions on how to encourage learners to use the library services

1.4 Scope of the study

This research was conducted in Ekurhuleni East in one of the townships, Tsakane, in Gauteng province. Tsakane is a Tsonga word, which means, “to be happy/ joy”. Tsakane is associated with the town of Brakpan. Tsakane was founded in the early 1960s when black people living close to Brakpan were moved to a new designated area. Tsakane residents know the previous residential area as “Old Location”. Most of the first residents of Tsakane were the ones who experience forced removal from Brakpan Old Location and were relocated to Tsakane (e.wikipedia.org). According to the 2011 Census Tsakane has a population of 135 994 (68 433 females and 67 562 males). The population is made up of different ethnic groups.

During the development/establishment of the Tsakane township, people were grouped according to their ethnic groups, as indicated by the names of the sections, during childhood and adolescence that literacy skills are established. Public libraries facilitate the acquisition of lifelong learning and literacy skills, which learners obtain while using information from the libraries. This information allows them to participate in and contribute positively to their communities.

1.5 Research methodology

1.5.1 Literature/theoretical studies

1.5.1.1 Background

Research conducted by Cully (2014) on the reasons for taking children to the library, showed that reading helps with the development of the brain in the child, especially in their first five years of life. She also goes on to say that their brain cells are activated when they are reading, the existing links between brain cells are strengthened, and new links are formed. Walter (2013:np) stated that libraries are important to children and young adults, as they provide information and stimulate cognitive development.

It is during childhood and adolescence that literacy skills are established. Public libraries facilitate the acquisition of lifelong learning and literacy skills, which learners obtain while using information from the libraries. This information allows them to participate in and contribute positively to their communities.

1.5.1.2 Current state of public library services

The democratization of South Africa and obtaining freedom from the oppressive apartheid regime, have made a massive contribution to the transformation of the public library sector. It has led to improved access to information by creating different plans and manifestos which foster a culture of reading by permitting free access to everyone. This was achieved through conditional grants so that the library and information services should be actively used (The State of Libraries in South Africa, 2015:7). Post-apartheid SA has experienced changes in almost all sectors since 1994.

The Department of Arts and Culture (DAC), together with provincial governments, has invested funds in building new library infrastructure and upgrading existing infrastructure. By so doing, it has prioritised the provision of reading materials and improved the information and communications technologies across the country (The State of Libraries in SA, 2015:4).

These partnerships facilitated the improvement of the existing 330 public libraries and the establishment of 78 new public libraries across South Africa. The South African Bill of Rights (1996) formulates individual rights, including the right of access to information, which forms the basis of the South African library and information services sector. Since 1994 efforts have been made to set up new public libraries, as well as to upgrade historically less equipped library facilities throughout the country. All nine (9) provinces established after 1994, including the homelands, have established provincial library systems (The State of Libraries in South Africa, 2015:14). However, the inequalities and disparities in library and information services (LIS) service delivery in certain provinces still point to inconsistency and imbalance in the historically disadvantaged areas. Historically SA libraries aimed to build an informed nation, remove inequalities, create self-reliance amongst individuals through access to information and technologies, and to build and

sustain civilized communities. In the democratic SA, libraries aim to redress these inequalities and to be reinvented as lifelong learning support centres and community development partners (The State of Libraries in South Africa, 2015:12).

1.5.2 Research methodology

Bryman, Bell, Hirschsohn, Dos Santos, Du Toit, Masenge, Van Aardt and Wagner (2017:100) define research design as the framework developed to generate evidence that meets a certain set of criteria. These criteria are reliability, replication, validity, trustworthiness and authenticity. It is the plan for how one intends to conduct one's research (Bryman et al., 2017:99). Research design provides a plan or picture that guides the research method and data analysis. Once the research design has been selected, the researcher needs to select research methods that will be used to collect data. According to Bryman et al. (2017:56), the mixed method unifies quantitative and qualitative methods within a single project/study. Qualitative research is exploratory research. It provides an understanding, perception and awareness into the problem and helps to develop the ideas (De Franzo, 2011:np).

She continues highlighting that it is used in gaining an understanding of reasons, opinions and motivations. Quantitative research is used to quantify the problem by way of creating and producing numerical data that can be conveyed and changed into usable statistics. De Franzo (2011) indicated that quantitative research is used to quantify attitudes, behaviour's and opinions and other defined variables to generalize results from a larger sample population.

A cross-sectional design involves data collection on more than one case and at a single point in time (Creswell, Heather, Brace, Feters and Curry, 2016:106). It may also involve the collection of qualitative data. Such research can be used to narrate the features of the population that exists in the area where the research is being conducted. Creswell et al. (2016:107) indicated that a survey research is composed of a cross-sectional design to collect the facts through questionnaires or by conducting interviews at a time. The cross-sectional design takes place at a single point in time (Cherry, 2018:np). Data on certain

interests is collected at the same time from people who have similar characteristics. In this case, learners have similar interests in using the public library. The cross-sectional design will, therefore, provide information about what is taking place in that particular population you are dealing with in the public library.

The population is learners who are attending schools in Tsakane and using the Tsakane Public Library for their school assignments, projects and homework in the 2018/19 academic year. Learners involved in the study were found in the Tsakane Library. The library staff was also given questionnaires to administer. This study was conducted by applying non-probability sampling. This is a sampling approach in whereby the researcher selects samples based on his/ her subjective judgement's (Bhat,(n.d). This type of sample is merely depended more on the researcher's expertise. Here not all the members of the population have the chance of participating in the study. This type of sampling is convenient and purposive in selecting participants.

The researcher involved learners who are library users in the study, as the study is focusing on the learners' access to and utilisation of library services. The researcher also used convenience sampling to conduct focus group discussions (FGDs). The researcher divided the learners into groups of three (3) to five (5) participants. Two groups participated in the discussion where the researcher asked questions. There were 10 participants in the FGD.

The researcher prepared three sets of questionnaires to collect data on barriers to accessing and utilising the PLS by learners. The researcher used self-developed questionnaires based on the primary questions. The first set was used to get information on gender, grade, age and home language. On open-ended questions, the respondents gave comments and gave their opinions on the topic freely. On closed questions, the respondents' answers were guided and limited to the listed answers given. The second set was about the frequency in the use of the services and the third set was about the information needs, what kind of information learners require from the library and their

accessibility, do they access the information if yes, how do they access that information.

In the study, quantitative and qualitative data analysis were used to analyse data as the researcher had applied both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Qualitative data analysis is a range of actions, operations and procedures involved whereby the qualitative information has been gathered is changed and presented based on the interpretation of data, explaining the situations and population the researcher is investigating. Here the researcher is trying to make sense and understand the phenomenon (Bryman et al, 2017:336). Whereas in quantitative data analysis the researcher is expected to turn raw numbers found through data collection into meaningful data through the application of critical and rational thinking that include the frequency calculation of variables and differences between variables (Bryman et al, 2017:338). The researcher analysed data received from the FGDs manually in the form of thematic analysis. Bryman et al., (2017: 61) indicated that thematic analysis is one of the common techniques to qualitative data analysis as undertaking a search for themes in the field notes or transcripts.

Ryan and Bernard (2003:88) quoted by Bryman et al, (2017:61) pointed out that researchers can use many different methods to get to the preliminary set of themes. In this study, the researcher will group data according to related themes. The tape-recorded sessions for each targeted focus group discussion were grouped by themes and reported by way of narratives. That data was analysed by organising and keeping track of the text. For quantitative analysis (closed questionnaires), the data were analysed using a commercial analysis program known as the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS).

1.6 Limitations of the study

Although there are other public libraries at Tsakane, the study focused mainly on Tsakane PL. The researcher wants to determine the reasons for the barriers to accessing and utilising library services by learners so that these issues can be addressed to improve the academic performance of the learners who use this library.

Although public libraries aim is to provide free information to all members of the communities they serve, they experience challenges in servicing their users. This research is only limited to Tsakane Public Library (Gauteng province).

1.7 Conceptual framework

Kombo and Tromp (2006) indicated that the conceptual framework is an instrument that is set up to help the researcher to expand understanding and realisation of the problem which is under examination. It directs the actions that are required in the course of the study with the help of the application of the previous knowledge and point of view of the researcher and the researcher's observations on the subject of research. The conceptual framework represents the strategy researcher combines elements of the literature to explain a situation.

Creswell (2013) highlighted that the motive behind the conceptual framework in a study is to examine the validity of the study. A conceptual framework defines your constructs by explaining how they are related to other constructs. The conceptual framework used in this study is the Standards for Accessing and Utilising Library

Services developed by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) (2008). According to these standards, learners should be given the right to use the resources and services of the library, irrespective of their ages. It should be noted that the framework also explores the challenges to learners' access and usage of public library resources, and the strategies put in place to enhance access to and use of libraries. The constructs for the framework identified in the philosophy of the ACRL Standards are access, usage, resources and library services. These are relevant to the context of this study.

1.7.1 Access for the achievement of academic results

In this study, accessibility means the ability to locate, gain entry and use a resource that is physically or electronically provided to obtain specific and accurate information. Everyone has the right to access to and use of any information held by the public libraries. Effective and appropriate library services and resources must be made available to all learners and the community at large.

Library services provided to distance learning students should be practically the same as those available to all learners, regardless of their age and reasons for using it.

This implies that learners should be able to have access to library materials in any medium, whether library electronic resources or other databases, such as Emerald. These would be essential for the attainment of higher academic skills (ACRL, 2008). According to the ACRL (2008), information provision institutions must make funds available to meet the information needs, as this will help the library to provide adequate and appropriate information resources to satisfy the information needs of students.

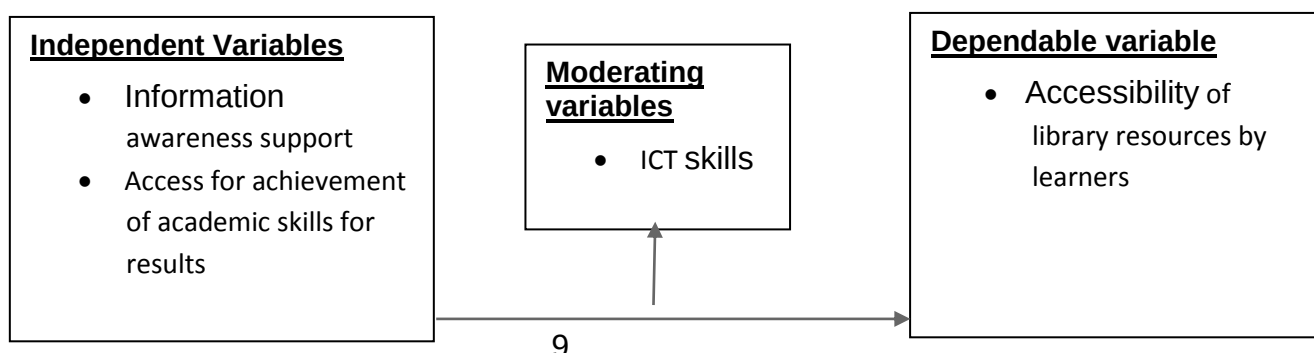
1.7.2 Utilisation

For the information resources to be effectively used by learners, they have to be accessible. In this study, utilisation of a resource is the act of exploiting library resources to satisfy an information need.

1.7.3 Public library services

These are the different kinds of services rendered by the library to its users. It provides information and activities to address information seeking needs of users (Chigwada and Blessing 2019). Such services include circulation services, reference services, online information services, interlibrary loans, and information literacy skills training. These are the resources, activities, programs, etc. which provided by libraries to enable users to meet their information needs (www.igi-global.com).

Fig. 1: Conceptual framework



Source: Developed by researcher

1.8 Layout of the study

Chapter 1.

