



The contribution of eThekweni Municipal Public Libraries towards social cohesion

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DECLARATION

I, Mohini Padayachee declare that:

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ABSTRACT

The term social cohesion has become very popular in the post-apartheid South African political landscape. The government, through social cohesion, has embarked on a process of nation building. Public libraries' role in social cohesion is to provide access to information which is recognised as a human right and a means to redistribute power and status.

The purpose of the study was to examine the contribution of eThekweni Municipal Libraries (EML) to social cohesion. This was achieved through examining EML's four main resources namely: library buildings, library collections, library programmes and staff.

The conceptual framework on social cohesion used in this study was developed by researchers within the South African Human Science Research Council taking into account the South African context. The conceptual framework model identified three domains to be considered when researching social cohesion, namely, the economic domain, civic domain and socio-cultural domain. The study falls within socio-cultural domain as libraries are contributors to social capital through the services they provide. The DAC (2018:102) views the goal of libraries to be enhancing "quality of life, wellbeing and happiness, social capital, social cohesion and social inclusion, safety and security."

All branch librarians in EML were requested to participate in the study making for a census survey through a self-administered questionnaire. This study was primarily quantitative in design with librarians given an opportunity to provide qualitative responses to elaborate on their answers if they so chose. A response rate of 65% was achieved which is considered good.

The major research findings indicate that while EML are contributing towards social cohesion in terms of the four resources noted above, there are shortcomings due to a lack of

effective policies and procedures, funding, staff training and expertise. This is compounded by the lack of a proper legislative framework for public libraries to operate within. This has resulted in the current precarious state of Public Libraries being insufficiently funded, resulting in Public Libraries being referred to as an unfunded mandate.

Conclusions and recommendations based on the findings are made. The study established that effectively contributing towards social cohesion is dependent on efficient and effective functioning of library resources which in turn is dependent on a number of factors. These include a proper legislative framework that provides a firm foundation for the functioning of public libraries, adequate funding as well as skills and knowledge on social cohesion.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my beloved family. My late grandparents, Mr S.V. Padayachee and Mrs Sundaram Padayachee. My late father, Mr G.B. Padayachee. My mother, Susheela Padayachee. My brothers Mahendiren, Praveshan, Kalin and my sister in-law Samantha and Deveshni Padayachee. My gorgeous nephew Luca James and niece Simika Padayachee for their love and ongoing support.

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“Satyam Shivam Sundaram”- the truth is eternal and beautiful (Upanishad : Chapter 3)

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
ALA	American Library Association
BBibl	Baccalaureus Bibliothecologiae
BInf	Bachelor of Information
BLIS	Bachelor of Library and Information Science
CCNY	Carnegie Corporation of New York
CDP	Collection Development Policy
CDP1	Collection Development Planning
CE	Continued Education
CHE	Council of Higher Education
CIDB	Construction Industry Development Board
CLP	Children's Literature Programme
CLIP	Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals
CPD	Continued Professional Development
DAC	Department of Arts and Culture
DBE	Department of Basic Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECDRC	Early Childhood Development Reading Centre
EML	eThekweni Municipal Libraries
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IBBYSA	International Board on Books for Young People South Africa
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IFLA	International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions
ISO	International Organisation for Standardisation
ICT	Information Communication Technology
LBGT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender
LIS	Library and Information Services
LIS1	Library and Information Science
LIASA	Library and Information Association of South Africa

MILE	Municipal Institute of Learning
NBI	National Business Initiative
NDP	National Development Plan
NEENU	National Education and Evaluation Development Unit
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NLSA	National Library of South Africa
ND:LIS	National Diploma: Library and Information Science
OHSA	Occupational Health and Safety Act
ORF	Oral Reading Frequency
PSEE	Private Sector Energy Efficiency Programme
RESEP	Research on Socio-Economic Policy
SABS	South African Bureau of Standards
SALA	South African Library Association
SANS	South African National Standard
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SCM	Supply Chain Management
SPSS	Statistical Package of the Social Sciences
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNISA	University of South Africa
WLIC	World Library and Information Congress
WSP	Work skills training programme

Chapter one: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

While apartheid ended in 1994 with the holding of the first democratic election, South Africa remains a divided nation. One of the major tasks faced by, and still facing government, is how to build a unified nation from a divided and fractured past. One response by the government is that it has embarked on making social cohesion a very important part of its strategic plan to build a unified nation. Outcome 14 of the National Development Plan (NDP) for 2030 by government lists the outcomes it expects to achieve by the year 2030 and the departments mandated to achieve them. In sub-outcome 2, action line 8, the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) mentions building new libraries, thereby recognising the value of libraries as a vehicle towards social cohesion. The definition of social cohesion used in this study is taken from the DAC (2012: 1). It defines social cohesion as “the degree of social integration and inclusion in communities and society at large, and the extent to which mutual solidarity finds expression among individuals and communities”. The eThekweni Municipality bases its Integrated Development Plan (IDP) on information and policies of national government. Social cohesion has thus been written into the eThekweni Municipality’s IDP. eThekweni Municipal Libraries (EML) form part of the Service Unit of Parks, Recreation and Culture, which is the unit mandated by eThekweni Municipality’s IDP to undertake Plan 6 of the IDP, namely, to create a socially cohesive and united nation. As will be shown below libraries are seen as having a key role to play in addressing the issue of social cohesion and this study seeks to determine whether EML are contributing to such cohesion.

1.2 Brief background on eThekweni Municipal Libraries (EML)

eThekweni Municipal Library was established in 1853 as the “Durban Mechanics Institute” for “the intellectual improvement of its members and others” and it is one of the oldest institutions in KwaZulu-Natal. In 1911 the Durban Corporation took over the running of the service and the library was moved to its current location in City Hall (eThekweni Municipality, 2017: 1). The Durban Corporation during a restructuring process became known as eThekweni Municipality.

eThekwini Municipal Libraries forms part of local government services rendering a service to the citizens of the metropolitan area. The library services comprise 92 branch libraries which offer a free service. Members of the community can enrol as library members which allow them to borrow items for a specified loan period which then need to be returned to the point of issue. Services also include free access to the internet as well as the running of library programmes designed to educate the community. Today, EML has a total of 592 977 members and library materials of over a million items (eThekwini Municipality, nd). Until the end of apartheid EML did not actively provide a service to the majority of the citizens of eThekwini due to the apartheid laws in South Africa. EML is actively trying to address the imbalance in service delivery caused by the legacy of apartheid. Currently, EML's aim and vision is as follows:

eThekwini Municipality Libraries and Heritage Department aims to promote the quality of life, creativity and life-long learning of the citizens of eThekwini by providing integrated access to information and knowledge through developing, interpreting and preserving our culture and heritage in libraries, museums, art galleries, science centres and living culture and heritage. Our Vision for our Heritage and Information Services is to create a leading footprint and digital gateway in Africa that provides knowledge, opportunity and experience of culture and heritage (eThekwini Municipality, nd: 1).

The situation regarding the branch libraries which make up EML will be described in Chapter three.

1.3 Research problem

Libraries playing a significant role in social cohesion would strengthen their institutional position both within the municipality and society as a whole. According to the DAC (2015) there are currently 1 612 public and community libraries serviced by nine provincial library services and 381 public libraries serviced by six metropolitan library services to meet the need of a population of 51 million. "This works out to 1 library service point for 31 600 people" (DAC, 2015: 27). The South African Constitutional Bill of Rights includes the right of access to information, and this provides the mandate for the South African library and information services (LIS) sector. The South African Public Library and Information Services Bill (DAC, 2013) aims to determine the national norms and standards for public libraries. Public libraries are a provincial function as stated by part A schedule 5 of the Constitution. Municipalities are

involved in providing the actual service. However, due to the confusion over the interpretation of libraries as a provincial function this has had a negative impact on the service. According to the DAC (2013: iii) “This has resulted in public libraries being left ‘in limbo’ with no clear institutional home”. Section 17 of the above-mentioned Bill empowers a Member of the Executive Council (MEC) in a province to assign the function to municipalities, considering the provisions of sections 9 and 10 of the Municipal Systems Act. Until the Bill is enacted, provinces can only conclude agency agreements with municipalities for the delivery of the function. Since public municipal libraries form part of an unfunded mandate, there is the constant threat to funding. According to the DAC (2013: 43) “Potentially, it will take just a few municipalities to stop funding the service to trigger a chain reaction.” Given their often-precarious position within municipalities, libraries need to be cognisant of the manner in which they do “business”. They need to be seen to be a valuable asset to municipalities including aiding municipalities in their function to bring unity to a divided nation. While it is generally acknowledged that public libraries play a valuable role in society, their contribution to social cohesion is an under-researched area. The research into public libraries and social cohesion is meagre. In this regard the LIS Transformation Charter (DAC, 2014:45) states that insufficient time prevents a comprehensive study of aligning “traditional aims and objectives of libraries with national imperatives such as poverty eradication, social cohesion, and economic development”. Given this, and in the context of social cohesion being a key mandate of government, the issue that this study sought to address is EML’s role in contributing towards social cohesion.

1.4 Purpose, objective and key questions

Given the research problem outlined in 1.3 above, the purpose of the study was to investigate the contribution of eThekweni Municipal Libraries towards social cohesion. In order to accomplish this, the specific objective of the study was:

- To establish whether eThekweni Municipal Libraries have the resources in place to address and foster social cohesion.

The key questions focused on the specific resources (human and material) which play a role in addressing and fostering social cohesion. These resources are the library building, library collection, library programmes and library staff. The key questions thus read as follows:

- Is the library building designed/structured in a functional manner to foster social cohesion and meet the needs of the community it serves?
- Does the library collection support social cohesion and address the needs of the community?
- What library programmes are run by staff to address and foster social cohesion in the communities?
- Do the librarians' education, skills and on-going training equip them to address and foster social cohesion in their communities?

1.5 Rationale of the study

As alluded to above, it is evident from a careful perusal of the literature that after 1994 no study has been conducted at EML on the success (or otherwise) of the implementation of policies derived from local government's IDP stemming from the national government's NDP. This study will assess the implementation of the policies with a specific focus on the policy of social cohesion. This will be done from the perspective of the branch librarians who are tasked with taking municipal public library services to the people. The hypothesis of this study is based on the premise that a gap exists between policy expectations and service delivery implementation. It is also evident from the literature that the role of the public library in promoting social cohesion is an under-researched area in the South African context and this study can be seen as an attempt to address this. More specifically, it is anticipated that the findings of the study will help improve EML's ability to render services according to prescribed policies thereby meeting governmental objectives towards national unity. The process of assessment will demonstrate what is being done well and should be continued, as well as what needs to be changed and any additional activities that could be introduced.