This chapter will introduce the study problem being investigated and background of the study, the contextual settings of the study, objectives and research questions, and the importance and benefits of the study.

Chapter 2.

Chapter 2 presents the review of the literature, focusing on the present state of the public library, and identifying barriers concerning the provision of these services.

Chapter 3.

This chapter discusses the research methodology employed. It gives an overview of the research philosophy and approach. It discusses the research instrument and the method of data collection. It describes the research population, sampling techniques and the sample. Additionally, it described the measures and statistical analysis techniques used to answer the research questions. Finally, it addresses issues such as ethics, voluntary participation, consent and confidentiality and anonymity. The reliability and validity of the measuring instrument are also discussed.

Chapter 4.

The data analysis is presented in this chapter. This chapter also presents a discussion of the findings. Relationships are identified and highlighted. The findings are linked to the literature cited in the literature review.

Chapter 5.

The summary, conclusion and recommendations are provided in this chapter.

Chapter 2

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an outline of what the public library is, what it is used for and where it is going. It describes the latest and contemporary tendencies in the growth and expansion in public libraries, and the current view of the modern public library compared to 20 years ago. It provides the wide context of South African public libraries in general but also refers specifically to the challenges that hinder effective accessibility and the utilisation of libraries to provide and render quality services.

2.2 What is a public library?

PLs are acknowledged as learning and knowledge centres and institutions that provide the public with spaces for information and learning which are accessible to all kinds of people in the community (The State of Libraries in SA, 2015:3) regardless of ethnicity, gender or age. Apart from the provision of and access to information, the public library offers a large range of materials and programmes for people of all ages. These include

- children's programmes – storytelling, homework assistance, watching educational movies, playing games using Xbox;
- young adult programmes – poetry, reading clubs, stage play performances, author visits; and
- adult programmes – programmes on entrepreneurship, etc.

They provide meeting rooms for the general public to conduct social programmes. These rooms are equipped to meet public need. The library offers reading on many different topics to assist people with research, résumé development and learning basic computer skills. They also offer programmes for children and young adults to draw them in (Singh-Arora, 2018).

2.3 Background/overview of public libraries in South Africa

The establishment of the first public library in South Africa (SA) in 1818 in the Cape Colony was based on the European concept (The State of Libraries in SA, 2015:4).

The aim was to meet the information needs of the white population, as the library establishment was merely based on whites, who were the most considered and catered for. The facilities of the public libraries during apartheid were based on race, geographical location and the socioeconomic status of the people (The State of Libraries in SA, 2015:5). The South African National Library (SANL) was developed in 1999 in an attempt to redress the inequalities that were introduced by the apartheid government in South Africa.

According to the Library and Information Service (LIS) Transformation Charter (2014:53), PLs have an entire capability of competency of provinces as according to Part A of Schedule 5 of the South African Constitution. Stilwell (2016:125) quoted by Mojapelo (2017:5) states that the LIS Transformation Charter of 2014 encourages social inclusion, economic development and poverty eradication and pointed out that many South Africans are unaware of the services and the benefits the library offers. The effects of apartheid still exist, even during the democratic era, as different communities are still showing huge disparities in the provision of PLS. Fourie and Meyer (2016:422) conclude that there is a need to move forward to address social exclusion and ensure social justice and access to information for all.

2.4 The link between literacy, learners and the public library

The new South African education system syllabi such as Outcome-Based Education (OBE), the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) and the Annual National Assessment (ANA), have steered learners to make more and more use of the PL. These new educational learning methods force learners to use PLs productively to get good assessment results. This indicates that the use of PLs by learners contributes positively to learning results and student achievements. Such educational systems creates a direct correlation between the use of library materials/resources by learners and learners' task completion and educational achievements. There is a strong connection between learners, libraries and educational outcomes. As a result, learners are motivated by such factors to use the PL. The use of the PL is beneficial for learners who want to achieve good educational results.

2.4.1 Outcome-Based Education (OBE)

OBE was introduced in South Africa in the late 1990s by the post-apartheid government as part of its Curriculum 2005 programme. The OBE system (model) was introduced on the assumption that it would increase the quality of education that South African learners attain in schools (Botha, 2010). When it was introduced, it was believed that the system would raise educational standards and increase the availability of education. The inception idea and support for the programme were derived from anti-apartheid education policies.

2.4.2 National Curriculum Statement (NCS)

The NCS was introduced in 2008 and was terminated in 2013. One of the goals of the NCS was to ensure that every learner studies either Mathematics or Mathematical Literacy to ensure that all learners are prepared for life and work in an increasingly technological, numerical and data-driven world (MOTS Tutoring, n.d.). This curriculum aimed to ensure that children acquire and apply knowledge and skills in ways that are meaningful to their own lives (Taylor & Francis Online, 2009). The purpose of the NCS was to equip learners with knowledge and skills and provide access to higher education.

2.4.3 Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)

The CAPS is a national policy set out by the Department of Education that states what should be included in the curricula of schools for each grade in South Africa. The implementation of the CAPS meant that textbooks had to come with a detailed teacher's guide that gave a week-by-week breakdown of what needed to be covered for each subject in each grade, include many additional worksheets, workbooks and rule books that provide extra practice for students, as well as approach topics slightly differently, which helps students to better understand what they are learning.

[\(https://www.clonard.co.za/what-is-caps/\)](https://www.clonard.co.za/what-is-caps/)

2.4.4 Annual National Assessment (ANA)

The Department of Basic Education introduced the Annual National Assessments (ANAs) nationally in 2011 to measure learner performance in numeracy/mathematics and literacy/language in public schools for Grade 1 to 6 and Grade 9 learners from 2012.

The ANAs are nationally standardised assessments that measure the skills and knowledge learners are expected to have acquired as a result of learning and teaching based on the curriculum (Schooling in South Africa). The purpose of the ANA is to make it easier for districts to identify schools with the greatest need for assistance, encourage schools to celebrate outstanding performance, and empower parents with important information about their children's performance (Department of Basic Education 2013).

2.5 How libraries support learners in their school assignments

All libraries play an important role for learners, as they should all be used to help learners achieve their goals.

2.5.1 Study resources

Public libraries are valuable places for learners to visit to study and complete group/individual assignments. Public libraries support learners in finding their answers through research (Mahwasane, 2016). For Mahwasane (2016) it is important to stress that libraries are a great resource for learners and it should be a place that is frequently visited by learners to increase knowledge, develop skills and help achieve goals. The library staff facilitate the study groups at the library to help learners complete their school projects, or offer homework help classes. Individuals or groups can receive help with homework/assignments from the staff (Mojapelo, 2017). This allows learners to seek answers and help with difficult homework assignments, which in turn help them, learn and complete their assignments. The public library provides the learners with the library homework assistance programmes and should assist learners with access to databases and various materials that will help them with assignments and student projects (Lynch, 2015).

2.5.2 Study spaces

Public libraries have many spaces available that can be shared and used by learners to read, study or complete assignments. This is advantageous for the learners that may be spending most of the time at the library finishing schoolwork (Kirtley, 2013). Many libraries also provide a private space that can be reserved for individual studying, or a group project.

2.5.3 Accessibility

Public libraries tend to be a more familiar space for students. Many parents bring their young children to libraries for the resources available, which instils the idea of library visits as a fun, positive event for their children. So, when these children are in high school or at university, they will be familiar with public libraries and the resources and spaces provided that make them great places to work on school tasks (Maguire, 2014).

2.6 The changing role of the public libraries in South Africa

According to Paton-Ash, (2012:44) the PL has shifted its role from being a place where resources are located, sourced and used by learners to a place in which the learner is the focus. Paton-Ash goes on to say that this change has ended up in the reorganisation of new planning and design in the library, resources and furnishings. PLs are information service institutions founded by the government and funded through tax money through the Department of Arts and Culture.

Such institutions serve their communities with information resources. PLs, provide access to information for those who need it. Even though their role is to serve their communities, they differ in size, location, specific needs and resources for the community they serve (Neuman, 2011:np). To reduce capital costs, the Department of Arts and Culture has recommended that provinces explore the feasibility of adopting a standardised library design from a portfolio of new library buildings, incorporating adaptations for local conditions (South African Public Library and Information Services Bill, 2012).

Mojapelo (2017:4) regards PLs as agencies for development. He highlights that members of society need a wide range of information ranging from careers, economy, politics, agriculture, education, technology, science and health, to information on

leisure and personal growth. The library is an information centre of the community and libraries are instruments of learning and through its use, illiteracy within the community will be reduced and ultimately removed (Mojapelo, 2015:5). Mojapelo (2015:5) reiterates that a library is a meeting place for the community, a public space that offers integrated services. It is a building that should be accessible to all groups in the area it serves and for all people to access the services it offers. The educational programmes, story hours and other library services offered by PLs attract more children to the library.

PLs fight illiteracy through offering reading programmes, writing skills, storytelling, distributing information brochures (for youth development programmes), bursaries, and learnerships for socioeconomic development to break the poverty cycle (Mojapelo, 2017:7). Before the country was declared a democracy in 1994, where a PL was situated was critical in how South Africans accessed information. All South Africans are now able to enjoy the full expression of information policies and practices (Hart & Nassimbeni, 2018:1).

Libraries promote deliberative democracy and disrupt the dominance of entrenched knowledge systems that marginalise the local and indigenous (Hart & Nassimbeni, 2018:4). According to Dick (2016:n.p), the apartheid regime was characterised by the oppression of African people as well as the suppression of information. This was designed to assert and entrench the privilege of the white minority and to suppress the black majority. Black people were excluded from white public libraries. These restrictions thus restricted the free flow of information in libraries (Dick, 2016:n.p).

Stilwell (2016:126) states that the PLs make a positive contribution to the lives of disadvantaged peoples in the community; for example, PLs ensure that users with visual and hearing challenges have access to information resources that meet their specialised information needs. Mojapelo (2017:6) states that PLs also provide ideal places for immigrants to meet, network and socialise with local citizens. PLs support the community with free internet access. They provide digital literacies and inclusion classes, support e-government, serve emergency response roles and are increasingly involved in the provision of social services and education (Stilwell, 2016:123).

During the 2017 Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA) Conference, the policy research team highlighted the problems identified in library and information services (LIS). The main point was that the provision of libraries in SA reflects the racially-based inequalities of the past, in that rural communities, especially in the former apartheid homelands, have inadequate public libraries and the schools that serve the poor black communities have no libraries at all (Hart & Nassimbeni, 2018:9). Research conducted by Celano and Neuman in 2001 shows that children need exposure to a wide variety of high-quality books on various topics to acquire literacy skills. The authors also highlighted that PLs play a major role in helping children to read. They emphasised that regular use of a PL improves learners' reading, as the PL exposes children to a large number of print materials.

2.7 Past comparison and changes in the uses, access and methods of the library to the current situation.

2.7.1 Traditional libraries

Traditional libraries are brick buildings with print and online resources (Cassandra, n.d.). When users require access to information, they physically have to visit the library to use the services and resources. The services provided by most libraries include access to e-books, online catalogues and electronic databases (Cassandra, n.d.). A 'traditional' library is more centred in a physical space with physical collections. The new technology has caused the traditional libraries to be less effective, as in the past the library resources were based on what was physically owned by the library. Nowadays libraries are remotely accessed electronically. These physical collections consist of books (fiction and non-fiction), magazines, newspapers, tapes and CDs. Because of users behaviour and information preferences, such factors affect the demand and use of library resources, facilities and services. The changes in teaching and learning in the education sector changes the behaviour and needs of the users in the library. As learning requires new digital services and resources, the traditional library has to add new such services which require more financial budget.

With the advent of modern information and communications technology (ICT), public

libraries started offering computer services and internet access. Most of these services do not require physical access to the library and can be conducted outside the library premises without using any library space. These services include online catalogues that are publicly accessible, digital resources, such as bibliographic databases, and online electronic journals (Neuman, 2011:np).