1.6 Conceptual model

The study relied on a conceptual model of social cohesion by Struwig, Roberts, Sithole, Tilley, Weir-Smith and Mokhele (2013) their conceptual model was based on one developed by Bernard (1999). As can be seen in Figure 1.1 below, the model identified three domains to be considered when researching social cohesion, namely, the economic domain, the civic domain and the socio-cultural domain. The first domain discusses issues of economic development and fosters

strategies to reduce wealth disparities. The second domain, the political or civic domain, discusses issues relating to common values and a lively civic culture. The third domain is the social-cultural domain and incorporates issues of social capital, trust, tolerance and shared identity. The study falls within this third domain for the following two reasons. Firstly, libraries are contributors to social capital through the services they provide. Secondly, in order for libraries to perform their functions effectively, the resources that they provide must meet the needs of the community. In doing so libraries will be contributing to social cohesion which encompasses the building of trust, tolerance, shared identity and the afore-mentioned social capital. The socio-cultural domain in the South African context, as guided by the conceptual model, would also refer to the broad democratic and progressive approach which includes the principles of unity, non-racialism and non-sexism. This was core in the national liberation struggle in freeing South Africa from apartheid and is now central to the Constitution. Putnam (2000) speaks of bonding and bridging cohesion. This study will also take into consideration both bridging and bonding cohesion which create a connectedness between people.

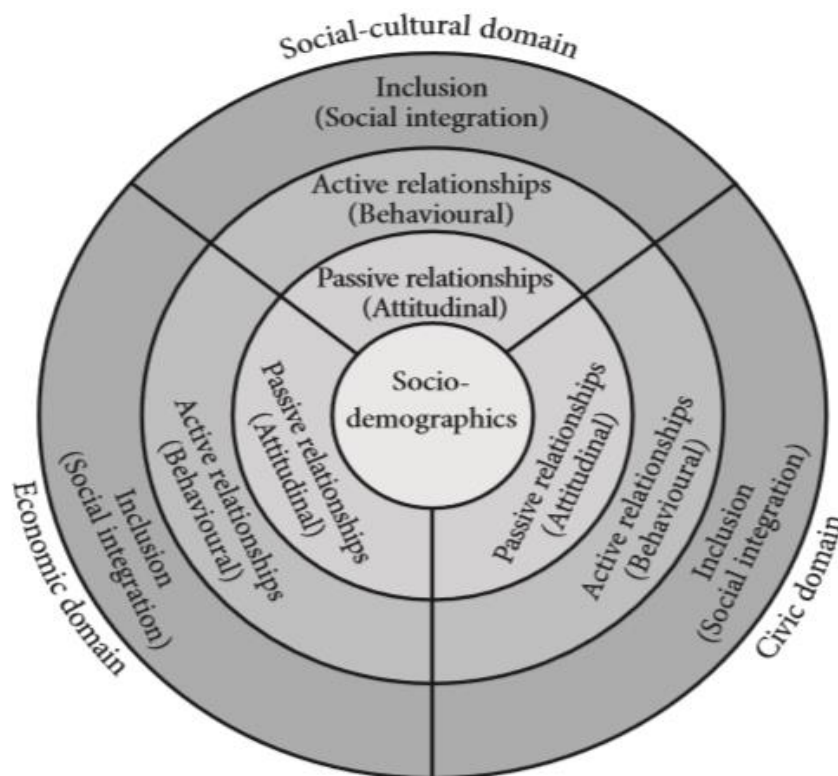


Figure 1.1 Conceptual framework for social cohesion

Source: Struwig et al (2013)

1.7 Limitations and delimitations

Du Plooy-Cillier, Davis and Bezuidenhout (2014) state that limitations can be described as constraints or limits in the research that are beyond the control of the researcher, such as time, financial resources and access to information. Delimitations are the result of very specific and defined choices the researcher makes when deciding on the scope of the research (Du Plooy-Cillier, Davis, and Bezuidenhout, 2014). The limitations of the study will not be listed here but will be discussed in Chapter 5 as they arise. In terms of delimitations, while there are other stakeholders (such as library patrons and municipal councillors) who have a key influence on public library development, this study was delimited to surveying branch librarians only. The reason for doing so is that the branch librarians are the first line of management that work closest to service delivery and the implementation of library goals. The researcher believed that the librarians were stakeholders in the best position to comment on EML's fulfilment of its mandate regarding social cohesion. Time constraints of a course work masters, limited financial resources and access to study participants also played a role in delimiting the study to branch librarians only. Branch librarians manage public libraries which are situated in urban, suburban and rural areas, directly serving the community. The study comprised a survey of all branch librarians in the 92 branch libraries which constitute EML. (See Chapter 3.)

1.8 Definition of key terms

The definitions of key terms used in the study are provided below.

1.8.1 Public library

UNESCO describes the public library as:

... an organisation that provides access to knowledge, information and works of imagination through a wide range of resources and services, making it available equally to all members of the community regardless of race, nationality, age, gender, religion, language, disability, economic and employment status (Mnkeni-Saurombe and Zimu, 2015: 42).

1.8.2 Social cohesion

The DAC (2012: 1), as noted in 1.1 above, defines social cohesion as:

the degree of social integration and inclusion in communities and society at large, and the extent to which mutual solidarity finds expression among individuals and communities.

A term also used in the context of social cohesion is “social inclusion”. According to Collins (2014:1466) “social inclusion is the act of making all groups of people within a society feel valued and important.” As such, it is an important component of social cohesion. Given the integral importance of the concept of social cohesion to this study, further discussion of the concept follows:

Social cohesion is considered a “tricky” concept that has often been used as political rhetoric and cultural platitudes, which has made conducting research on the topic difficult. As social cohesion is expected to cover a range of social issues including racism, income, inequality, and civic responsibility, this makes arriving at an agreed upon definition equally difficult. The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) tasked researchers to quantify and measure social cohesion in South Africa (Struwig et al, 2013). This resulted in the social cohesion conceptual model used in this study (section 1.4). Struwig et al (2013), after a thorough investigation of the literature, arrived at a refined definition that captured the essence of social cohesion as it would apply to the South African Constitution. They defined social cohesion as:

the property by which whole societies, and the individuals within them, are bound together through the action of specific attitudes, behaviours, rules and institutions which rely on consensus rather than pure coercion (Struwig et al, 2013: 401).

This definition allows for differing social groups to be accommodated within a framework of homogeneous citizenship, while also respecting cultural and other differences. The definition also allows for both the inclusion of subjective (opinions, attitudes and values) and objective (behavioural) indicators (Struwig et al, 2013). This, in turn, has allowed for the measurement of social cohesion to take place with the South African context, as well as underpinned the present study. Access to services and opportunities via access to information, including accessibility of public libraries are an important component of social cohesion. As stated in the LIS

Transformation Charter (DAC, 2014: 3) “in the information age access to information is decisive and a source of wealth and power”.

1.8.3 Library collection

Samek (2014:85) defines a library collection as:

The total accumulation of books and other materials owned by a library, cataloged and arranged for ease of access, often consisting of several smaller collections (reference, circulating books, serials, government documents, rare books, special collections, etc.).

1.8.4 Library material

According to the South African Public Library and Information Services Bill (DAC, 2012: 4-5):

Library material means any book, periodical, manuscript, chart, map, video cassette, slide, filmstrip, microfilm, audio cassette, audio-compact disc, computer software or any other material supplied by a public library and information services.

1.8.5 Collection development

Reitz (2004) provides a detailed description of what collection development entails. It is:

The process of planning and building a useful and balanced collection of library materials over a period of years, based on an ongoing assessment of the information needs of the library's clientele, analysis of usage statistics, and demographic projections, normally constrained by budgetary limitations. Collection development includes the formulation of selection criteria, planning for resource sharing, and replacement of lost and damaged items, as well as routine selection and deselection decisions. Large libraries and library systems may use an approval plan or blanket order plan to develop their collections. In small- and medium-sized libraries, collection development responsibilities are normally shared by all the librarians, based on their interests and subject specializations, usually under the overall guidance of a written collection development policy (Reitz, 2004: 150).

1.8.6 Library building

A public library is a building where things such as books, newspapers, videos, and music are kept for people to read, use, or borrow” (Collins, 2014: 879). It is also viewed as “The physical structure housing a library, or part of a library, as distinct from the collections and equipment it contains, and the personnel who operate and maintain it.” Furthermore, “A library facility can be stand-alone or a multi-purpose structure of which the library is one of two or more components (Reitz, 2004: 380).

1.8.7 Library programme

Reitz (2004: 477) defines a library programme as:

An activity or event (or series of events) scheduled by a library for the benefit of its patrons. Examples include book talks, read-a-thons, and summer reading programs for children and young adults.

1.8.8 Librarian

According to Reitz (2004: 376) a librarian is:

A professionally trained person responsible for the care of a library and its contents, including the selection, processing, and organization of materials and the delivery of information, instruction, and loan services to meet the needs of its users. In the online environment, the role of the librarian is to manage and mediate access to information that may exist only in electronic form.

The term is elaborated on in Chapter two.

1.9 Structure of the remainder of the thesis

Chapter two comprises the literature review. The resources related to public libraries, namely, the library building, library collection, library programmes and library staff are discussed.

The design of the study, data collection techniques and procedures used are described and discussed in Chapter three.

Chapter four presents the results of the study which was conducted by means of a census survey using a self-administered questionnaire. The findings are presented in the form of bar charts, tables and text.

In Chapter five, the findings of importance are discussed in light of the research problem, research objective and research questions.

Conclusions, based on the findings of the study and on the literature reviewed, are put forward in Chapter six. Recommendations are made and further topics for research are identified.

1.10 Summary

This chapter introduced the study which was an investigation of eThekweni Municipal Libraries' contribution towards social cohesion. It provided a statement of the problem with which the study was concerned, the rationale for the study, the research objective and the key research questions asked as well as the conceptual model underpinning the study. The main terms were defined to avoid ambiguity and confusion with regard to meaning. Delimitations of the study were provided and, finally, the structure of the thesis, which comprised six chapters, was outlined.

Chapter two, the literature review, follows.

Chapter two: Literature review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the literature review drawn from scholarly studies, the literature in general, and government legislation and policies. The focus is on the resources (human and material) which play a role in addressing and fostering social cohesion in a public library. These resources are the library buildings, library collections (more specifically, collection development), library programmes and library staff. Each are discussed in turn. It must be borne in mind, as noted in Chapter one, that the literature on social cohesion and public libraries is meagre. The concept of social cohesion was defined and discussed in that chapter and background information on EML was also given.

2.2 Library buildings

“The design of the library building and arrangement of space should be in keeping with cultural needs and environmental conditions which will encourage people to enter the library and feel at home there” (Department of Arts and Culture (DAC), 2014: 95-96). The LIS Transformation Charter (2014) states that many libraries are old or are in buildings that were not designed as libraries, which makes rendering an effective service challenging. There are also no norms and standards in place governing library buildings (DAC, 2014). South Africa does have building regulations regarding public buildings such as libraries set by the South African Bureau of Standards and the Occupational Health and Safety Act but these regulations need to be consolidated into the norms and standards set for South African public libraries. According to the IFLA (2001) *Guidelines for public library service*, the library building plays an important part in public library provision and should be designed to reflect the function of the service. The library needs to be accessible to all the community and be able to accommodate new and changing services. Ideally, public libraries should be built close to other community activities and should be available for other community uses, such as meetings and exhibitions. A well-used public library can make a vital impact on the community, and can be seen as a learning and social centre (IFLA, 2001). In South Africa there is a need for public libraries to provide study space. The DAC (2013), in a report on the Public Library and Information Services Bill, states

that library buildings should be designed to make provision for study space with a separate entrance so that the library can be locked, but the study space kept open after hours. The Bill further states that public libraries should not be built as monuments which are very expensive to maintain but rather as buildings, the size and design of which should be appropriate for the context and the size of the population being served. The Bill recommends norms and standards that regulate the size, location and cost of library buildings be formulated and followed and which are in accordance with the norms used by the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) (DAC, 2013). In the past libraries were stationary and promoted working in silos. However, currently the DAC is on a campaign to build libraries comprising diverse models such as mobile, modular and permanent structures which meet the information needs of the community and by doing so contributing to Batho Pele principles (Mbatha, 2018). Batho Pele principles require public servants to be polite, open and transparent and to deliver good service to the public. The 2018 theme for South African library week was “Libraries: heart of the community” and is a reminder to all library users that the library is a communal space that caters to specific needs whether educational, social, recreational or informational (Seageng, 2018).

The National Policy for LIS (2018: 75) states that public library planning must be undertaken “in consultation with town and city planners to identify opportunities, for example, urban regeneration projects. Planning must be jointly done when interests of different agencies coincide in the location and arrangements for a dual use library”. The National Policy further states that public libraries are open to all regardless of economic or social status and are considered the third place (the first two being home and work) where people can gather easily, informally, inexpensively and pleasurably. This is considered vital for democracy, community and the building of social capital (DAC, 2018). Public libraries are credited with being a public space to aid in the creation of a free and democratic public life (Rooney-Browne and McMenemy, 2010).

The IFLA (2007: 4) *Library buildings guidelines* state that a library building should be “functional, adaptable, accessible, varied, interactive, conducive, environmentally suitable, safe and secure, efficient and suitable for information technology”.

Some of these characteristics of the library building are discussed below.

2.2.1 Accessibility

A library “building must allow for easy, safe access by all library clients regardless of age or mobility” (Queensland Public Library, 2009: 5). “One of the fundamental rights that need to be considered for all members of a society is the right to access all facilities, resources and services, despite their varying abilities or limitations” (Bodaghi and Zainab, 2012: 241). The LIS Transformation Charter states that special care needs to be taken to ensure the human rights of the most marginalised in society, namely, women, children, youth and people living with a disability are protected (DAC, 2014). Yet, there are library buildings which are inaccessible to people with disabilities. The Charter’s vision is that “LIS are seen as a place for everyone, catering for the marginalized such as people with disability” (DAC, 2014: 16). It is a human right for people living with a disability to gain access to public spaces and public libraries are public spaces as mandated by the South African Library for the Blind Act, No 91 of 1998 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities and Optional Protocol (United Nations, 2008) which South Africa has ratified. In this regard the South African Public Library and Information Services Bill (DAC, 2013: 79) requires, as a national minimum norm and standard, the provision of a building plan “for the physical infrastructure of the library to ensure access to persons with disabilities, older persons and children, which infrastructure must include ... the expansion, renovation and maintenance for existing premises of the public library and information services.”

2.2.2. Library shelving

Library shelving must be of an accessible height and be able to carry the weight of library items to ensure the safety of staff and public. “Shelving heights must ensure best possible access to collections and safety for all clients” (Queensland Public Library, 2009: 5). In addition, “to facilitate maximum flexibility, library shelving should be adjustable and easily reconfigured to accommodate redesigning of library layouts” (Queensland Public Library, 2009:5). Shelving should also be labelled to assist the public in finding the information they require and enable the library to be easily navigated (Queensland Public Library, 2009). The IFLA (2001) *Public Library Services* states that library material should be displayed on open shelves and arranged at a height within easy reach for users. It also states that shelving should be adjustable and preferably moveable, while furniture in the children’s section should be size appropriate. Importantly, shelving should also be an accessible height for a person in a wheelchair.

2.2.3. Interior design

In this information age libraries are no longer the main place in which the public can obtain information (Ugwuanyi, Okwor and Ezeji, 2011). In this regard, the questions Ugwuanyi, Okwor and Ezeji (2011: 92) ask include:

- “Is the physical library still needed in the age where information is accessible and available electronically?”
- “What does this revolutionary change mean for the creation and design of the library space?”

The authors argue that “the paradigm shift in information resources from print to electronic and services from manual to electronic, calls for a critical examination of the concepts, principles and features of the library as space and place”(Ugwuanyi, Okwor and Ezeji, 2011: 93). Public libraries should be aesthetically appealing and comply with basic interior design principles. Users should find the space attractive through art work, decoration and other beautifying features which enhance the architecture of the building. A library building can be both an expression of beauty and a representation of knowledge and culture (Swanepoel and Swanepoel, 2010; Ugwuanyi, Okwor and Ezeji, 2011). The LIS Transformation Charter (2014) states that as libraries are significant public spaces for communities their design and furnishing are very important. The DAC (2014: 60) has recommended “adopting a standardised library design from a portfolio of new library buildings, incorporating adaptations for local conditions”.

Libraries need to evolve in the manner in which they engage with communities in order to ensure their continued growth and survival. Consequently, public libraries are continually adapting their services to meet their customer needs thereby ensuring their relevance to the communities they serve. Thus, modern public libraries are being designed with coffee shops, cyber-zones and activities rooms. “Larger libraries may include a café, open either throughout the opening hours of the library, or for special occasions. Such facilities are sometimes contracted out to a commercial provider” (IFLA, 2001: 46). Creating spaces for people to come together to engage in educational, social and recreational activities builds an enabling environment for social cohesion to occur. Public library users’ needs have changed through the years, requiring public libraries to provide facilities to meet these needs. Thus one finds audiovisual and electronic reading rooms, activity rooms for lectures, academic meetings, special seminars, information workshops, computer labs, literacy programmes and homework

centres as common features in the modern library (McCabe and Kennedy, 2003; Ugwuanyi, Okwor and Ezeji, 2011). It is therefore essential for a library building to be designed for the purpose of its existence as well as the changing needs of the public.

2.2.4. Wayfinding and signage

Libraries should have clear external, internal and directional signage. External signage, for example, should clearly indicate where parking for the disabled is as well as the location of the ramp allowing a disabled person entry into the library. The South African National Standards (SANS)10400S (2011: 9) states that “facilities that are included in a building specifically for use by persons with disabilities, such as wheelchair-accessible parking spaces, wheelchair-accessible toilets, and platform or stair lifts, shall be indicated by the international symbol for access”. SANS (2011) further states that “signs should be in clear, visible and tactile format to ensure that persons with visual impairments are also fully informed. In buildings where persons with visual impairments work or live, evacuation instructions in large print and braille should be provided, so that persons with visual impairments can familiarise themselves with escape routes” (South African Bureau of Standards (SABS), 2011: 9). Internal signage should be attractive and functional, allowing the public to easily navigate the library. Effective signage can contribute much to improved access and usability (Swanepoel and Swanepoel, 2010). Signage in the language of the community should also be displayed to ensure ease of access. Directional street signage should help the public to easily find the library. The Queensland Public Library Standards and Guidelines (2009: 8) states that “wayfinding should not be limited to signage but include internal layout, lighting, furnishing, floor covering, colour schemes and graphics to define a space thereby easily directing the public.”

2.2.5. Information technology

“Library planners should keep in mind that automation has changed library services patterns and the design and size of the library must take current and future technology into account” (IFLA, 2001: 101). This is a point also underscored by the Queensland Public Library Standards and Guidelines (2009: 8) which states that “public libraries, as major providers of information, should make adequate provision for future needs and technology.” It is evident that public

libraries need to accommodate the ongoing growth for digital services and plan for additional plug points for workstations, adequate power and communication cabling. One such digital service is providing access to the internet. By providing wireless technology such as Wi-Fi can increase flexibility in that the public can access the internet through smart phones, laptops and tablets. In this regard, “by July 2015, the City of eThekweni had connected more than 80 public libraries and 75 of these had free Wi-Fi” (*SANews*, 2015b: 1). The internet has clearly created a demand for electronic information and public libraries are seen by the South African government as one of the sites in which the public can access information free of charge. Thus “an amount of R32 million has been allocated towards Mzansi Libraries On-Line, which provides free internet connectivity for all South Africans through public libraries” (*SANews*, 2015a: 1).

The LIS Transformation Charter (DAC, 2014) expressed concern regarding the provision of access to information technology by stating that there are too few public spaces for, and processes of, education and training in information literacy. The Charter views access to information technology as a means to fulfil the citizen’s right to access to information as a human right as this is a right that concerns the distribution of power and status (DAC, 2014). By providing access to information technology and thereby helping ensure a distribution of power and status, libraries are contributing to building national unity and social cohesion. The Charter states that access to information literacy will help “individuals work smarter to achieve higher levels of service delivery”. It also argues that equal “access to information contributes to economic growth and job creation and can help to suppress conflict and disturbances (DAC, 2014:10).” The Charter further states that all public libraries should have sufficient computer capacity and dedicated bandwidth for the management and delivery of services to the community. There should be adequate provision of computers to meet the needs of both the community and staff (DAC, 2014).

2.2.6. Health, safety and security

Public libraries by their very nature are open and accessible to all and they need to ensure the safety of their staff, public and library material. “Libraries should thus be designed and constructed to ensure the security, health and safety of staff and clients”(Queensland Public Library, 2009: 7). “In any building freely accessible to the public, staff will occasionally encounter users who behave in an unpleasant and anti-social manner” (IFLA, 2001: 69). The

National Policy for LIS (DAC, 2018: 75) states that “buildings and facilities must be protected by suitable security arrangements. Where the building and services are provided by different authorities, budget and responsibility for security must be clearly allocated”. Norms and standards need to be in place to ensure that libraries are not established in certain areas zoned for bars and restaurants where alcohol is consumed, as the noise and patrons of these establishments often create a disturbance for libraries (DAC, 2018). Money from the conditional grant awarded to municipal libraries can be used to install or upgrade security measures. The conditional grant is money that is transferred from national government to local government to be used for a stated purpose and is required to comply with stipulated conditions and reporting. “South African libraries face critical challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, inconsistent levels of service, a lack of staff and, in disadvantaged areas, a lack of services. These problems have been prioritised by government and are being addressed by a conditional grant available over a three-year period (for the re-capitalisation of the public or community libraries”(DAC, 2010: xv).