According to Neuman (2011), the shift from traditional libraries to digital services is not merely a technological evolution but requires a change in the way in which people access and interact with information. Neuman (2011) pointed out that the traditional library is characterised by the following:

- the emphasis is on storage and preservation of physical items, such as books and periodicals;
- browsing based on the physical proximity of related materials, e.g. books on the same subject are located closer to one another on the shelves; and
- information which is physically grouped in one place; i.e. users have to walk/ tour the library to see what kind of materials or resources are available and make use thereof. Traditional libraries need to be transformed to accommodate the expectations and user's needs.

2.7.2 Conventional library

A conventional library is marked by the digital changes that have taken place. Generally, we know that the PL is a building that houses books in the physical form, but now everything about the library has been modernised. There is a change in how it looks and is being used. The information is presented and offered electronically, using modern technologies. The conventional library changes with the times.

Magazines, books in the physical form and e-books, computers and free classes in technology are available to the public. The access points the conventional library provides to the user are magazine articles, books, papers, images, sound files and videos. According to Kurtz (2013), the conventional local library has been changing over some time and they now also offer e-books, computers and free classes in technology.

2.7.3 Modern library

The 21st century has brought many changes in the public library environment. In this era, there have been many new developments. Libraries now use electronic services with flexible communication systems. Web-based information sources are mostly used. These services are of high quality and more user-orientated. The availability of internet services indicates that libraries are part of what is defined as modernity.

The modern library is in the transition from print to electronic. However, print material is still preferred by many, mainly because the printed page is still more readable than a computer screen. A book can be transported more easily than a portable computer and one can flip through the pages of a book (New Zealand Electronic Text Centre, 2008). The New Zealand Electronic Text Centre (2008) goes on to elaborate that paper documents last longer than the electronic media and is also a flexible medium. The digital format cannot match up – for example, to use magnetic media one needs computer access, whereas a paper document only needs one to read/use it irrespective of electricity and internet availability. Modern libraries use information in electronic format, which can be presented as different types, including (a) three-dimensional, (b) graphic, moving simulations, or (c) animations, which the traditional printed copy cannot do (New Zealand Electronic Text Centre, 2008).

Using electronic information is much cheaper than print materials and access to information is instant. Electronic information is becoming more accessible as technology improves and computer networks expand and develop. As a result, all information services are available to users on their personal computers.

2.8 Services offered by PLs

Kirtley (2013) listed the following as services offered by the PLs:

- Lending books (reference services)
- Lending DVDs (or other types of visual material)
- Lending CDs (or other types of audio material)
- Providing children's programmes

- Providing adult programmes
- Providing study space
- Providing study assistance
- Providing copying/scanning assistance
- Providing newspapers to read free
- Providing magazines to read
- Online services
- User orientation/guidance

2.9 Origins of the electronic library

Electronic libraries or digital libraries, also known as virtual libraries, began surfacing in the 1970s. Libraries in the developing world only began computerising some of their activities during the 1980s, ushering in the integrated library system and the Online Public Access Computer Systems (OPACS) (etext.lib).

During that period, CD-ROM databases made an appearance. They came in as stand-alone, but today they can be networked with even remote servers. As a result, users can access information from a CD-ROM on any computer in internet mode and with it, the development of web and web-based resources and access tools, including databases, emerged. This means that information can now be accessed from anywhere in the world (What is a Conventional Library?).

2.10 Library attractiveness and friendliness

A library attractiveness rating is based on both internal and external factors (Delrieu & Gibson, 2017:18). According to the authors, the internal factors are related to the quality of the library provision defined by the total hours the library opens per week.

What attracts users to the library is their satisfaction experience when using the collections the libraries have at their disposal. Delrieu and Gibson (2017:18) point out that the quantity of items offered by the library does not attract users, but they do appreciate the number of books, CDs and videos available. What attracts them is finding the resources that correspond to what they are looking for. The more the book collection satisfies the users, the more users are attracted to the library. Besides, the library operating hours and the appeal of the space attract people to the library. Users' attraction to libraries is defined by the collection they offer to patrons.

Miles and Gibson (2016) believe that the attractiveness of the library is based on the size of the collection (number of books) and therefore libraries exist because of the collections they make available to users. They argue that there is a relationship between the size of the collection and the frequency of use by the patrons. Miles and Gibson (2016) postulate that people identify libraries by their collections. Libraries are not the only places where information is available but is one of the few places where patrons converge. Their willingness and eagerness to visit the library are based on the library's appeal.

The library operating hours also determine its attractiveness and access. When large groups of people come to the library daily, it is an indication of its allure and a contributing factor to the increase of use. Delrieu and Gibson (2017:21) highlighted transport infrastructure as a pull factor that attracts people to libraries. The authors highlighted that a transport network along major routes and access points to rail transport has an impact on users' decision to make use of the library. Attractiveness is the results of pull factors related to the services the library provides and the nature of service provision is influenced by the internal factors (Delrieu & Gibson, 2017:22).

The attractiveness of the library is related to the number of user groups regularly held at the library, the total number of hours the library opens per week and external factors, such as geographical context; for example, its proximity to shops, banks and post offices, and the number of educational facilities, parks, bus routes/metro stations within a reasonable distance. The neighbourhood in which the library is situated and its location also contributes to its attractiveness (Miles & Gibson, 2016:154).

These factors are characterised as pull factors. Also, internet access and services increase library attractiveness, as more users, especially the youth, prefer e-books to hard copy. The availability of the internet in public libraries contributes to the increased number of personal computers (PC) available and connected to the internet in the libraries and an increased number of registered users in public libraries. PLs that offer this service attract a large number of library users.

A library has to be user friendly to anyone who comes to use the services offered. A user-friendly system is defined as one with which untrained users can interact easily (Taher, n.d.). When talking about the friendliness of the library, it means that it should welcome and accommodate different kinds of users (i.e. the elderly, children, people with handicaps, etc.) with different needs. The library should be aware of how they care for the users' needs and behaviour, including physiological, social, cultural, aptitude and safety needs (Tahar, n.d.). Any PL needs to provide and maintain good customer service. It is the task and duty of the librarians, the library staff and library management to develop a friendly environment within the library. For the staff to perform and maintain good customer service, staff should be trained in maintaining friendliness. By so doing, users develop a friendly feeling towards staff when visiting the library.

It is noted that libraries do not always provide equal opportunities for different types of users. Shelves do not allow easy access to people that are wheelchair bound and the spaces between the shelves do not allow free movement. The library design, furniture, space and layout are not always according to the needs of users with special needs. Braille facilities and resources are sometimes non-existent.

2.11 The physical conditions of the library

Keeping an environment clean is important for one's health. Old books sometimes change colour to yellow or brown and users are reluctant to borrow unclean and old books. As a result, they opt for e-books rather than borrowing "used" books to read. When dust collects on books, it absorbs and holds moisture that causes deterioration by acid (Schwartz, 2018:np). Clean, neat books and other library resources give the impression to patrons that library materials are taken care of. Staff should ensure that their hands are always clean when handling books.

According to Schwartz (2018), improper cleaning creates a hazard to collections. Libraries should be a pleasant place of learning (Schwartz, 2018). Everyone wants a clean and tidy working environment. To keep the library clean, users should not be allowed to bring food and drinks into the library.

2.12 The changing role of the public library in the development of South African education

The role of the PL is not only to nurture democracy but also to serve as a gateway to participate in society through the provision of access to information to all and to enable lifelong teaching and learning (The State of Libraries in SA, 2015:5). The library, therefore, remains the main source for information for the community it serves, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity and religion.

Due to the emergence of ICT, the role and the functions of the PLs are changing. The development of ICT makes it possible for libraries to have access to all forms of information of high quality and improved resources to meet patrons' needs. The public libraries also give guidance and training on information searching and information sources from which the users can benefit. According to Sing-Arora, (2018) public libraries are a need and important requirements for free information and knowledge societies. These days public libraries partner with prisons and old-age homes. These partnerships ensure that prisoners, for example, have access to available resources and encourage participation in programmes the local libraries have on offer. The library provides and facilitates programmes. Such programmes include book clubs and community service projects.

The library shares resources with nearby prisons and old-age homes. For the inmates to receive the library resources, the warders have to liaise with the librarians and come to collect books for them and bring them back when they are due. The resources the inmates get from the library consist of religious materials from various denominations, which inmates are encouraged to read and discuss. These books help to educate prisoners. In addition to educational opportunities, using books from the library helps prisoners to think positively about life and meet with others with common interests. The library staffs, with the help of the home's caregivers, facilitate the circulation of books from the library to the centre as well as within the old-age home.

Elderly people join the reading groups, as reading encourages them to keep mentally active and engaged. Many libraries offer access to public computers with internet connectivity, which patrons can use to search and apply for jobs. Patrons also use the computers to prepare/type their curricula vitae (CVs), to keep themselves informed about the worldwide news and to communicate with their friends and loved ones using social media platforms. By providing these services, public libraries help people to obtain relevant stability and quality of life by utilising the resources available.

2.13 Historical role of public libraries

The role of the public library is to serve its community in different ways, but its core functions are:

- to make information available, and offer resources to every patron, regardless of age, financial status, or any other factors;
- to provide a quiet place for study, research, reading and learning;
- to educate, inform and entertain its users by offering different programmes for all age groups;
- to allow patrons to visit the library and loan/check out any materials; and
- to house a collection of materials, such as newspapers, historical records, non-fiction and fiction (Mnkeni-Saurombe & Zimu, 2013:48).

2.14 Barriers experienced by the PL users

The function of the PL is to make information available to its users. This can be achieved by organising such information or resources for easy retrieval by users.

Barriers to using these library resources may result in underutilisation of services. These barriers hamper access to information resources and utilising of PLS. Iwhiwhu and Okoroduru (2012) pointed out that learners are usually not denied the use of the PL, but their access is limited, meaning that there are barriers which limit access to information for learners. According to Iwhiwhu and Okoroduru (2012), the effective utilisation of PLS lies in satisfactory use by learners. They state that the barriers which restrict access to and utilisation of the PLS by learners may be the following:

2.14.1 Location and transportation challenges

The location of public libraries is one of the challenges facing public libraries, which emanate from the Group Areas Act of 1950 enacted by the apartheid government system. As a result of the geographical planning and layout of these areas, i.e. townships, informal settlements and rural areas, they were underserved, or some of them not served at all.

The provision of transport has remained one of the key challenges confronting the government in the post-apartheid era. This is largely the result of the apartheid practices that ensured that the majority of the society was placed in largely inaccessible areas, but also of the complexity of the current transport needs resulting from increased economic activity. The aforementioned issues pose very specific challenges to the transportation of learners to and from schools. The ability of learners to access education is hampered by the long distances they have to travel to school, threats to safety and security, as well as the cost of learner transport. Learners have difficulty accessing educational institutions due to the inadequacy of learner transport and insufficient provision of schools in areas where they live (Department of Transport, Notice 1004 of 2014). Distance to the library is, therefore, a major problem to many users, especially for those without proper transport (Maguire, 2014). Learners living far from libraries have to use public transport to reach the library. For some learners, it is impossible to access the library after school hours. The transport from school will not transport them to the library and from home, they can only use public transport or walk to the library.

2.14.2 Operating hours

According to SA labour law (The Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995) (LRA), normal working hours are eight hours a day. As a result, the average working hours in South Africa are 40 hours per week. The LIS Transformation Charter (2014:55) states that opening hours are limited to workdays from Mondays to Fridays. This limitation also militates against social inclusion. Opening hours are driven by staffing provision, which is insufficient in most libraries. Staffing challenges are mostly influenced by insufficient budgets.