Libraries have been targeted during service delivery protests which lead to high insurance costs and in this regard the Public Library and Information Services Bill recommends that a portion of the insurance money be spent on security, including systems for detecting and extinguishing fires (DAC, 2013). South Africa has a very high crime rate which is fueled by various socio-economic factors such as a high rate of unemployment (Meerkat Data Management, 2017). This makes security essential for an institution that is openly accessible to all members of the public. It is thus vital for library management to plan for the safety and protection of both library patrons and employees. As the Library Security Guidelines by the American Library Association (2010: 5) state:

The Library Director, or designee in safety and security matters, should be responsible for: ensuring the physical protection of both library staff and library patrons. He/she also is responsible for protecting the building, its contents, and its immediate surroundings. The responsibility includes, but is not limited to, the development and integration of protection programs for emergencies, as well as fire, floods, earthquakes, and other natural disasters.

A protection programme (as above) can also be referred to as disaster management and planning, which is having a plan in place before a disaster happens thereby mitigating damages that could arise in the event of, for example, fires, floods and earthquakes. The South African Occupational

Health and Safety Amendment Act No 181 of 1993 (OHS Act), provides for the health and safety of people at work. The OHS Act requires the employer to have health and safety representatives who conduct inspections of the work premises. A health and safety committee is also required for the fulfillment of the OHS Act. The committee is tasked with identifying and rectifying health and safety risks in the workplace and “ensuring that all equipment and cabling conforms to recognised safety standards” (Department of Labour, 2016: 21). The SANS standards regarding buildings will also apply to health and safety. Staff need to be trained on how to respond to various health, safety and security situations ranging from the theft of a library book to a fire in the building (SABS, 2011).

2.2.7. Lighting and ventilation

SANS 10400-O governs the lighting and ventilation in a building. All habitable rooms must have some form of lighting and ventilation that allow the room to be used safely. The most important aspect is that using the public library should not be detrimental to the health of those using it. SANS 10400-O also prescribes the type of lighting that can be used, natural lighting as well as artificial lighting (SABS, 2011). A “variety of lighting styles and luminesces should be used according to the functional requirements of different parts of the library”(Queensland Public Library, 2009: 5). A “unified floor height of 3.6 to 4.5 m satisfies the natural light and ventilation needs of a library building”. The minimum ventilation requirement of a library is two air changes per 6.5 persons per hour. With a “combination of air conditioners and “artificial light, readers can be assured of good light and ventilation in all the activity areas of the library” (Ugwuanyi, Okwor and Ezeji, 2011: 95). Some libraries have been built in a manner that prevents the building from taking advantage of natural light and the library then has to rely on artificial light which increases the running costs of the library (DAC, 2013). SANS 10400-O also prescribes the minimum quality of natural air that enters a building as well the artificial air, which is the use of air-conditioning (SABS, 2011). According to the Private Sector Energy Efficiency Programme (PSEE) the recommended temperature within a library building should be between 19-21 degrees Celsius. The PSEE, a project of the National Business Initiative (NBI), was established to work in partnership with business to build a better, more efficient and secure energy future for South Africa (PSEE, 2017). The climate of “the library should be maintained at a comfortable temperature, using efficient heating and air conditioning. Humidity control helps to protect library material as well as increase the comfort of the library” (IFLA, 2001: 46). All

buildings used by the public, including libraries, must display signage to indicate where smoking is permitted and where smoking is not permitted. The signage that displays smoking is prohibited must also carry the following warning: “Any person who fails to comply with this notice shall be liable to be prosecuted and may be subject to a fine” (SABS, 2011: 195).

2.2.8. Floor loads and floor surfaces

SANS 10400-J 2010 governs floors in a building. “Any floor of any building shall be strong enough to safely support its own weight and any load to which it is likely to be subjected to.” The flooring is required to be fire resistant and not easily combustible. The floor in the toilets must be non-slip (SABS, 2010: 69). The floor surface of a library is required to handle high volumes of traffic and have an appropriate acoustic quality. In terms of the latter, carpets are often used. As noted by the Queensland Public Library (2009: 8) “... carpets should be chosen for staff and public areas, with appropriate surfaces selected for specific functions as needed.” The DAC (2013) has provided a proposed list of norms for different spaces in public libraries which is dependent on the category of library: basic, branch, central, regional and mega. The design of libraries may differ provided the minimum space requirement is adhered to (DAC, 2013).

2.3 Collection development

A library collection as defined in the previous chapter is “The total accumulation of books and other materials owned by a library...” and the development of that collection (or collection development) is considered one of the most important tasks in library and information work. Collection development in public libraries is a fundamental aspect in meeting the information seeking needs of a diversified society (Sarasvathy, Umesha and Swamy, 2011). Crucial here is the collection development policy (CDP) defined by Johnson (2014: 91) as “A formal written statement of the principles guiding a library’s selection of books and other materials, including the criteria used in selection, de-selection, and acceptance of gifts.” Kennedy (2005: 238) adds that such a policy “may also address intellectual freedom, future goals, and special areas of attention”. A CDP guides librarians in the selection of book and non-book material. The *Public Library Manifesto* (1994) notes that “collections and services have to include all types of

appropriate media and modern technologies as well as traditional materials which are of relevance to local needs and conditions. Material must reflect current trends and changes in society, as well as history and imagination. Collections and services must be free of any form of ideological, political or religious censorship” (IFLA, 1994: 1).

South Africa is a multicultural society, with people of many cultures calling South Africa their home. Emeritus Archbishop Desmond Tutu in 1994 coined the phrase “rainbow nation”, in reference to the diversity of the people in South Africa. The South African Constitution states that South Africa belongs to all who live in it. While South Africa has 11 official languages there are other languages spoken including sign language. The challenge public libraries face is ensuring their services speak to the needs of all South African people. The DAC (2013) states that public libraries should house a local area study collection and material for the visually impaired – the latter starting with an adequate number of large print books. Specialised services are required by the blind which all public libraries need to supplement by facilitating library loans from the South African Library for the Blind, and providing access to equipment such as the daisy machines for playing audio books (DAC, 2013). Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) rights are human rights and the mission of public libraries is to contribute to social inclusion and justice (which have been inadequately catered for) and this can be done, for example, by including the needs of the LGBT community into the collection policy (Hart and Mfazo. 2010). As the DAC (2013:83) points out “the collection in each library needs to be developed with reference to the reading interests and needs of the community the library serves.”

2.3.1. Multicultural library

Every individual within society should be able to find information within a library that addresses their cultural and linguistic needs, with special attention being given to individuals from marginalised communities such as refugees. The library should have staff that are trained to work with diverse communities (IFLA 2009). People are living “in an increasingly heterogeneous society. There are more than 6 000 different languages in the world. The international migration rate is growing every year resulting in an increasing number of people with complex identities. Globalisation, increased migration, faster communication, ease of transportation and other 21st century forces have increased cultural diversity in many nations

where it might not have previously existed or has augmented the existing multicultural makeup” (IFLA *Multicultural Library Manifesto*, 2009: 1).

South Africa, as noted above, is a multicultural society. According to Ocholla (2002: 59), “South Africa’s population is diverse and is composed of Africans, Whites, Coloureds and Indians/Asians. Most of the white population is Afrikaans or English speaking. Other smaller groups are of German, French, Italian and Portuguese descent – amongst others. The black population is also diverse. The nine major ethnic groups are Zulu (the largest), Xhosa, South Sotho, North Sotho, Tswana, Venda, Ndebele, Swazi and Tsonga”. The number of languages spoken has been pointed out. “Religious diversity is also significant. Approximately 80 per cent of the people are Christian, while the remaining 20 per cent is made up mainly of Muslim and Hindu faiths which are widespread amongst the Asian communities” (Da Silva Rodrigues, 2009: 74). The LIS Transformation Charter (2009) devoted a section to “multilingualism” in which LIS1 professionals were urged to provide “books in mother tongue ... in order to promote the Language Policy and foster reading and in so doing both promote linguistic, cultural diversity and affirm language rights in a multilingual society” (DAC, 2009: 74). Librarians are concerned with how they can serve users speaking indigenous languages and seek materials in those languages as a means of reaching out and ensuring the relevance of their services to communities (Lor, 2012). The Constitution of South Africa (1996) recognises that South Africa “consists of a diversity of cultural, religious and linguistic communities where everyone has the right to use the language and to participate in the cultural life of their choice” (Republic of South Africa, 1996: 31). Public libraries, as part of local government, need to support and uphold the constitution and the values and rights mentioned therein. The promotion of libraries should be a national responsibility and the national government should, therefore, fund the promotion of indigenous languages. This should be governed by policy rather than demand as the aim is to create a demand. The need for material in indigenous languages needs to be investigated thoroughly before a policy is passed as librarians have stated that the demand for indigenous languages is fairly limited as compared to English and Afrikaans even in communities where neither English nor Afrikaans is the mother tongue (DAC, 2013). Public libraries are institutions that are open to all but are public libraries accessible to all? Stilwell (1997: 27) stated that “public libraries have only been democratised in the sense that they are open to all races”. Stilwell was writing over 20 years ago and the situation may very well have changed. However, “very little evidence is available of systematic and continuous needs assessments by the public

sector” (Da Silva Rodrigues, 2009: 81). A multicultural approach in public libraries means that all members of the community are able to use the library, the materials and services provided are representative of the needs of the community.

Some of the procedures that can assist in developing a multicultural library collection are discussed in section 2.3.2.

2.3.2 Selection

The main function of a written collection development policy (CDP) is to provide guidance to staff when selecting and deselecting (printed and electronic) resources for the local collection. The document serves as a guide for each stage of materials handling.

According to IFLA (2001:1):

a CDP might cover the selection, acquisition, processing, housing, weeding, retention, preservation (archiving in case of electronic resources), relegation and discarding of all types of library material in the relevant subjects, with reference to specified levels of collection depth and breadth.

Collection development policies do not emanate from a vacuum – several factors have a bearing on the manner in which collections are developed and managed. Libraries are facing challenges on several different fronts. It is therefore important for libraries to communicate their value to their parent organisation and having a written CDP aligned to the organisation’s goals and objectives is one way for libraries to communicate their value (Fought, Gahn and Mills, 2014). This is in agreement with Bartle and Brown’s (1983) statement that public libraries have the responsibility of accountability for using public funding to provide a library service. “A resources selection policy statement is of value only when it is a public document, the purpose of which is to tell the community what the library thinks it is doing in providing the kinds of resources it provides, why and for whom it is providing these resources, and how it is intending to make them available”.

The public are entitled to know how funding is being allocated and what items are being prioritised for purchase and this will be reflected in the library's CDP. According to IFLA (2001:1) a CDP:

... reduces personal bias by setting individual selection decisions in the context of the aims of collection building practice, and identifies gaps in collection development responsibilities. It ensures continuity and consistency in selection and revision.

Bartle and Brown (1983) and Van Zijl (2005) point out that public libraries do not operate in a vacuum, they are part of governmental infrastructure and as such the mission statement of public libraries needs to reflect the government's mandate in its policies. The *IFLA Collection Development Policy* (2001) and the *IFLA Public Library Service* (2001) state that an analysis of the community needs to take place in order to reflect the uniqueness of the community being served. The needs of each community will differ, and therefore the collection development policy of a branch library, while linking to the mission statement of the organisation of which it is a part, must also be tailored to reflect the needs of the community it serves.

A CDP "clarifies the purpose and scope of local collections, and allows selection decisions to be evaluated by, for example, identifying what proportion of in-scope published material has been acquired. Such a reference guide reduces the need for selectors to raise recurrent questions, and assists in the training of new staff. It also provides useful information to other library staff whose work is collection based" (IFLA, 2001: 1). The LIS Transformation Charter (DAC, 2014) states that library collections must contain materials, media and artefacts that meet the needs of the community being served, taking into account cultural and linguistic diversity and educational levels. Sound collection development principles which closely articulate the needs and interests of the community are vital (DAC 2014). The National Policy for LIS (DAC 2018) states that each library or library system must have a mandatory CDP which includes document delivery arrangements and taking into account the principles of redress, language, diversity, provision for people living with disability, opportunities for emerging writers, efficiency and economies of scale. The policy statement above is indicative of government's commitment to having libraries as spaces where all community members feel catered for and the CDP plays an important role in contributing to building an inclusive and socially cohesive library service.

2.3.3. Collection development planning (CDPI)

A collection development planning (CDPI) document provides a sound foundation for future planning, thereby assisting in determining priorities, especially when financial resources are limited (IFLA, 2001). (Note: A collection development policy (CDP) and a collection development plan (CDPI) are interlinked as the former speaks to the latter in terms of directing the purchasing strategy for library material and budget allocation.) In times of fiscal restraint and greater emphasis on accountability amongst all types of libraries, there are accelerating demands that libraries show evidence of their value. The South African LIS sector is not immune from these pressures – the final draft of the Library and Information Services Transformation Charter (2014) contains a new chapter on monitoring and evaluation which argues that:

LIS of all types should have a programme of monitoring and evaluation (M and E) in the interests of good governance, accountability and the opportunity for the collection of evidence on their impact and value (Skarzynski and Nassimbeni, 2016: 26).

Van Zijl (1998) stated that libraries had budgetary problems in the 90s, pointing out that as budgets were diminishing, resources were becoming more expensive. Libraries also have to increasingly justify their expenses. A well-constructed collection development policy is the ideal tool for this purpose. Budgetary problems have continued into the 2000s as reflected by Nous and Roslund's (2009: 12) statement that "libraries are struggling to keep their budgets balanced while maintaining a consistent level of service to patrons". It is evident that libraries world-wide are facing budgetary restrictions which make it impossible for branch libraries to cover all subjects to the depth an individual patron may require. Libraries need to be prudent with their finances and a CDP will aid in doing so. Having a CDP in a formal publication to refer to ensures continuity and avoids confusion. Compilation of a formal document is beneficial as it involves acquiring knowledge of the existing collection's strengths and weakness, including the history of the collection and obliges staff to reflect on the library's goals (Johnson, 2004; IFLA, 2001). The collection depth and breadth should be given to ensure the CDP is a meaningful planning document for the library (Van Zijl, 1998). The stated aims of the CDP "help other collection-related activities such as cataloguing, preservation and storage to form a coherent strategy, and support reader services, for example by identifying areas that are ripe for deselection, or more suitable for inter-library loan, document delivery or internet access than for acquisition." (IFLA, 2001: 2).

2.3.3.1. Library community

The CDP should define the community and user groups. The policy should be able to list the characteristics of the user community and their educational levels. The use of demographic and other factual and statistical information to define the community profile is recommended by Fordham (2004). A CDP should also state which groups do and do not use the library, and for what purposes the library is being used for (Fordham 2004). The policy statement serves as a contract with the library's users and demonstrates to individuals within a community what they can expect of the library both in the form of collections and of services. It also enables individual selection decisions to be justified on a standardised basis (IFLA, 2001). Fordham (2004) argues that a CDP should keep in mind the audience and the purpose of the policy. The purpose of the policy should discuss the library management, planning, accountability and consistency. The writer of the policy should bear in mind whom the policy is addressing, namely, staff, board members, users, community officials, administration and politicians. Formal policy statements can be useful in making the case for the library when dealing with its users, administrators and funding bodies. For example, a formal statement can indicate support of the "stated objectives of the organisation, and demonstrate accountability and commitment to agreed goals. Ideally, the compilation of the document requires the active participation of both users and administrators, thereby improving communication between the library and its clientele" (IFLA, 2001: 2). Van Zijl (1998) and Fordham (2004) both agree that a CDP must address items members of the public would like to donate to the library, as not all items will be seen as welcome or beneficial to the library and there is a cost involved in cataloguing, processing and housing the items in the library. "Library staff can deflect criticism or censorship arising from special interest groups, and politely but firmly refuse unwanted gifts, sectarian materials or potentially offensive items by referring to the official CDP statement" (IFLA, 2001: 2).

2.3.3.2 Library cooperative/collaborative agreements

"As individual libraries are increasingly unable to provide all needed services on their own, they are banding together into cooperatives, alliances and consortia. For these ventures to work, there must be mutual knowledge and agreement on which library is collecting what. A written CDP therefore often serves as a basis for wider cooperation and resource sharing, whether in a locality, region, country, or even internationally" (IFLA, 2001: 2). Cooperative and

collaborative collection development statements should state what agreements are held with other libraries. Technological advances allow libraries to participate in electronic networks enabling them to share material at a low cost. The availability of interlibrary loan, internet access, collaborative activities or other consortial arrangements, should be listed in the CDP (Fordham, 2004). O'Connor, Andrew and Collier (2001) state that while the words "cooperation" and "collaboration" are used interchangeably, they should not. Cooperation in the library context refers to when a larger library supports a smaller one. Collaboration recognises that all libraries, irrespective of size, are under pressure and that each library can contribute meaningfully to the benefit of the whole. There are differing views on how a public library collection should be developed: some are of the view that cooperation and collaboration are the way forward, while others, such as Alabaster (2010), advocate for a core collection in public libraries. A core collection is a collection specifically selected with the intention of serving the needs of the public, as public libraries are regarded as a "people's university" – a place where people can go to fulfil their information needs. However, Nous and Roslund (2009: 12) state that public libraries should develop collaborative collection development agreements with their print material to save costs and address user needs. This will help public libraries prevent duplication in collections and focus on creating unique collections. The barrier to success of a collaborative collection in public libraries will be "an unwillingness to sacrifice immediate access to a title for a larger overall collection". Nous and Roslund (2009) see these collaborative collection development agreements as a means to address budgetary constraints and the technological advances that have had a massive impact on the library profession as well as growing multicultural users. These challenges require more discerning and circumspect collection development policies. Fordham (2004) and Nous and Roslund (2009), support the statements made by IFLA's *Collection development policy* to create cooperative and collaborative agreements.

In the South African context, the LIS Transformation Charter (DAC, 2014) states that a spirit of cooperation and collaboration among various library types is required to build a reading nation, inculcate the spirit of sharing, and broaden access to library and information services. Affiliated agreements between organisations that have the same overarching function can aid in collaboration (DAC, 2014). This will require librarians to think in terms of service to a broader community. The National Policy for LIS (DAC, 2018) states that public libraries must assist schools to promote reading by arranging block loans of books and toys which can be rotated on a

regular basis. Public libraries can also assist community colleges by allocating materials to assist with their learning and teaching programmes.

2.4 Library programmes

Library programmes are the manner in which libraries engage with the communities they serve, highlighting, for example, the importance of reading. Public libraries, as part of government services, should be conducting programmes that support and further government aims and objectives in uplifting the lives of people through service delivery which focuses on putting people first. The Northern Cape premier, Sylvia Lucas (Mere, 2018: 1), at the opening of two new community libraries in the province, stated:

Through our library programme, we also promote social cohesion and nation building, because there is no restriction on who may gain access to libraries. Libraries are open for the benefit of everyone, irrespective of race, colour or creed.

Some of the programmes that can assist in achieving governmental objectives are discussed below.

2.4.1. Illiteracy

Illiteracy is a barrier to South Africa being a socially cohesive nation as those who are unable to read and write do not have access to services and opportunities as easily as a person who is literate. Public libraries can play a vital role in eradicating this barrier and this is discussed below.

2.4.1.1. *Definition of illiteracy*

“Illiteracy is being unable to read and write, violating accepted standards in reading and writing” (Collins, 2014: 774). Literacy is the ability to read, write and calculate and also prepares a person for a social, civic and economic role. Illiteracy prevents people from effectively contributing to economic, political and social life in South Africa (Sibiya, 2005). IFLA (N.d.)

believes that libraries are uniquely placed to promote literacy. Libraries can create their own literacy programmes or they can support literacy programmes by other organisations.

2.4.1.2 Impact of illiteracy on South Africa

Poor quality schooling is linked to South Africa's economic development. "Both microeconomic and macroeconomic estimates suggest that with a more typical level of school performance South Africa's GDP [gross domestic product] would be 23% to 30% higher than it currently is." (Gustafsson, Van der Berg, Shepherd and Burger, 2010: 2). GDP per capita (or average income per capita) is important because it is a reliable indicator of the overall wellbeing of the citizens of a country, and the country's level of development. Gustafsson, Van der Berg, Shepherd and Burger (2010) agree that this indicator is debatable, and alternative indicators have been proposed such as the Human Development Index of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The 2008 World Values Survey dataset provides an opportunity to examine linkages between literacy and social benefits, such as social cohesion, which are difficult to evaluate in monetary terms. The survey found that factors considered important for social cohesion, such as an interest in politics, was greater among literate people (Gustafsson, Van der Berg, Shepherd and Burger, 2010). The World Values Survey also found that "On a personal level, people who are literate tend to feel healthier, more satisfied with life, and less used by others" (Gustafsson et al, 2010: 26). Seageng (2018: 7) states that "libraries play an important role in a democratic society by advancing literacy, making the basic right of freedom of access to information a reality, and promoting tolerance and respect among all South Africans". The LIS Transformation Charter (DAC, 2014: 3) states that:

Despite attempts by government since the transition to democracy in 1994, both the literacy level and the culture of reading in South Africa still leave much to be desired by international standards. In the information age access to information is decisive and a source of wealth and power. The LIS sector which has an important role to play in the knowledge economy and sustainable development can make a vital contribution in redressing historical inequalities, poverty eradication, social cohesion and growing the economy.