2.14.3 Enforcement of public library policies

Each organisation or institution has its own rules and regulations to ensure the smooth running and management of the institution. PLs as such are facilities with their own rules

and regulations to ensure order and proper management within the facility. Some of these rules could harm both the users and the staff, whether directly or indirectly.

Policy challenges and insufficient support from the government remain daunting obstacles to the libraries in rendering efficient services (Fourie & Meyer, 2016). A study by Fourie and Meyer (2016) found that some libraries use the old policies, even though there are new ones in place, in which case you find libraries using different systems.

Jarret (2015) and Graham (2017) pointed out the three policies which create barriers to learners' accessing and utilising services: proof of permanent address required to obtain a library card; policies restricting personal belongings; and policies about hygiene and library behaviour. Graham (2017) mentioned the documentation needed for one to obtain library card as a barrier on its own emanating from library policies. Such documents include proof of residence, an identity document or birth certificate. Those without the required documents are excluded from accessing some of the library services.

Halliday (2016) highlighted that there are ethical implications concerning library policies, such as inconsistencies in the application of policies as they are subject to personal bias, as well as economic barriers to access. Greater barriers exist for the poor. Wong (2011) indicated that libraries should ensure that policies balance the needs of all patrons and are consistently applied by staff. For Wong (2011), such policies should dictate all aspects of library management from collection development to rules of conduct. According to Maguire (2014), in most cases library users are not being informed about library policies when using the library, but only when users are experiencing problems when using and when trying to access services. For Maguire (2014), the issue with the policies is inconsistent enforcement, since policies are enforced differently by different staff members.

2.14.4 Economic barriers

The principles governing fines, fees and user charges indicate that libraries that adhere to these principles systematically monitor their service programmes for potential barriers to access and strive to eliminate such barriers when they occur (Jensen, 2016). Jensen (2016) thinks that all library policies and procedures, particularly those involving fines,

fees, or other user charges, should be scrutinised for potential barriers to access. For example to have computer print outs user have to pay, and borrowing of CDs and DVDs user has to pay as well. Graham (2017) states that all services should be designed and implemented with care, to not infringe on or interfere with the provision or delivery of information and resources. For Graham (2017), services should be re-evaluated regularly to ensure that the library's basic mission remains uncompromised.

2.14.5 Library fines

The public library is meant to offer free services to users; however, Jensen (2016) supports the idea of paying library fines. Jensen (2016) postulates that they rationalise overdue fines for the following reasons: (a) to encourage users to return library materials on time; (b) to teach responsibility and accountability to patrons, especially children and teens; and (c) to earn revenue for the library and demonstrate fiscal responsibility. On the other hand, Graham (2017) believes that financial penalties have exclusionary effects, as they discourage patrons from using the library.

Fines particularly affect low-income patrons and children and can damage library community relations and destroy trust. Families with no income or with low income may lack the funds to pay the fines on their late resources/material and libraries may suspend or cancel their membership until fines are paid. For such learners, this presents economic barriers. Such fees deny access to some learners based on their ability and willingness to pay (Graham, 2017).

Charging fees for the use of public library services or facilities, therefore, increase barriers to information access by learners. Libraries usually suspend your membership if you have unpaid fines. Unpaid fees deny access to some members of the community; because the access is based on their ability and willingness to pay (Graham, 2017). It is suggested that library management and librarians have to do away with the restrictions that limit access to information by learners. They can make effective changes in the payment structure of library fees as they best understand the financial position of the community they serve. Fees charged for using library collections, services the library offers, programmes and facilities that were purchased with public funds, raises barriers to access (Jensen, 2016).

Such fees deny access for some members of the community because they reinforce distinctions among users based on their ability and willingness to pay (Jensen, 2016).

2.14.6 Barriers with staff/attitude

Askin (2015) points out that the lack of awareness among staff members of the needs and concerns of the underserved group is a barrier to the effective provision of information access. The library staff should treat users with consideration and they should have the desire to help them. In a study conducted by Iwhiwhu and Okorodudu (2012), they found that the friendly disposition of staff and the willingness of library staff to assist users to get required materials will encourage users to use the library and above all, will increase users' satisfaction with the library service. These authors believe that the attitude of some library staff shows rudeness and a lazy approach to requests or enquiries, and may prevent some potential library users from visiting the library. Therefore, the library staff's negative attitude is another barrier to library usage. PLs in collaboration with the NLSA have been organising workshops, seminars and programmes that will help equip staff with necessary the skills they require to promote reading culture (Hart, 2016).

2.14.7 Space

Most of the traditional libraries today hold a mixture of both physical and digital collections (Niegaard, 2011). PLs have a physical rather than a digital collection but use modern ICT for technological operations to facilitate the use and run of the library. With the traditional libraries physical collections take up much of the space and you cannot have a bigger collection than the physical space you have. Apart from that, it is also difficult for more than one person to use the same item at a time. The bigger the collection, the smaller the space to accommodate more resources and in these instances weeding has to take place (Harns, 2017). Bookshelves are over-packed so that books are squeezed together so tightly that it is difficult for the user to put the book back on the overloaded shelf. The entrances and the central space within the library need to appear inviting when the user enters the library. A major challenge faced by libraries is to create spaces that are flexible and spacious and provide both quiet study areas and an area for group discussion, which can also accommodate book talks and seminars

.2.14.8 Affective barriers

Many learners experience difficulties in using and operating information systems. Abdullah, Erfanmanesh and Karim, (2014) state that learners who have difficulty operating ICT tend to experience high levels of anxiety. Abdullah et al. (2014) have termed this information-seeking anxiety. According to the authors, this type of anxiety is experienced when an individual is searching for information in libraries or trying to conduct research (Abdullah et al., 2014). Based on this perspective, information-seeking anxiety is a state of fear when an individual is searching for information resources during the information-seeking process in the library (Abdullah et al., 2014). This type of affective barrier affects how the search progresses after a learner has started using the ICT equipment.

2.14.9 Information barriers

According to Swigon (2011), there are four groups of information barriers. Swigon (2011) indicated that information barriers in information provision have a negative effect on the needs and behaviour of the users. Swigon (2011) clustered these barriers as follows:

- a. Those that are related to individual attribute and features – these are the barriers that an individual is unaware of, low of information skills, lack of time, the meaning of words barriers, resistance to computer and internet use, passive attitude, refusal to asking questions to get clarity.
- b. Environmental barriers – those are the ones related to finances, geographical dispensation, politics and cultural barriers
- c. Challenges connected to information resources – those that are found in libraries connected to insufficient research in libraries, unfriendly rules, delays in serving users for instance information quality is low, information that is not needed/ aggressive and obtaining other materials stored in computer systems.

2.14.10 Lack of resources

The information need expectations can also hinder utilisation (Iwhiwhu & Okorodudu, 2012). When information resources obtained from PLs are lower than the information expectations, learners become dissatisfied. The research conducted by Iwhiwhu and Okorodudu (2012) also indicates that the PLS are utilised more when the facilities such as

chairs, tables, ICT equipment and books are available. Mojapelo (2017) states that lack of funds remains the main obstacle to the purchase of adequate resources for libraries.

2.14.11 Lack of service awareness

Askin (2015) indicates that another barrier to providing access to information is a lack of awareness among community members about the services and resources the library has and offers. Askin (2015) indicates that creating awareness can contribute to non-users becoming library members/users. Schwartz (2013) emphasises that libraries should conduct campaigns to reach potential users to join the libraries. Learners usually have little or no idea of the services the library has on offer.

Most users assume that the library is only for borrowing books. If you do not require books, there is no need for you to visit the library. Maguire (2014) states that most of the library users have little understanding of the library as a source of resources and services and are unaware of the other services offered by the library that are relevant to their needs.

2.14.12 Technology

Information resources are retrieved differently from an online library than from a traditional library. Traditional libraries offer print and electronic versions of books, magazines, research databases and newspapers, but credible, trustworthy and reliable information also can be obtained electronically using online libraries (Cassandra, n.d).

Askin (2015) has mentioned that technological illiteracy is also a barrier to information access. Askin (2015) highlighted that illiteracy does not only present problems with reading and understanding of the available resources but also presents as discomfort and a feeling of anxiety in using the library to acquire information. For Askin (2015), technology comes with new opportunities to access information but provides a challenge to those who are unable to use and do not have the required digital skills to access technology. The practice of collecting books and displaying them on the shelves for users to use is being challenged. With the emergence and development of information and communications technology, with networked systems, new methods of acquisition and use of information sources have come along (Cassandra, n.d). This means the public libraries have to plan and invent new ideas in service provision that will be user friendly and create user satisfaction.

Public libraries have modernised their information provision to include digitisation, which is faster and saves time. Electronic information can be disseminated much more quickly and is stored in different modes. Libraries now have access to digitised information and make it available electronically. Nowadays, ICTs in public libraries provide instant access to relevant information to its users. ICT is rapidly becoming the first option in libraries because it allows access to a greater number of sources of information, enhances resource sharing, and assists in professional development through discussion groups, mailing lists, etc. (Askin, 2015).

WiFi also provides internet connectivity to allow users to access their mobile devices. Limited speed and poor internet coverage are barriers, as users find it difficult to use the internet when it is slow and can only be accessed in certain hotspot areas, which are also limited. As a result, this inaccessibility of technology affects learners' use of the technology provided freely for them. Mahwasane (2016) states that information retrieval skills are important for anyone using the library's access to information resources in different formats. Mahwasane (2016) further states that lack of proper knowledge on how to use information retrieval, insufficient user education, and lack of computer knowledge and ICT skills are challenges that learners face in accessing information in the library.

The Department of Arts and Culture provided computers and ICT connectivity to all public libraries with sufficient computer capacity as part of the delivery of services to the community members and users at large. They made sure that there were sufficient computers with internet connections at each service point for the use of the general public and staff. Another ICT project for community libraries is being implemented by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (Gatesfoundation.org). This foundation has provided free internet access to community libraries, known as Mzansi Libraries Online. They are providing computers with internet connections to public libraries to ensure that users using these spaces are always connected. This project has provided computers with internet connectivity to three (3) public libraries in each province and 27 libraries in South Africa.

The main aim is to provide free internet access and connectivity to all South Africans through PLs and to create an informed and information literate society (The State of Libraries in SA, 2015). This is a two (2) year project, but there is a possibility of extending it a further five (5) years if it proves to be successful.

2.14.13 Provision of sufficient information on the library use and procedures

Since libraries do not provide written policies to learners to read themselves, learners find it difficult to understand some of the aspects of library policies and services. Misunderstanding is also caused by inconsistent enforcement of policies. There is a lack of uniformity concerning the enforcement of policies between libraries and users who use different libraries experience confusion and social marginalisation (Maguire, 2014).

Users usually get sufficient information when they are inquiring and trying to access library resources. Users' needs to have a proper understanding of the procedures of using the library resources when they enter the library. That communication can be through the display of information on the notice boards (Maguire, 2014) and when they come in contact with library staff. Maguire (2014) postulates that users need to be given adequate information so that they can make choices and decisions about how to use the library. Users need to know who to contact when they have problems and when to begin looking for information. In most cases, learners are reluctant to speak to staff and ask those questions, which leads to misinformation and frustration.

2.15 Conclusion

The literature I have reviewed highlights the changing roles of a PL from a traditional to a conventional (modern) library, and the benefits that come with the present state of the library, such as attractiveness and friendliness for the effective utilisation by learners. This chapter elaborates on the methods and procedures in place that promote access for learners, as well as on the barriers to access. It further highlights the services on offer in a PL and how these services can be integrated with the curriculum taught at school.

Chapter 3

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research philosophy applied, the study's overall research design, the research methods, the geographical area, the study design, population, the sampling methods, and data collection instruments. Data collection procedures are also discussed, including the methods used to determine the validity and reliability of the instruments.

3.2 Research philosophy

The research philosophy refers to the convictions underlying how data should be gathered, analysed and used to ensure the general reliability of the results that have been observed. As this study used a mixed-methods approach, the philosophical underpinning is pragmatism. According to Datta (1994:63) pragmatism is considered the best philosophical principle to give grounds for combining different methods in one study. In social science research, pragmatism is a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods used to evaluate different aspects of a research problem. It is a problem-oriented philosophy that takes the view that the best research methods are the ones that most effectively assist in answering the research question (Creswell et al., 2016:315).

It is based on the concept that mixed methods want to explore more than one methodological perspective. It views reality as containing characteristics and components that are accessible and constructed, therefore making it more real and actual when it comes to the results and impact. Patton (2014:189) indicated that pragmatist's think that the truth is the result of understanding the best in a research problem. Reichardt and Rallis (1994) indicate that qualitative and quantitative methods can exist together without any problems to allow their combination within a single study. Both numerical and text data are collected and analysed to address different aspects of the same general research problem and provide its more complete understanding (Creswell et al., 2016:315).

3.3 Research design

Bryman, Bell and Hirschsohn (2017:100) define research design as the framework developed to generate evidence that meets certain criteria.

These criteria are reliability, replication, validity, trustworthiness and authenticity. It is the plan for how one intends to conduct one's research (Bryman et al., 2017:99). Research design provides a plan or picture that guides the research method and data analysis. The research design will include how data is to be collected, what instruments will be employed, how the instruments will be used and the means the researcher is intending use to analyse the data collected (Creswell, 2013:70).

For this study, a cross-sectional research design was used. Creswell et al. (2016:106) indicated that the research design involves data collected on more than one case in a single point in time, which sometimes involves qualitative data collection. Such kinds of research can be used to narrate the features of the population which exists in the area where the research is being done. Creswell et al. (2016:107) state that survey research in cross-sectional design is the collection of data by questionnaires or by structured interviews at a single point in time (Cherry, 2018:np). Data on certain interests is collected at the same time from people who have similar characteristics. In this case, learners share the same interest in using the public library. The cross-sectional design will provide information about what is taking place in that particular population you are dealing with.

3.4 Research methodology

Once the research design has been selected, the researcher needs to select research methods that will be used to collect data. According to Bryman et al. (2017:56), a mixed-method approach is used by researchers to integrated quantitative and qualitative methods within a single project/ study. Creswell (2013:290) stipulated the advantages of using a mixed-method approach:

- Researchers can use all the tools available to them and collect more comprehensive data. This provides results that have a broader perspective on the overall issue or research problem.
- Using both approaches in one study provides additional evidence and support for the findings.
- Mixed methods combine inductive and deductive thinking and reasoning.
- The researcher can use both words and numbers to communicate the results and

findings and combining methodologies helps to reduce the personal biases of the researcher.

Qualitative data was collected through a survey design in the form of interviews and focus group discussions (FGD), whereas quantitative data was collected through the administering of a questionnaire. A descriptive survey design was selected for the study. Creswell et al. (2016:293), referring to Bless and Higson-Smith (2000), explained that a descriptive survey design assists the researcher in obtaining information from various populations that were sampled and allows the researcher to focus on the characteristics under investigation. The qualitative elements of the study will assist the researcher in gaining a clear understanding and acquire knowledge regarding the social issues that are under investigation (Creswell et al., 2016:293).

3.4.1 Qualitative methods

Qualitative research is increasingly gaining momentum in the clinical setting as it carries different criteria for evaluating its rigour or quality (Young, Fisher & Kirkman, 2014:101). Hammarberg, Kirkman and De Lacey (2016) state that it is accepted that qualitative research should be ethical, and use appropriate and rigorous methods. When data is gathered to answer questions of personal or social meaning, one needs to capture real-life experiences, which cannot be identical from one person to the next.

3.4.2 Quantitative methods

Quantitative methods can reveal the percentage of the population distribution by age, marital status, residential area and so on, as well as changes from one survey to the next (Kovacs et al., 2012). Kovacs et al. (2012) reiterate that qualitative methods are used to answer questions about experience, meaning and perspective, from the standpoint of the participant. Quantitative studies generally involve the systematic collection of data about a phenomenon, using standardised measures and statistical analysis. In contrast, qualitative studies involve the systematic collection, organisation, description and interpretation of textual, verbal or visual data. The particular approach taken determines to a certain extent the criteria used for judging the quality of the report (Young et al., 2014).

3.4.3 Mixed methods

Mixed method research refers to the one that combines both methods within a single project. The mixed-method research permits the researcher to capitalise on the strengths of each research method. For this study, the mixed method was used to increase the scope and volume of the conclusion of the study as it reflects the participants' point of view. It also gives the analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data in response to the research questions. There are three approaches to mixed methods: triangulation (which refers to the use of quantitative methods to corroborate qualitative research findings), facilitation (when one research strategy is employed to make using the other strategy easier) and complementarity (a situation in which two or more different things improve or emphasise each other's qualities) (Bryman et al., 2017:62). Qualitative and quantitative methods may be used together when the researcher hopes for similar outcomes from both methods. The two methods can be used sequentially (first a quantitative then a qualitative study or vice versa), where the first approach is used to facilitate the design of the second. They can also be used in parallel as different approaches to the same question (Babbie & Mouton, 2012:271).

3.5 Research ethics

Ethical issues are important in all types of research. Ethics are concerned with matters such as honesty when reporting the results. They are a set standard for conduct that differentiates between right and wrong. Ethics help to determine the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour's on the part of the researcher. Ethics deals with protecting human rights and any object that is involved in the research. In this research will be followed.

Firstly, participants should be told clearly what the research that is involved into is all about and they should be fully informed about reasons for the research. The research cannot be conducted anywhere and by anyone, so it is important to obtain permission and ethical clearance from ethics committee when any kind of humans or objects are involved in any kind of research so that ethics issues are sorted out. In terms of this study, the researcher has concluded the following: -

The researcher will give a consent letter to learners whereby the research process will be described. The researcher will read the letter so that they can understand it well and ask questions if they need more clarity. Then participants will take the forms to the parents so that they can sign the forms if they are willing that their kids should participate in the research. In the letter, it is clearly stated that participants may withdraw at any time if they want to. The researcher will ensure that participants are not exposed to any harm for being part of the study, they will be protected from any harm. The researcher will respect participants and be honest during the study. The researcher will give a clear understanding to participants regarding confidentiality, Anonymity, privacy and confidentiality of the results and the findings of the study. All information shared by participants during the study will be kept private and the results will be presented in an anonymity manner to protect their identity. Interviews recordings will be destroyed immediately the study has been completed.

3.6 Research site

An evaluation of the literature pointed out that no previous studies have been conducted that involves Tsakane Library and the services it offers. The researcher, therefore, investigated the problems and barriers that learners face when they access and utilise library services. Tsakane Library was selected because of the historical significance of the library and the area in which it is situated and the frequency of use by surrounding schools.

3.7 Population

The population in this study were learners who attend the surrounding schools and use the Tsakane Public Library for their school assignments, projects and homework in the 2019 academic year. Learners and library staff involved in the study were found at the Tsakane Library. All learners using the library were allowed to participate in the study. The study investigated the barriers to accessing and utilising public library services in Tsakane township. Learners, the librarians (library staff) or the employees of the library (organisation), and library resources/services were the units of analysis.

The library, as an organisation/institution, was also a unit of analysis and the employees are the ones who render a service to the learners. As a unit of analysis, individuals may be characterised according to their membership in social groupings (Fox & Bayat, 2013:32). Learners were characterised according to their grade levels; for example, primary or secondary school, as well as according to their library usage. Learners who participated in the study were only those who use the public library and were found in the library. Every learner who came into the library to do his or her schoolwork or to use other services in the library formed part of the population. The FGD consisted of learners who were randomly selected to participate in the FGD who was in the library.

3.8 Sampling

Sampling refers to the selection of participants for a particular study. Mason, (2018:63) refers to sample as a part of the population (the totality of entries in which you have an interest), which is the collection of individuals, events and objects about who you want to make inferences. This study was conducted by applying both probability and non-probability sampling. This was achieved by combining convenience, purposive and simple random sampling to select participants. The researcher involved learners who are library users in the study, as the study mainly focuses on the learner's access to and utilisation of library services. A simple random sample is a sample drawn from the population in such a way that each element of that population has the same chance of being drawn (Fox & Bayat, 2013:55). Random sampling was applied only to those learners that indicated that they would participate and who filled the consent forms. The learners to administer questionnaires to were randomly selected as they came to the library. To gather quantitative data, random sampling was used for issuing the questionnaires, so that each learner had an opportunity of being selected. All library staff were given questionnaires to administer as well, combining purposive and simple random sampling to select participants.

3.8.1 Sampling methods

The researcher applied purposive sampling for qualitative data collection. The reason for purposive sampling is that it involves the selection of respondents that will provide the most valuable and useful information (Creswell et al., 2016:178). According to the authors,

this type of sampling permits the researcher to choose participants based on certain criteria.

For example, in this study purposive sampling applied in choosing learners who were using the library, those who would be found in the library and those found at schools. A convenience sample refers to a group of individuals, items, objects, etc. that are conveniently available for the study (Mason, 2018:71). The learners using the library were convenient because their characteristics were similar and they would give the information required from them. Those who did not go to the library would provide the information on what prevents them from using the library services.

The researcher also used convenience sampling to conduct FGDs. A convenience sample is a sample obtained when the most accessible units of the population are selected (Fox & Bayat, 2013:59). The participants were chosen based on their availability. The researcher grouped learners from 3-5 participants in a group and two groups to participate in the discussion where the researcher asked questions. This means 10 participants participated in the FGDs that was conducted at the library. Questionnaires were distributed to the secondary school learners that were found in the library. A purposive sampling includes people of interest and rejects people who do not fit a particular profile or excludes those who do not suit the purpose. If the targeted individuals were busy, convenience sampling was used to administer to those available.

3.8.2 Sampling frame

A sampling frame is a complete list in which each unit of analysis is mentioned only once (Fox & Bayat, 2013: 52). It is a list of all those within a population who can be sampled and may include individuals, a source of material from which a sample is drawn (Mason, 2018:69).

3.8.3 Sampling size

Ten (10) learners were randomly sampled from the library and two primary and two secondary schools for FGDs and 150 questionnaires were distributed. The selection of the sample was based on Gay's (1996:125) guidelines for sampling. According to Gay (1996:125), the larger the population, the smaller the percentage of the population required to get a representative sample.

Gay (1996) states that for smaller populations of 100 or less, there is little point in sampling, in which case the entire population must be included in the study. If the population size is 1 500, 20% should be sampled, and beyond 5 000, the population size is irrelevant. The sample size for this study was 150 and 80 (53%) questionnaires were returned. This sample size was adequate. The focus group discussions consisted of 10 learners, which is also an adequate sample size.

3.9 Validity and reliability

In this study, the research design deals with issues that are concerned with assessing the primary data quality in a study. For Leugh (2015:326), validity is an indication of how sound the research is. To improve validity, the researcher conducted a pilot study. The research used questionnaires and FGDs so that data was adequate to address the research objectives of the study that was conducted. The study also addressed the issue of the reliability of the instruments.

Reliability is important for research, as it tests if the study fulfils its aims and it ensures that the results are due to that particular study. The researcher assessed whether the research instruments/tools used produced stable results. By evaluating the reliability and validity of the design, the quality of the results can be assessed.

The criteria for evaluating quantitative research are reliability, replicability and validity (Bryman et al., 2017:107). Valid data collection means that the findings represent what one is claiming to measure. Replication is about when the researcher chooses to reproduce the findings of others, for instance, to set up whether or not the original results are valid and applicable in a different condition (Bryman et al, 2017:24). Reliability is concerned with whether the results of a study are repeatable.