2.4.2 Adult literacy

In a speech in 2001, Professor Kader Asmal, Minister of Education at the time, noted that:

... 3.5 million adults over the age of 16 have never attended school; another 2.5 million adults ... have lost their earlier ability to read or write. That makes essentially 6 million South Africans who are essentially barred from the written word, from the whole universe of information and imagination that books hold; and also from the more functional everyday empowerment that written languages gives – for employment, for travel and to be a responsible citizen (Nassimbeni and May, 2006: 13)

Statistics from the Community Survey 2016 reveal that 2.2 million South Africans have never set foot in school and remain completely illiterate (Dube, 2016). While this figure is 37.1% less than the figure mentioned by Professor Asmal in 2001 it is still a staggering amount of people. According to the Survey, 287 655 of the illiterate people were between the ages of 25 and 34 (Dube, 2016). This in effect means that a large sector of the economically viable population is unable to contribute significantly to the country's economy, as they are only able to hold menial low paying jobs. It is widely recognised that high rates of illiteracy have deleterious effects on economic and social advancement, particularly in developing countries (Nassimbeni and May, 2006). In 2015, the Department of Basic Education, as part of the National Reading Campaign and the Kha Ri Gude roadshow, adopted the theme “A reading nation is a winning nation” to promote and improve literacy in the country. The Kha Ri Gude campaign is informed by the Constitution of South Africa (1996: 21), which in Chapter 2, Clause 29, 1a states that “everyone has the right to a basic education, including adult basic education.” The campaign has trained more than 3.4 million people, to perform banking transactions, read letters, sign contracts with understanding and use cell phones confidently. Many of those trained have gone on to become small business entrepreneurs.

Ramarumo (2015:1) states that “libraries have a role to play in addressing literacy factors, from access to materials to training, promotion and cooperation.” “The role of libraries, with regard to the promotion of literacy and reading, is largely construed as marketing reading material and the reading experience in order to convince people to read and use these materials”(Department of Basic Education (DBE), 2015). The National Policy for LIS (DAC, 2018) agrees with the role public libraries are currently playing in addressing adult illiteracy by stating that public libraries

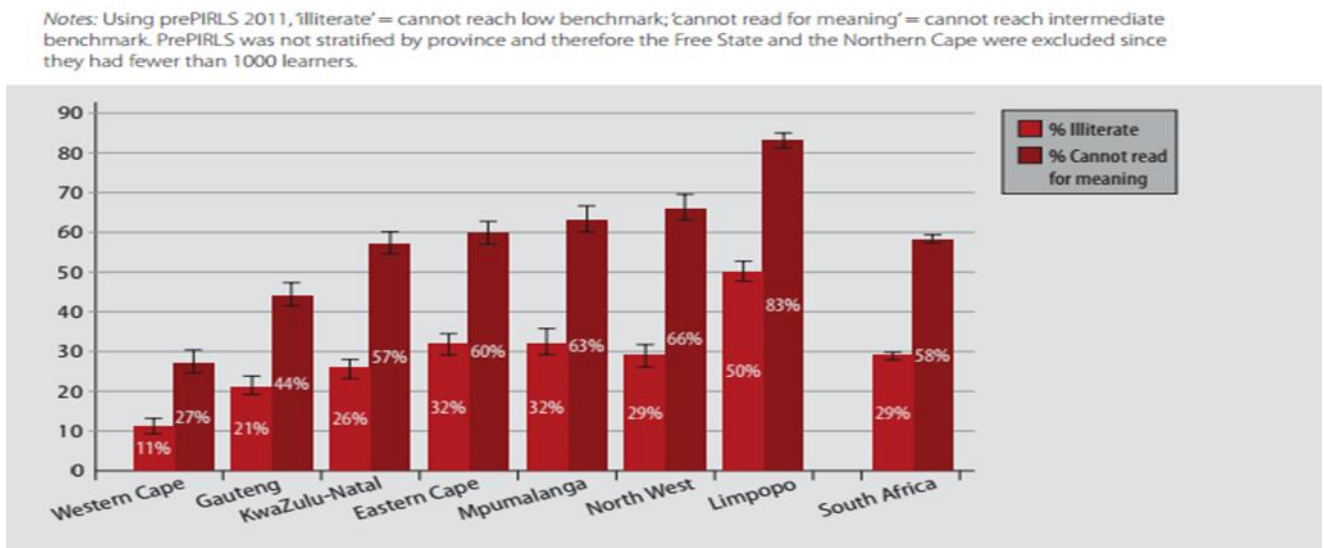
support Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) through the provision and hosting of adult learning programmes and supply of suitable material (DAC, 2018). The Department of Basic Education (2015) has developed a four-year plan (2015 to 2019) named, “The Reading Promotion and Provision of School Library and Information Services (SLIS) Plan.” Minister Angie Motshekga (DBE, 2015), in a speech, stated that “community libraries will be used by learners and volunteer educators as resources for teaching and learning.” She ended her speech with a quote from the former (and late) United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan: “Literacy is a key lever of change and a practical tool of empowerment on each” of the three main pillars of sustainable development: economic development, social development and environmental protection” (DBE, 2015). The Minister of Arts and Culture, Nathi Mthethwa (DAC, 2018: 1) stated that “South Africa faces a tremendous challenge to uplift citizens through the eradication of unemployment, social inequality, illiteracy and poverty”. He went on to say that “promoting a culture of reading and writing is essential in inculcating critical thinking and consciousness, contributing to nation-building and identity, and instilling national values and culture”.

The above statements clearly indicate government’s recognition and commitment to the eradication of illiteracy and the elimination of barriers to sustainable development, given that literacy is a means of creating an informed, empowered, and socially cohesive citizenry.

2.4.3 Children

As evident above, South Africa is facing an illiteracy crisis. Illiteracy perpetuates inequality, poverty and has the power to bring the country to its knees (Help2Read, 2016). Spaul (2016) states that 58% of grade 4 learners in South Africa cannot read for meaning, while 29% are completely illiterate (see Figure 2.1 below). The National Education and Evaluation Development Unit (NEEDU) which conducted Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) tests in 2013 states that of 1,772 rural Grade 5 learners, 41% read so slowly that they were considered non-readers in English, while 11% could not read a single English word from the passage used to assess their reading fluency. The study went on to compare the South African statistics with Florida (US) where there is a large percentage of English as a second language learners. The comparison indicated that a South African grade 5 learner from rural areas had the same distribution as a grade 1 second language learner in Florida (Spaul, 2016). Spaul (2016) further points out that

90% of the South African curriculum is taught in English and that those who cannot engage are “silently excluded”. While Help2Read (2016) acknowledges that the NEEDU assessment is not reflective of all South African schools, it does demonstrate that a high number of children are unable to read in their fifth year of schooling.



3 The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) is an international comparative study of young children's reading literacy. The prePIRLS test is considerably easier than the PIRLS test, with roughly 400 words per text rather than the PIRLS 800 words per text.

Figure 2.1: Percentage of illiterate grade 4 learners' vs percentage who cannot read for meaning
Source: Spaul (2016)

Spaul (2016: 6) states that only when “sustained research and evidence-based interventions focusing on the Foundation Phase and teacher development” occur, will children then acquire core reading skills appropriate to their age irrespective of their linguistic or socio-economic background. In Kwazulu-Natal the level of illiteracy was 26% and level of functional literacy 57% among the grade 4 learners tested.

2.4.4 Role of public libraries in children's literacy

Van der Walt, Cloete and Jacobs (2007: 83) argue that the role of the South African LIS sector is the “... development of all communities in the country by providing access to levels of information for all”, which includes children. Public libraries should, therefore, be providing

children with special services and materials to promote a culture of life-long learning and create an information literate society (Van der Walt, Cloete and Jacobs, 2007). The promotion of children's reading in South Africa is largely done by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), as South African public libraries have, for a long time, suffered from funding constraints. South Africans do not have a reading culture and this needs to be addressed by promoting reading among children. There are few books available in indigenous languages, which make reading difficult for children reading in a language they do not use daily (Chizwina, 2011). The public library as a gateway to information should support children with services and material to contribute to life-long learning and create an information literate culture (Van der Walt, Cloete and Jacobs, 2007). Van der Walt, Cloete and Jacobs (2007: 83) state that the "public librarian as a specialist in the field is best placed to assist school children in using information effectively".

FunDza Literacy Trust (2017), a South African non-profit organisation improving literacy among teens and young adults, states that 4.7 million children in South Africa are functionally illiterate, which will have a severe negative impact on their opportunities for future success and their ability to contribute towards economic development and social cohesion. The LIS Transformation Charter (DAC, 2014) points out that the South African LIS1 profession faces the challenge of addressing the need for indigenous literature and languages and indigenous knowledge systems while simultaneously addressing the uneven access to ICT, especially for poor black children. The inability to read books in indigenous languages affects a child's confidence in reading. "Improving literacy and growing a culture of reading in SA is imperative to build the foundation for an empowered, engaged and active citizenry" (FunDza, 2017: 1).

The National Library of South Africa (NLSA) (2017) through the Children's Literature Programme (CLP) supports and promotes reading programmes among children. The CLP aims to install a passion for reading in children. The projects CLP supports are Isiqalo (First Words in Print Project), Mount Ayliff Children's Library, the Early Childhood Development Reading Centre (ECDRC), children's book clubs, International Literacy Day celebrations, as well as capacity building workshops for authors and illustrators of children's books. Isiqalo offers very young South African children the ability to read a book in their home language. The project contributes to family literacy enabling children to have a heritage of literacy. The project has currently reached over 50 000 children living in rural areas. Book packs are freely given to children and adult caregivers are given guidance on how to encourage and share in reading

activities with young children. The project won the International Board on Books for Young People South Africa (IBBYSA) Asahi Reading Development Award in 2004. The Early Childhood Development Reading Centre (ECDRC), a project of the Centre for the Book in conjunction with the Ukuhamba Nabatwana Trust, provides reading programmes. The ECDRC provides children of three to six years an opportunity to listen to storytellers, read books for pleasure and engage in book related activities. It is open daily from 10:00 to 12:00 and can accommodate 40 children at a time (NLSA, 2017).

Recent events in South Africa have produced a large grouping of vulnerable children whose families have been displaced by xenophobia, wars and famines. Thus, creating an environment for inclusion is broader than just the teacher and the learner, as children are influenced by their environment. The local community (which includes local institutions such as libraries, clinics, parks, hospitals and schools) should be seen as constantly developing and interacting with one another in a reciprocal manner over time (Bornman and Rose, 2017). Bornman and Rose (2017) acknowledge the role public libraries can play in the ECD of a child. A literature search on children's literacy in public libraries in South Africa revealed that the statement made by Chizwina (2011) is still valid today, namely, children's literacy services are still largely run by NGOs. The draft National Policy for LIS (DAC, 2018) states that public libraries support ECD and promote children's literacy through toy libraries, story time programmes, reading material, book clubs, poetry slams, holiday programmes and spelling bees. Minister Nathi Mthethwa, in his 2018 budget speech, stated that "books and literary productions can play a significant role in promoting South African identity, nation building and social cohesion". In July 2018 a meeting was held in Durban with African Ministers responsible for arts, culture and heritage to develop a coherent plan in terms of which African countries will commit to enhance the state of libraries on the continent (DAC, 2018: 1). As the DAC is looking at ways and means to address the challenges facing public libraries due to the legacy of apartheid and funding neglect, it is hoped that public libraries will assume a greater role in the promotion of children's literacy.

2.4.5 Life-long learning

Life-long learning is an integral part of growth and development for a society and public libraries play a vital role in facilitating this development. This is discussed below.

2.4.5.1 Definition of life-long learning

Life-long learning is a holistic view of education recognising learning in, and from, different environments. Life-long learning is a concept that has a broad scope and equally broad consequences. Life-long learning is sometimes referred to as life-wide learning (IFLA, 2004). According to IFLA (2004: 2):

Lifelong learning can be defined as all purposeful learning activity undertaken on an ongoing basis with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competence. It contains various forms of education and training, formal, non-formal and informal, e.g. the traditional school system from primary to tertiary level, free adult education, informal search and training, individually, in a group setting or within the framework of social movements.

“Libraries have the ability to make a difference between the traditional system of formal education and a broader system of learning. Libraries as a place are socially inclusive, offering a broad choice of different media and professional guidance in information searching. Libraries must, therefore, supplement the classroom and traditional textbook” (IFLA, 2004:4).

2.4.6 Life-long learning and public libraries

Public libraries, with their global resources of information and knowledge, are strategically placed to play a role in the development of future systems of life-long learning. Information communication technology (ICT) allows users of small local libraries access to worldwide sources of information (IFLA, 2004). Educational disadvantage is closely linked to social exclusion and poverty, and there is a need, through life-long learning, to empower users in the use of ICT (Bernsmann and Croll, 2013). Public libraries offer users guidance and training in searching, using and evaluating quality information sources. Thus, public libraries can be said to qualify as important prerequisites for an informed democratic knowledge society (Bernsmann and Croll, 2013). IFLA (2009: 6) states that “Libraries should foster lifelong learning and social engagement through community education and training programmes, and public programme activities that celebrate and foster cultural diversity”. Public libraries and librarians will need to change and adapt to new demands, professional tasks and working conditions (IFLA, 2001) and “libraries should always be directed toward the empowerment of the user” (IFLA 2004: 3).

Political, economic and social circumstances shape and develop libraries. Hart (2012) states that in a society like South Africa, the institutional culture of public libraries needs to change to embrace the role of the library in social inclusion, and this requires visionary leadership. Life-long learning is one of the means to achieving social cohesion, by providing people an opportunity to upgrade their knowledge and skills thereby improving their economic, social and political circumstances.

2.5 Libraries contribution to culture and access to information technology

This section will present the contribution libraries make to culture and to providing access to, and training in, information technology.

2.5.1 Definition of culture

“Culture consists of the beliefs, behaviours, objects and other characteristics common to the members of a particular group or society. Through culture, people and groups define themselves, conform to society’s shared values and contribute to society” (Cliftnotes, 2016).

2.5.2. Culture and public libraries

The Canadian Library Association (IFLA, 2009: 4) defines a multicultural library as:

... a library and information service which endeavors to provide a service that recognises and affirms the dignity of all those they serve, regardless of a person’s heritage, beliefs, race, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, physical or mental capabilities, or personal wealth.

IFLA (2009) states that “cultural diversity” or “multiculturalism” refers to the harmonious co-existence of different cultures, through spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society, encompassing art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs. It goes on to say that “Cultural diversity or multiculturalism is the foundation of our collective strength in our local communities and in our global society” (IFLA, 2009: 1). The respect for diversity of cultures, tolerance, dialogue and cooperation, in a climate

of mutual trust and understanding are the best guarantees for international peace and security and libraries should, therefore, support and promote cultural and linguistic diversity at local, national and international levels (IFLA, 2009). As pointed out by IFLA (2009: 4), “Public institutions, including libraries, have a responsibility to contribute to a culture that celebrates diversity and inclusion”.

South Africa comprises a culturally diverse people. It is the role of the public library to reach all members of society in a culturally diverse environment such as South Africa and libraries thus need to take into account the multicultural composition of their clients in the collections and services they offer (Rodrigues, 2013). Blind learners, for example, should participate in library programmes as social inclusiveness in the library is encouraged (Mandongana, 2018). In another example, Bornman and Rose (2017: 86) state that children with intellectual disability need an inclusive community setting, that is, “places where these children learn, live, work and play together such as schools, churches, libraries, sporting stadiums” and everyone has the right to be socially included in their communities. This statement includes public libraries. The final draft of the National Policy for LIS in South Africa (2018) states that the LIS sector is crucial in addressing, through social cohesion and community building, the inequalities that still exist as “libraries of all kinds are vibrant inclusive meeting places that add to their users’ quality of life and participation in society”(DAC, 2018: 36). The eThekweni Municipal Libraries and Heritage Department, Service Delivery Charter (N.d. :1) underscores the important role that libraries (along with other institutions such as museums, art galleries and science centres) can play in developing, interpreting and preserving our culture and heritage. By so doing, access to information and knowledge is facilitated, and the quality of life, creativity and life-long learning of the citizens of eThekweni are promoted.

2.5.3 Information literacy

The section below focuses on information literacy and the role of public libraries in information literacy.

2.5.3.1 Definition of information literacy

Harding (2008: 275) states that “information literacy is widely considered to be an essential survival skill for life in the information age, a vital underpinning to lifelong learning, and critical for a thriving democracy”. The American Library Association (ALA) defines information literacy as the ability to “recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information” (Harding, 2008: 275). In similar vein, the DAC (2009: 13) defines information literacy as “the ability to access, use and evaluate information from different sources, to enhance learning, solve problems and generate new knowledge”. According to Hart (2006: 172), “current thinking defines the construct of information literacy education as learning how to find and use information to build new knowledge”.

2.5.3.2 Public libraries and information literacy

An information literacy programme offered in a public library is defined as one “provided by public librarians aimed at assisting users in gaining skills and knowledge on how to access, retrieve, analyse, evaluate, interpret and organise information in such a way that an original, identified problem or query is solved” (Van der Walt, Cloete and Jacobs, 2007: 84). Public libraries are uniquely placed to act as agents for developing the critical skills of information literacy in their communities. Public libraries, in providing information literacy instruction, have the ability to foster life-long learning in their communities which is described as “gaining knowledge to lead better, more fulfilled lives” and separate from formal study (Harding, 2008: 277). The draft National Policy for LIS (DAC, 2018), recognising the importance of information literacy, states that there is no more important developmental policy than one oriented towards eradicating information illiteracy and building a modern, efficient, and equitable library and information system. This, it continues, is in the national and global interest of South Africa to be an informed and information literate nation (DAC, 2018).

The LIS Transformation Charter states there are too few places for, and processes of, education and training in information literacy and points to the key position that libraries hold in terms of improving information literacy and, among other benefits, contributing to social cohesion (DAC, 2014: 15):

There is a systematic structural relationship between the integration of library and information services, the diffusion of information technologies, improved literacy and information literacy levels, citizenship, and the evolution of social cohesion and employment levels in the economy as a whole.

Public libraries, by contributing to information technology (see below) and information literacy, fulfil the vital function of access to information as a human right. By enabling people, for example, to apply for jobs, gain information to start a business or apply for a study bursary, information can uplift and empower the lives of citizens. In this manner public libraries can contribute to the economy and help build social cohesion.

Closely linked to information literacy is the issue of information technology (IT) and the section below outlines public libraries' contribution to the community through information technology.

2.5.4 Information technology and public libraries

The Internet Manifesto states that the internet enables individuals and communities to have “equality of access to information to support personal development, education, cultural enrichment, economic activity, access to government and other services, enabling participation in a democratic society as an active citizen”(IFLA, 2014: 21). The DAC (2014: 4) refers to e-governance which it considers a national priority – “having access to governmental, provincial and municipal websites is a necessity to keep people informed. It is an essential enabler of economic growth and social inclusion.” The role of public libraries in the development agenda hinges on the notion that “enhanced online access to informal and formal learning opportunities; health and life skills information; employment and career building opportunities will greatly assist people from previously disadvantaged communities to lift themselves out of the poverty cycle” (Matolong 2016: 3). Matolong (2016) points out that 40% of South African live under the triple scourge of poverty, inequality and unemployment. Digital exclusion – defined in the South African context as insufficient free online access to ICT and information and resources –

is particularly apparent amongst communities regarded as previously disadvantaged and further compounds the triple scourge (which is, in a large part, due to the legacy of apartheid).

Mzansili (2016) states the DAC, in conjunction with the Global Libraries Programme, has undertaken the Mzansi Libraries On-line project, the objective being to strengthen and enhance libraries and librarianship through free access to information through technology. The pilot phase from 2014 to 2015 saw 27 public libraries (three per province) becoming beneficiaries of a wide range of technological support, including desktops, tablets, e-readers, gaming facilities, and technological equipment for people living with disabilities. The eThekweni Municipal Libraries and Heritage Department Service Delivery Charter states that its vision for the Heritage and Information Services “is to create a leading footprint and digital gateway in Africa that provides knowledge, opportunity and experience of culture and heritage” (eThekweni Municipality n.d.:1). The Mzansi Libraries On-line project (outlined above), by providing free access to information, especially e-governance through technology, can be viewed as the government’s intention to assist citizens to overcome the triple scourge of poverty, inequality and unemployment. Enabling citizens to access the services and opportunities available to them is essential in the promotion of social cohesion. As Stilwell (2016: 127) points out, “access to the internet through public libraries enables individuals to search for employment, access government programmes, learn skills through online courses, research health issues, and interact socially” which are all contributors to social inclusion. Children with various forms of disability are often unable to access information (Wanjohi, 2018) and public libraries can provide tailor-made ICT tools that will increase access to information by disabled young people.

The draft National Policy for LIS (which stems from the South African National Development Plan (NDP) 2030) recognises the role libraries play in bridging the digital divide and supporting the country’s development goals to address the political, economic, social needs and conditions of the country. Social cohesion is a central theme in the NDP 2030 (Ntombela, 2018). In order for the NDP 2030 to achieve its objective certain strategies have been identified: extending speedy broadband access and establishing hubs of innovation and knowledge, which will develop the highly skilled human resources needed in a knowledge-based economy (DAC, 2018).