Reliability is a degree to which research methods produces consistent and stable results, this means that when a test is giving the same repeated result under the same condition (Bryman et al, 2017:24). The researcher explained the procedures for selecting respondents, administering the research instruments and analysing data (Bryman et al., 2017:107). In a quantitative approach, researchers regard the ability to replicate (to reproduce) one another's research as important to the validity of their research findings (Bryman et al., 2017:40).

3.10 Pilot study

According to Silverton (2015:101), a pilot study is a preliminary study on small samples that helps to identify potential problems with the research design, particularly the research instruments. During pretesting, researchers administer the instruments and check that there are no mistakes, such as poor wording, ambiguity, and so on. Pretesting is useful because it can be used to test the reliability and validity of the research instruments (Howell, 2013:119). This is an opportunity to identify questionnaire items that might be misunderstood by the participants. The research instruments were tested at two local schools before they were used in the primary study. Emmel (2013:81) stresses that instruments should be piloted on a group that is similar to the research population. The researcher piloted the questionnaire and interview questions for the FGDs of three learners.

It took an average of twenty-five minutes for the learners to complete the questionnaires, and twenty to forty minutes for each FGD to be completed. Based on the results obtained, the interview questions for the focus groups appeared to be clear and the wording was acceptable. The aim of piloting the questionnaires was to check the appropriate wording and to determine whether they were meaningful to the respondents. This was done to determine whether respondents would provide relevant answers to questions. No issues were raised and the respondents did not have any difficulty in understanding and answering the questions. Schools that participated in the pilot study were excluded from the main study.

3.11 Data collection

Both qualitative and quantitative data are collected in all mixed methods research. The researcher determined when and how the data would be collected. The researcher collected data utilising questionnaires issued to secondary school learners and librarians/library staff and conducted a focus group discussion for learners as a means of verification. The Grade 8 to 12 learners were issued with the questionnaires when they made use of the library. They were given the questionnaires to fill in in the library and brought them back immediately after completing them. The researcher also delivered the questionnaires to the library staff to administer and collect.

3.11.1 Data collection instruments

3.11.1.1 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

An FGD was conducted for the study. The researcher used open-ended questions for the FGD. The researcher grouped the learners in groups of 3 to 5 participants and two groups participated in the discussion. The FGD lasted an hour. The researcher believes that the data collected from a FGD is more varied than the data collected from participants being interviewed on a one-to-one basis. In this study, learners using the library were sampled.

One of the reasons for / advantages of choosing a FGD as one of the data collection tools is that when learners are part of a group they are more relaxed than compared to a one-to-one interview. Data collected from a FGD is more varied than the data collected from participants being interviewed on a one-to-one basis (Bryman et al., 2017:234). In this study learners using the library were contacted. The researcher preferred a FGD because she could obtain information about group feelings and opinions. They save time as they are cheap, quick and cost less money compared to individual interviews.

The researcher required the assistance of the library staff in finding participants since the participants were the learners who visited the library. Interested learners were given consent forms to complete, which were returned at the time and date of the discussion, at a venue arranged by the researcher. The researcher chose the library activity room as an appropriate location as it is familiar to the participants and a public place convenient for participants. The researcher chose this venue to reduce the anxiety of the participant. The facilitator asked questions which could easily be answered without much of a discussion. The facilitator encouraged group participation, by allowing all members of the group to contribute to the discussion.

3.11.1.2 Questionnaires (for Grade 8 to 12 learners) and library staff

The researcher designed three sets of questionnaires to collect data in investigating barriers in accessing and utilising the PLS by learners. The researcher used self-developed questionnaires based on the primary objectives. The questionnaires were in two formats, namely open-ended and closed questions. The researcher decided to use open-ended questions so that the respondents would give comments and opinions on the topic freely.

The researcher also used closed questions, whereby the respondent's answer is guided by and based on the listed answers given. The first part of the questionnaires (Section A) requests biographic information on the gender, grade, age and home language of the participants. In Section B, the participants are required to select the most appropriate answer from the given alternatives. In Section C, the learners are required to give their views on the accessibility of the library services.

The researcher made use of questionnaires because data from questionnaires can be collected quickly and do not require the researcher to be present when the questionnaires are completed. Administering questionnaires is inexpensive and flexible as one can fill them in anytime and anywhere. Questionnaires can be administered to a large number of people simultaneously. Respondents can take their time to complete the question. The respondents were encouraged to answer truthfully.

3.12 Data analysis

In the study, both quantitative and qualitative data analysis was used to analyse data. The researcher analysed data received from the FGD manually in the form of thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is the process of identifying patterns or themes within qualitative data (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017: 2). This makes it a very flexible method, which is a considerable advantage given the diversity of the participants and their experiences. The researcher grouped data according to the related themes. The tape-recorded sessions for each targeted FGD were grouped in themes and reported by way of narratives. That data was analysed by organising and keeping track of the text. This was achieved by cutting, sorting data separately, and marking each piece of data clearly, using boxes to combine information dealing with the same batch of data by labelling those boxes.

Quantitative data (closed questionnaires) was analysed using a commercial analysis program known as the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 20 (SPSS). This is a well-known program used for analysing quantitative research and for statistical analysis in social science. SPSS is among the most widely used programs and was used to perform data entry and analysis and to create tables and graphs.

Results were presented in tables, graphs and figures. As some of the questionnaires consisted of open ended-questions with long explanations that are not easy to categorise, these were analysed using qualitative data analysis, which is content analysis. Content analysis is a qualitative data analysis that identifies and summarises message content (Creswell et al., 2016:101). These authors state that content analysis is used when working with narratives such as analysing qualitative responses to open-ended questions on interviews or FGDs.

The study reveals that insufficient funds are a critical issue the library staff is facing in terms of effective provision of library services to learners. Staff indicated that because of insufficient library funds, there is a shortage of staff, lack of promotion of library and what it offers to people tend to be the most important challenge for the services to be improved. There is a growing number of users, so the library needs to develop new services to maximise their value to the users, but because of budget cuts, it's a challenge. Staff also indicated that budget reductions make them unable to cope with the continued changes and transformation in terms of service delivery which also poses a challenge in learner's access to the resources. Also, they have pointed out that there is a reduction in staff, in such that vacant posts had been freeze and there is also no replacement for other staff members who have resigned or went to pension. Due to staff shortage, there is a reduction of library opening hours especially in the afternoons and during weekends. Findings indicate that adequate funding remains a significant prerequisite for the provision of public library services to the learners. The findings revealed that the unawareness of library services is an issue that learners face to have access to information. Most learners facing the challenges by lacking knowledge and understanding of what kind of information is found in the libraries. Results recovered from the questionnaires administered were analysed, and the results reveal that:

- The absence of relevant resources is the most barrier faced by the learners in accessing and utilising effective library services.
- Lack of awareness was also found to be a major challenge that learners encountered in getting access to information.

3.13 Summary

In this chapter, the sampling method used to identify learners that participated in the study through FGDs and the administering of questionnaires was described. Librarians and library staff from the library were also selected to participate in the study through the administering of questionnaires. Learners were selected randomly at the library for questionnaires as well as for the FGD. One hundred questionnaires were distributed and only 80 were returned.

Chapter 4: Results and discussions

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 4 is about getting responses to questionnaires that were handed to the learners, FGD and staff were compiled, analysed and interpreted. The general aim of this study was to investigate barriers in accessing and utilising public library services by the learners.

4.2 Questionnaires from learners

Personal Information

Table:1 Gender

Gender	n	%
Males	39	49
Females	41	51
TOTAL	80	100

Table 1 reveals that 51% of participants are females which show a minor significant difference with the males (49%).

Table 2: School grades

Grade	n	%
8	11	14%
9	18	23%
10	22	27%
11	20	25 %
12	09	11%
TOTAL	80	100%

Of the learners who participated in the study, 27% are in grade 10, 25% in grade 11 and 25% and 23% are in grade 9. Grade 8 (14%) and 12(11%) had the least participants.

Table 3: Age groups of the participants

Age	n	%
13-14 yrs	12	15%
16-18 yrs	26	32,5%
19-20 yrs	32	40%
21 and over	10	12,5%
TOTAL	80	100%

Table 3 above shows the age groups of the participants. Forty percent of the participants fall in the 19-20 year age group, followed by 16-18 years at (32,5%), 13-14 years at (15%) and the least were 21 years and over at (12,5%).

Table 4: Home language

Home language	n	%
IsiZulu	23	28,75%
Northern Sotho	11	14%
Southern Sotho	20	25%
IsiNdebele	09	11%
Tshivenda	02	2,5%
Tsonga	03	3,75%
IsiXhosa	12	15%
Other (specify)	0	0%
TOTAL	80	100%

Based on the participant's home language, IsiZulu speaking learners were at (28,75%), followed by Southern Sotho at (25%), IsiXhosa at (15%), Northern Sotho (14%), IsiNdebele (9%) whereas other languages were below 5%.

Section B Table 5: Use of specific services. Please tick the one you use.

Service	Regularly	Sometimes	Never
1.Borrowing books	16 (20%)	12 (15%)	0
2.Internet	75 (94%)	15 (19%)	4 (5%)
3.Photocopying	15 (19%)	23 (29%)	5 (6%)
4.Study space	58 (73%)	45 (56%)	0
5.Reading magazines and newspapers	16 (20%)	19 (24%)	2 (2.5%)
6.Reference services	67 (84%)	21 (26%)	0
7.User education/library orientation	4 (5%)	0	9 (11%)
8.Lamination and book bindery	0	0	76 (95%)
9. Reading competitions/ programs	7 (9%)	7 (9%)	5 (6%)

Table5 above shows the frequency of library services used by the participants. Internet use has the highest response at (94%), followed by the reference services (84%), study space (73%), reading of magazines/ newspaper (20%), photocopying (19%). The results indicate that the participants seldom participate in the library reading programs and lamination and bindery services. The table also shows that the borrowing of books is one of the least-used services at the library.

Table 6: Awareness of services the library offers.

Awareness of library services on offer	n	%
1.Aware of all the services	46	57,5%
2. Know some of the services on offer	24	30%
3. Not aware of all the services	10	12,5%
4. Nothing at all	0	0%
TOTAL	80	100%

Table 6 indicates that 46 (57.5%) learners are familiar with the available library services. While the majority of the users claimed awareness, 24 (30%) of the respondents knows of some of the services on offer and 10 (12.5%) lack of awareness of the services. A significant number of respondents (34, 42.5%) are not aware of all the services the library offers and what they are capable of using.

Table 7: Library usage

Library usage	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	N
1.Do you use the library for all your school work	41 (51%)	32 (40%)	4 (5%)	3(4%)	80
2. Does the library give access to computer facilities	22(28%)	38(48%)	20(25%)	0	80
3.Are you satisfied with the library resources collection	19 (24%)	11(14%)	30(38%)	20 (25%)	80
4. Is the library staff helpful	45 (56%)	15 (19%)	15(19%)	5(6%)	80
5. Are you satisfied with the furniture and equipment facilities	28 (35%)	22 (28%)	25(31%)	15 (19%)	80
6. Is the reading room in the library available for use	65 (81%)	15 (19%)	0	0	80

Table 7 indicates the services the library is used for. Ninety-one percent (91%) of the respondents agreed that they use the library for school work and (9%) disagreed. The majority of the respondents (76%) has access to computer facilities. On the other hand, 63% are not satisfied with the library resource collection. Seventy-five percent (75%) of the respondents indicate that the library staff is helpful. All respondents indicated that the reading room is always available. A significant number of respondents indicates the extent of user contentment with the library services offered in the library is more impressive.

Section C: Information needs

Table 8: Discipline-specific information sources

What type of information do you require from the library?	n	%
Social science	12	15%
Mathematics	32	40%
Science	16	20%
Commerce	20	25%
TOTAL	80	100%

Table 8 above shows that the majority of the respondents (40%) use the library to obtain information on Mathematics, Commerce (25%) and Science (20%). Only 15% look for information in the Social Sciences.

Table 9: Reasons for acquiring information

For what purposes do you require the information?	n	%
Completion of homework	76	95%
Reading for leisure	1	1%
Reading newspapers	3	3,75%
TOTAL	80	100%

Table 9 shows that the majority of the participants (95%) acquire information to complete their school work. A small percentage (3,75%) use it to access newspapers and for leisurely readings (1,25%). No respondents use the library to get world news updates.

Table 10: Ease of acquiring information

Do you find the information you are looking for?	n	%
Yes	38	48%
No	42	52%
TOTAL	80	100%

Table 10 shows the breakdown of responses to the ease of acquiring information. It indicates that the majority of respondents (52%) do not find the information they are looking for. Only (48%) said they get useful information from the library.

Table 11: Satisfaction index

Are you satisfied with the information you get?	n	%
Yes	36	45%
No	44	55%
TOTAL	80	100%

Of those respondents who indicated that they are not satisfied with the information they get from the library, 44 (55%) indicated that the information is out to date and that the library lacks adequate information resources and services.

Table 12: Library membership

Do you have a library membership card?	n	%
Yes	35	44%
No	45	56%
TOTAL	80	100%

Table 12 indicates that only 35 (44%) of the respondents possesses library membership cards. The majority 45 (56%) indicated that they do not have a library card. Those without library cards indicated that they don't know how to go about to obtain a card and others highlighted that they don't have the necessary documentation to acquire cards. Others have lost them and have to pay a card lost-fee charge of which they do not have.

Table 13: Suggested improvements to library services

What do you like the library to improve on?	n	%
Buy more library resources	58	72%
Increase more space	2	2,5%
Extend library operating hours	6	7,5%
Buy more computers	11	14%
Provide more furniture	3	4%
TOTAL	80	100%

The majority of the respondents (72%) suggest that the library should increase their resources, fourteen percent (14% indicate computers are required, 7,5% indicated that the library operating hours be extended and the least number (2,5% need more space and more furniture (4%).

Information accessibility

Table14: What type of media /information resources do you use to obtain the information you need?

What kind of media /information resources do you use to obtain the information you need?	n	%
Books	52	65%
Computer print outs	0	0%
Encyclopaedia	6	7,5%
Study guides	22	27,5%
TOTAL	80	100%

The majority of respondents (65%) use books, followed by the study guides at (27,5%) and Encyclopaedia (7,5%) as a resource to obtain the information they need. No one does computer printouts.

List the media you use to acquire information

On the question of listing the type of media they use to acquire information, they have indicated that they use mostly the books (92%), only a few (8%) uses the computers.

Do you encounter any problems when using that information?

Eighty-eight percent (88%) indicated that they don't encounter any problems when using the information, 12% indicated that they encounter problems when accessing information. Problems listed include few resources, outdated resources and lack of library cards to take resources home.

Table 15: Challenges concerning library computer usage?

What challenges do you encounter concerning library computer usage?	n	%
Time is limited	25	31%
One needs to have a library card	10	12,5%
Have to pay for printouts	15	19%
Users are not allowed to use their memory sticks	30	37,5%
TOTAL	80	100%

Table 15 indicates that users face many challenges in using computers to access information. The majority of respondents 30, (37.5%) indicated that it is not allowed to use their memory sticks, 25 (31%) complain that time is limited, 15 (19%) have to pay for the printouts and 10 (12.5%) do not have library card as a requirement to access the computers.

3.2.6 Does the library staff help you to find information?

81% of the respondents indicated that the staff helps them find the required information, whereas 19% showed dissatisfaction when it comes to being assisted by staff.

4.3 Findings

The findings obtained through the FGD drawn from the study on the access to and utilisation of Public Library Services by learners at Tsakane PL have been organised according to the research questions:

1. What are the barriers you encounter in accessing the library?

Participants indicated that one of the barriers they encounter in using the library in the absence of a library card, especially if learners need to loan books or use the computer facilities as it is a requirement for accessing these services.

3. What do you like most about the library and why?

It provides a place for using free WiFi, meeting friends, having discussions about school work, and getting school-related resources. It provides the use of computers. The results on what the learners like about the library reveal that they manage to get more information for their school work and as a result, they achieve better marks and they find teaching and learning interesting.

4. How can the library services be improved?

Suggested improvements would be the potential for improving service quality in terms of hiring more staff to avoid the long wait to be served while the staff are busy servicing other users. More books and other library resources should be purchased. Other services such as photocopying and printing should also be offered free of charge. More computers should be purchased to accommodate more users at a time.

5. How can the collection be improved?

The participants indicated that more relevant information could be added to the collection. African writers and African literature should be included in the collection.

6. What types of programmes should the library implement?

Free computer lessons should be provided.

7. How will these programmes benefit you?

People from the community will be able to use computers to look and apply for jobs without asking for assistance from the staff. Women would also be able to use computers to find information on how to keep their houses clean and to improve their healthy lifestyles.

8. Does the librarian feel equipped to provide such training?

For the librarians to provide such training they need to be trained and a special staff member responsible for the training should be hired, so that the training should not interfere with the librarian's daily duties and tasks.

From the discussion of the findings from the staff responses, it was discovered that the library is facing severe budget constraints. The library survey collected from the staff showed that when the budget is allocated, most of the funds are not used for the acquisition of resources and information needed for school by the learners. Although the library has staff are well trained and in possession of needed skills, there is no one specific who is responsible mainly for serving the needs of learners who request information literacy skills.

The highlights of the findings include a lack of current resources, inadequate funding, and a lack of trained personnel. The improvement suggestions include an increase in allocated funding for the library. Due to resource constraints, the library finds itself with a lack of funds and unable to employ more staff which will be able to go the people and promote the library. The library also finds that their staffs due to insufficiently training provided, they are failing to meet learner's orders which presents a serious barrier to improving services to the users. About the research questions and the objective of the study analysed data indicated the challenges facing learners in using public libraries in the accomplishment of their information needs. The study also revealed that services offered do not meet the needs of the learners. The study has discovered that learners' information needs are not always met, which resulted in them being discouraged to use the library.

Even though some of the learners' needs are not always met, this survey has shown that other learners indicate a high extent in learner's contentment about the services they receive. This is probably because the library offers a range of services that most of the youth are interested in, such as free WIFI.

4.4 Discussion of Findings from the staff responses,

Results recovered from questionnaires administered were analysed, and the result reveals that: -

- Unavailability of relevant resources is the major barrier faced by the learners in accessing and utilising the provision of effective library services effective.
- Lack of awareness was also found to be the major challenge learners encountered in getting access to information.

4.5 Summary

This chapter presents the findings of the study on the investigation of the barriers in accessing and utilising library services by learners at Tsakane public library. The findings, in general, indicate the budget for the library is extremely inadequate; the library lacks the current materials and unawareness of the services. Chapter 5 will provide the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter gives the conclusion, recommendations, achievement of the aims and purpose of the study and suggests directions for further research. This study investigated the challenges in accessing and utilising public library services by learners at Tsakane public library. Objectives of the study were as follows:

1. To investigate if the learners are aware of the resources available at Tsakane Public Library

Mahwasane (2016) indicated that public libraries are great places for learners to visit to study and complete assignments in a group/ as individuals. Public libraries support learners in finding their answers through research. Mahwasane (2016) further emphasized that libraries are a great resource for students and it should be a place that is frequently visited by learners to increase knowledge, develop skills and help achieve goals. This is confirmed by the responses from the participants, which shows that the library information resource centre provides respondents with necessary resources to do their schoolwork and that they can use the library as a resource centre to discover new resources and locate different types of information both in print and electronic format.

Mahwasana (2016) stated the importance of information retrieval skills for everyone using the library to access information in different formats. She stated that due to lack of proper knowledge on information retrieval techniques learners face a challenge in accessing some of the electronic information using the Google search engine, as learners are not aware of other databases like Emerald and Ebscohost which can also provide them with relevant information. Askin (2015) has also mentioned that technology illiteracy is also a challenge in accessing information.

This finding is supported by Pew (2012) who is an Internet survey found that 83% of users in public libraries use Google search engines to find information on the web (Purcell, Brenner, & Rainie, 2012). The study found that Public library resources that are not indexed by search engines cannot populate on search engine results pages, so a searcher would need to begin on a library homepage to access these resources.

The participants also believe the public library to be a place for independent learning compared to what occurs in a formal class setting whereby the teacher is in front of the class telling them what to do, which is different from learning that took place in a school setting.

2. To investigate/assess whether the library provides any form of user education to its users

During the Focus Group Discussion, the participants pointed out that the library does not offer them formal programmes to inform them about basic library routines by which staff can inform them about the physical layout of the place, procedures for using the library resources relevant to their needs or making them aware of the staff availability when seeking assistance.

As a result, they pointed out that they just go to anyone who is in the library whether it's a security or a cleaner. Furthermore, they do not have access to some of the services that are available and the basic understanding, skills and knowledge that are required for the effective and efficient use of the library resources and services. User education to enable better use of available resources kept in the library is non-existent. Users should also be informed of information services are currently on offer.

The results are supported by Tahar (n.d) who mentioned that the library should be taken into consideration in caring for the users' needs and behaviour, including physiological, social, cultural, aptitude, safety etc. Any PL needs to provide and maintain good customer service. It is the task and duty of a librarian, library staff and library management to develop a friendly environment within the library. For the staff to perform and maintain good customer service, staff should be trained in maintaining friendliness. By so doing, users develop a friendly feeling towards staff when visiting the library. Tahar (n.d) further reiterates that libraries do not provide equal opportunities for different types of users.

3. To examine the accessibility and usage of PLS by learners

Restricted library hours are another major challenge indicated by learners as a key factor which hinders them from accessing and utilizing the library. Participants indicated that they have only an hour or less to use the resources because of the restricted operating hours. Delrieu and Gibson (2017) state that library operating hours determine their attractiveness through access. When large groups of people come to the library daily, it is an indication of its allure and a contributing factor in the increase of use of its facilities.

4. To establish the extent of the learners' contentment with the services rendered by the library.

Miles and Gibson (2014) reveal that internet access and electronic services increased library attractiveness, as more users, especially the youth, prefers ebooks rather than the hard copy. The availability WIFI in the public libraries contributes to the increased number of personal computers (PCs) available connected to the Internet and an increased number of registered users in public libraries. PL that offer this service attract a larger number of library users. The study revealed that the participants were satisfied with library services such as circulation service (issuing and renewals), and enquiry or reference services. It found that learners were dissatisfied with the usage of internet services in the library, as the time allocation is too short and that downloading and printing of online resources were not offered.

5. To determine how learners, understand the role of the PL and that one of librarians

Learners have indicated they understand the role the public libraries play in their lives in terms of providing them with the skills to be lifelong learners. According to Mnkeni-Saurombe and Zimu (2013), the role of the public library is (a) to make resources available to every patron, regardless of age, financial status, or any other factors, providing a quiet place for study, research, reading, and learning, (c) educating, inform, and entertain its users through offering different programs for all age groups, (d) allowing patrons to visit the library and loan /check out any materials and (e) housing a collection of materials, such as newspapers, historical records, nonfiction, and fiction.

6. To offer suggestions on how to encourage learners to use the library services

Library staff indicated that inviting local authors to the library every quarter to discuss books with them can motivate learners. This can be a strategy to inspire learners to read and promote the love of reading. Learners should be taught the reading strategies as most of them do not like reading because it's hard for them. Such strategies may help them feel confident and to read fluently. Introducing the book clubs by forming reading groups is a great plan for learners to meet with others and friends and to socialize and share their views.

Through this reading will be much more enjoyable, and on the other hand, their skills for spelling writing is being increased. Learners love technology that can be proved even the way they are obsessed about their smartphones making them be more involved in the technology applications can be the best technique which will push them to come to the library.

5.2 Conclusions

Findings have shown that there is also a lack of awareness of services offered by the Public Library. The public libraries have been found lacking the necessary resources to deliver effective information services to participants. Inadequate funding hampers the delivery of innovative services. The survey showed that the library has a shortage of staff, so they are unable to accommodate all the information that is required. The study confirmed that challenges such as staffing, lack of funding, restrictive hours, insufficient space, restrictive rules and regulations, insufficient resources, have led to poor access to service and the underutilisation of the library.

From the results of the survey, it can be concluded that the participants rely mostly on Internet resources for their school-related information needs. The results also show that the users visit the library daily to search for the information they use to complete school tasks and for general knowledge. They believe that the library resources should be improved because they are unable to find relevant informed

Human Resources. Many of the respondents suggested that they need more and trained librarians to guide and assist them with their library queries. There was also a concern that Human Resources have to advertise posts and hire skilled employees.

Facilities/services. Participants suggested that more tables and chair are required to accommodate all users.

Books. Participants request more books and recent editions on a diverse range of topics. They also suggested more recent collection for the non- fictions sections.

Adequate staff training, better-trained librarians are required. The issue of developing employees was also their concern, that when they develop employees they are sharpening their skills and making those employees competent and more valuable for their routine operations.

Service provision: Participants suggested that the following services such as relevant and updated collection and computer or Internet access should be added to the PL service offerings.

Library management. This will focus on certain challenges facing the library. This involves making provisions for the maintenance of the library, systems used for the operations and services and allocation of budget to run the library.

5.3 Recommendations

1. Participants indicated they are often afraid to ask for assistance. Library staff should be friendly and more personable.
2. The library collection resources should include more up-to-date books and a larger selection of books, more magazines and more reference materials.
3. Concerning computers and computer access, increased times to access computers increase bandwidth and training should be provided.
4. Library User Education will assist with increased usage of the library and increased accessibility.
5. Relevant training concerning clients should be conducted frequently and timeously, by offering library orientation.
6. Being friendly: Library staff should be friendly and considerate. They should use common terms which can be easily be understood by users. When they assist, the staff should save time by navigating information quickly.

7. Librarians should assist users on how to access and use information and resources quickly and promptly. They should be equipped enough to explain how to use the latest technologies. That will help them to improve users with their research skills.
8. Increasing access to library resources - Sufficient access areas to wireless networks with an increased number of computers with wireless access. Public libraries have to keep learners up-to-date on new acquisitions, upcoming library events and programs via social network sites, such as Facebook and Twitter.
9. The physical library space/ Study Spaces - Enough physical space for independent study should be available to learners. Spaces should be attractive, flexible and accessible spaces that can keep learners engaged and provide learning opportunities should be available in the library. Learning spaces plan and design should be in such that learner's information needs are met and the PL usually have more spaces that can be used for reading, studying or completing assignments. Libraries may also provide a private space that can be reserved for individual studying, a group project or meetings.
10. More library furniture is needed such as tables and chairs to accommodate more students.
11. The library should invest in more books and recent editions, especially in the non-fiction section. The study then recommends that the library itself should inform people about their services to the learners/ communities they serve.
12. The library itself (library staff) should be responsible for the marketing of the library and its services.

5.4 Achievement of the objective of the study

The study shows that progress is made toward accomplishing the objectives especially, (1) to investigate if the learners are aware of the resources available, (2) to determine what information services are currently offered for learners, (3) to examine the accessibility and usage of PLS by learners, (4) to establish the extent of the learners' contentment with services rendered by the library, and (5) the usage of technology resources accessibility should be improved. Objectives of the public library are to give access to resources to its users as well as organising information sources and arranging them so they can be stored and retrieved with minimum effort.

These include:

Access Information - Providing reliable and flexible access to high-quality information to meet learners educational and service needs.

Information

Empowerment - Providing information services and educational opportunities to further learner's information skills to be applied for life-long learning.

Appropriate Environment - Providing physical spaces appropriate for the discussions and exchange of ideas and knowledge.

5.5 Recommendations for future research

Based on this study on the challenges on the provision and utilisation of school library services in township secondary schools, the researcher suggests that further research can be initiated to determine the current situation in the management and provision of school library resources in all school libraries, including primary schools on the East Rand, Johannesburg. More research should be conducted in this field to guide the provision of fund for the public libraries. Also, additional research is needed to identify the best methods for librarians to assist young users. Additional research is needed on how young library users and librarians view and interact with one another to improve the relationship between the two groups. More research is needed on the relationship between the availability and use of a quality library collection and academic achievement. The research should focus on the differences between what librarians perceive to be the needs of school learners.

5.6 Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate the challenges of accessing and utilizing public library services by learners. It also looked at how the new education system forces learners to use the public library and its resources. It also looked at how the library rules, policies and regulations can demotivate learner's use of the library. Moreover, libraries have to deal with the issue of the rising costs of resources, to be able to successfully provide for the communities.

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LIST OF QUESTIONNAIRES FOR LEARNERS

Section A

1. Personal information

1.1 Gender

Male	Female

1.2 Grade

8	
9	
10	
11	
12	

1.3 Age

13-15 years	
16-18 years	
19-20 years	
21 and over	

1.4 Home language

IsiZulu	
Northern Sotho	
Southern Sotho	
IsiNdebele	

Tshivenda	
Tsonga	
IsiXhosa	
Other (specify)	

Section B

2.1 Use of specific services. Please tick the one you use.

Service	Regularly	Sometimes	Never
1. Borrowing books			
2. Internet			
3. Photocopying			
4. Study space			
5. Reading magazines and newspapers			
6. Reference services			
7. User education/library orientation			
8. Lamination and book bindery			
9. Reading competitions/ programs			

2.2 Do you know what the library offers?

1. Aware of all the services	
2. Know some of the services on offer	
3. Not aware of all the services	
4. Nothing at all	

2.3 Library usage.? Please tick a box

	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree
1.Do you use the library for all your school work				
2. Does the library give access to computer facilities				
3.Are you satisfied with the library resources collection				
4. Is the library staff helpful				
5. Are you satisfied with the furniture and equipment facilities				
6. Is the reading room in the library available for use				

Section C

3.1 Information needs

3.1.1 What kind of information do you require from the library?

Social science	
Mathematics	
Science	
Commerce	

3.1.2 For what purposes do you need the information?

Completion of homework	
Reading for leisure	
Updates about the world news	
Reading newspapers	

3.1.3 Do you get that information?

Yes	
No	

3.1.4 Are you satisfied with the information you get?

Yes	
No	

3.1.5 If no, why you are not satisfied?

.....

3.1.6 Do you have a library membership card?

Yes	
No	

3.1.7 If no, why you don't have one?

.....

3.1.8 What do you like the library to improve on?

Buy more library resources	
Increase more space	
Extend library operating hours	
Buy more computers	
Provide more furniture	

3.2. Information accessibility. Select the answer from the given below

3.2.1 What kind of media /information resources do you use to obtain the information you need?

Books	
Computer print outs	
Encyclopedia	
Study guides	

3.2.2 List the media you use to acquire information?

.....

3.2.3 Do you encounter any problems when using that information?

.....

3.2.4 If yes, what problems?

.....

3.2.5 What challenges do you encounter concerning library computer usage?

Time is limited	
One needs to have a library card	
Have to pay for printouts	
Users are not allowed to use their memory sticks	

3.2.6 Does the library staff help you to find information?

.....

Focus Group Discussion

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the barriers you encounter in accessing the library?
2. Which library facilities are the most accessible and why?
3. What you like most about the library and why?
4. How can the library services be improved?
5. How can the collection be improved?
6. What type of programmes should the library implement?
7. How will these programmes benefit you?
8. Does the librarian feel equipped to provide such training?

LIBRARY STAFF QUESTIONNAIRES

Section 1: Demography

Mark with an X next to an appropriate answer

1.1 Gender

Male	Female

1.2 Age

Between 18 and 25	
Between 26 and 34	
Between 35 and 40	
Above 40	

1.3 Highest qualifications

Diploma	
Degree	
Honours	
Masters	
PhD	
Other (specify)	

1.4 Job title

Library Assistant	
Library Aid	
Chief Librarian	
Librarian	

1.5 Work experience

1-5 years	
5-10 years	
10-15 years	
15-20 years	
Above 20 years	

Section 2: Use of services by learners in a library

2.1 Which of the following services do learners use in the library? (Mark as many as applicable)

	Very Frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely
Computers				
WIFI				
Photocopy				
Laminating				
Printing				
Scanning				
Lending books				
Reference services				
Study area				

2.2 How satisfied are learners with the services they get?

	Not at all satisfied	Very Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied
Reference			
Computers			
Lending books			

Printing			
Scanning			

Section 3: Librarians' perceived usefulness of ICTs facilities in the libraries

3.1 Are ICTs available in the libraries easy to use?

Yes	
No	

3.2 If your answer to question 3.1 is yes, explain why?

.....

3.3 If your answer to question 3.1 is no, explain why?

.....

.....

3.4 What is your view should be done to ensure the ease of use of the facilities

.....

.....

3.5 In your view, of how useful are ICTs facilities available in the libraries?

Very useful	
Not useful	

3.6 If your answer to question 3.5 is "very useful ", explain why?

Kept us informed about the new developments in our profession as well as acquiring more knowledge

.....

3.7 If your answer to question 3.5 is “not useful” explain why?

.....

3.8 If your answer to question 3.5 is “not useful” what is your view should be done to ensure that facilities become useful to you.

.....

3.9 Do you train learners on how to use computer facilities?

Yes	
No	

3.10 What training needs do you have to the users?

.....

Section 4: Librarians’ ICTs training

4.1 Have you received training on how to use ICTs available in the libraries?

Yes	
No	

4.2 If yes, which of the following applications have you been trained on?

Internet	
Microsoft Word	
Microsoft Excel	
PowerPoint	
Microsoft Access	
Other (Specify)	

Section E: Challenges experienced by learners in using library services

5.1 What challenges do learners face in using ICTs in the libraries?

.....

5.2 What challenges do learners face in using and accessing the services?

.....

5.3 What challenges do learners face when it comes to information needs?

.....

5.4 In your view how could such challenges be alleviated?

.....

5.5 Is the library sufficiently equipped for school learners?

.....

5.6 Is the location for the library convenient for the learners?

.....

5.7 Are library facilities and staff sufficient?

.....

5.8 Are library operating hours accommodate learners to use the library?

.....



Ekurhuleni
METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

Head Office

Sport, Recreation, Arts and
Culture

41 Van Riebeeck Street
Old Magistrate Court
Alberton North

Tel : (011) 999 3212
Fax : 086 215 7457
www.ekurhuleni.com

Email: Lindiwe.Shandu@ekurhuleni.gov.za

Attention: Lindiwe Shandu

Tsakane Library
Control Librarian
Cnr Xhosa & Gubhela Street
Tsakane, 1550

Lindiwe Shandu

DEPARTMENT OF SPORT, ARTS, CULTURE AND RECREATION: LIBRARY SERVICES:
REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO WRITE A PAPER ON BARRIERS IN ACCESSING AND
UTILIZING PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES

Permission is hereby granted for you to write a paper on the "Barriers in accessing and utilizing
public library services" as per your request.

You will be required to present your findings and recommendation to the Ekurhuleni Library
Management.

Yours faithfully