The preface of the draft National Policy for LIS (2018) acknowledges the challenges of providing access to information as a human right in a knowledge and information society stating that the right of access to information and knowledge is a long-term goal for millions of South Africans. Despite the challenges of providing access to information and knowledge there are many political and moral arguments to support calls upon government and its social partners to ensure the right of access to information and knowledge. Such a right, in a country that is facing many challenges, concerns the distribution of power and status. As the DAC (2014) points out, those that have access to information have an enforceable claim and do not need to rely on the goodness of others. Information empowers people, enabling them to claim their constitutional rights and seek the employment and educational opportunities available to them. Minister Nathi Mthethwa, at the third African Public Libraries Summit, stated that more needs to be done to promote libraries as spaces where information conveyed through new technologies can help transform people's lives for the better (Singh, 2018).

2.6 Staff

Staff in a library are the face of the organisation to the community they serve. They are expected to convey the values of the organisation and render a professional service. The discussion below covers the issue of staffing in libraries including professional training. The emphasis is on public librarians in the South African context.

2.6.1. Definition of the term librarian

Reitz's (2004) definition of a librarian was provided in the previous chapter and will not be repeated here. The Queensland Public Library Staff Standards and Guidelines defines a librarian as a professional staff member who has undertaken tertiary qualifications in librarianship and information studies, making him or her eligible for admission to the Australian Library and Information Association (Queensland Public Library, 2008). LIASA (2018) defines a professional librarian as a qualified member with an accredited educational qualification and in possession of certain criteria: understanding of LIS legislation and ethics, competency in professional skills and commitment to continued professional development (CPD). Librarians develop and implement policies and services to meet user needs. In public libraries, librarians

are responsible for collection development, organisation of resources, providing assistance to users in information retrieval and promotion of services (Queensland Public Library, 2008). In South Africa Meyer (2010) found the tasks of weeding, selection, programmes and reference work rest with librarians. Public libraries employ university graduates in professional positions and according to Raju (2008:132) “Professional functions of librarians are clearly defined to include staff supervision, decision making, collection development, administrative/management functions, etc”. Underwood (2003) states that “professional” refers to traits of behaviour that give clients confidence, through skills and use of technology. Competencies of a professional librarian listed by Underwood (2003) include the combination of natural curiosity with the ability to listen, and to understand an enquiry for information, along with the skills of information technology.

2.6.2. History of professional library qualifications in South Africa

In 1928 a conference in Bloemfontein laid the foundations for a countrywide co-operative library structure with the assistance of the Carnegie Corporation of New York (CCNY). Following the recommendations of Carnegie Corporation commissioners S.A. Pitt and M.J. Ferguson, the South African Library Association (SALA) introduced local correspondence courses for the training of librarians. Prior to this, librarians obtained mostly British qualifications also through correspondence (Raju, 2005; DAC, 2015). The SALA followed the British model in terms of courses and examinations in librarianship. Librarianship as a formal academic qualification was introduced in 1938 in South Africa as a bachelor's degree at the University of Pretoria, with the University of Cape Town following a year later. The University of South Africa (UNISA) began correspondence programmes in librarianship in 1955 (Raju, 2005). Thereafter, many universities offered training and education in librarianship. The university qualifications comprised a two-year Lower Diploma in Librarianship required for paraprofessionals while professional qualifications could be obtained through a one-year Post-graduate Diploma in Librarianship, after the completion of a three-year bachelor's degree. The Bachelor of Library and Information Science also known as Baccalaureus Bibliothecologiae (BBibl.) was an alternative library qualification. Advanced qualifications at honours, masters and doctoral levels became available (Raju, 2005).

2.6.3. Current status of library qualifications in South Africa

In a report entitled *The demand for and supply of skills in library and information services* commissioned by the DAC and the National Council for Library and Information Services (NCLIS) the acute shortage of trained librarians, archivists, records managers and other information professionals was made apparent (DAC, 2010). The report states "...the vacancy rates observed in the IMS [Information Management Sector] and specifically in the librarian occupation were high by all standards and are indicative of a shortage of skills in the market" (DAC, 2010: 179). Students interviewed for the report stated that bursaries and/or financial assistance were lacking which was a deterrent to studying LIS1 (DAC, 2010). The LIS Transformation Charter (2014: 11) stated that "upgrading the provision of library and information science education at universities would enhance efficiency and accelerate institutional realignment within the sector". The Charter's vision for the LIS1 staff states that

Staff are committed professionals and respected as such by their parent institutions, government bodies and user communities. They are appropriately qualified and remunerated. They are engaged in continuous professional education and development. They have codes of ethics and are held accountable (DAC, 2014: 16).

The Charter further states that the "set of skills, knowledge and abilities that LIS students have should be relevant in serving the twenty-first century clients"(DAC, 2014). In South Africa nine universities offer LIS1 graduate programmes (see Figure 2.3 below). Undergraduate level students can undertake diplomas and Bachelor degrees. Postgraduate studies consist of the Postgraduate diploma, Honours, Masters and Doctoral degrees. There is a lack of uniformity in the curriculum offered by the nine universities, resulting in confusion among educators, students and employers (Satgoor, 2015). Not all nine schools have introduced new curriculum themes and relevant technology skills in response to the changing information landscape (Raju, 2014). Some schools have tried to keep pace with international changes in the information landscape introducing areas such as research librarianship, digital curation, research data management, content management systems and repositories, and the Open Scholarship Movement (Raju 2015). The LIS Transformation Charter (2014) states that the training needs of the new generation of LIS1 workers will necessitate changes in curriculum, training, and assessment and will need to include digital and traditional LIS1 elements (DAC, 2014). The National Policy for LIS (2018) refers to the Council for Higher Education (CHE) which, in July 2017, drew

standards for basic and core LIS professional qualifications. It is anticipated that the 480 credit Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS) degree, NQF level 8, will help to resolve the confusion over the nature and professional standing of LIS qualifications and programmes (DAC, 2018). “A national conversation has commenced between educators and practitioners, which will now include LIASA as the SAQA [South African Qualifications Authority] approved professional body” (Satgoor, 2015: 107). Satgoor (2018) in her capacity as LIASA chair stated that the designation of Professional Librarian, Library Practitioner and Library Assistant have been submitted to SAQA for consideration and an outcome is awaited. LIASA (2018) is now the SAQA approved body to confer professional status to librarians. In terms of the requirements, a paid-up member of LIASA uploads their national identification document (ID), LIS academic qualifications and proof of employment to the LIASA website. On 12 October 2018 the website published the names of librarians who met the requirements, and thus had professional librarian status conferred upon them.

and other digital technologies.

Table 1: LIS schools in South Africa

HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION	NAME OF LIS SCHOOL	WIDER ACADEMIC UNIT
Durban University of Technology	Library and Information Studies Programme	Department of Information and Corporate Management Faculty of Accounting and Informatics
Fort Hare	Department of Library and Information Science	Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
University of Cape Town	Library and Information Studies Centre	Humanities Faculty/UCT Libraries
University of Kwa-Zulu Natal	Information Studies Programme	Development Cluster: Gender Studies, Economic History; Information Studies School of Social Sciences
University of Limpopo	Programme of Information Studies	Department of Communication, Media and Information Studies Faculty of Humanities
University of Pretoria	Department of Information Science	School of Information Technology Faculty of Engineering, the Built Environment and Information Technology
University of South Africa	Department of Information Science	Schools of Arts College of Human Sciences
University of the Western Cape	Department of Library and Information Science	Faculty of Arts
University of Zululand	Department of Information Studies	Faculty of Arts

Figure 2.2: LIS schools in South Africa

Source: Raju (2015)

2.6.4. Role of the public librarian

According to the *IFLA Public Library Services Guidelines* (2001: 63-64), a public librarian needs to have the skills and expertise to undertake the following functions:

analysing the resource and information needs of the community, formulating and implementing policies for service development, planning services to the public and participating in their delivery, retrieving and presenting information, answering reference and information enquiries using appropriate material, assisting users in the use of library resources and information, developing services to meet the needs of special groups, e.g., children, creating and maintaining databases to meet the needs of the library and its users, designing library and information services and systems to meet the needs of the public, developing acquisition policies and systems for library resources, managing and administering library and information systems, cataloguing and classification of library materials, promoting library services, evaluating library services and systems and measuring their performance, selecting evaluating managing and training staff, budgeting, strategic planning, and participation in planning the design and layout of new and refurbished libraries and of mobile libraries.

The *IFLA/UNESCO (1994) Public Library Manifesto* states that the core function of a public library [and therefore the core function of the librarian] is to promote information, literacy, education and culture. The Manifesto lists the functions as follows:

- creating and strengthening reading habits in children from an early age supporting both individual and self-conducted education as well as formal education at all levels
- providing opportunities for personal creative development, stimulating the imagination and creativity of children and young people
- promoting awareness of cultural heritage, appreciation of the arts, scientific achievements and innovations
- providing access to cultural expressions of all performing arts
- fostering inter-cultural dialogue and favouring cultural diversity
- supporting the oral tradition, ensuring access for citizens to all sorts of community information

- providing adequate information services to local enterprises, associations and interest groups
- facilitating the development of information and computer literacy skills, supporting and participating in literacy activities and programmes for all age groups, and initiating such activities if necessary (IFLA, 1994: 4).

The *IFLA Code of Ethics for Librarians and Other Information Workers* (IFLA, 2012:2) under the heading “Responsibilities towards individuals and society” states that:

to promote inclusion and eradicate discrimination, librarians and other information workers ensure that the right of accessing information is not denied and that equitable services are provided for everyone whatever their age, citizenship, political belief, physical or mental ability, gender identity, heritage, education, income, immigration and asylum-seeking status, marital status, origin, race, religion or sexual orientation.

The LIS Transformation Charter (DAC, 2014:58) views the role of the public library [and thereby the role of the public librarian] as offering the following services to the community:

promotion of reading and writing, with a focus on family literacy programmes, education and learning; formal and informal, community and other useful information provision, e.g. consumer health, employment opportunities, participatory democracy and active citizenship, fostering creativity and cultural expression, support of businesses, social cohesion and the fostering of appreciation of cultural diversity and information literacy to allow citizens to participate in the knowledge society.

South Africa has a unique history which has left the country with unique challenges. Therefore, the South African library and information profession must rise up to meet the needs of the country which have been aptly expressed in the South African LIS Transformation Charter. These needs, some of which have been mentioned in this chapter, include access to information, literacy, information literacy and access to libraries. In meeting these needs the profession will strengthen and grow the role of librarians as well as that of public libraries in the community.

2.6.5. Value of professional librarians managing libraries

The library profession has not been a regulated profession which has resulted in the situation where qualified librarians hold the position of librarian alongside unqualified staff who are also appointed to the position of librarian. This has led to concerns about the quality of service provided in the LIS sector. As has been pointed out, there are “...certain instances [where] non-librarians are appointed to top posts – this could possibly mean that the quality of service offered is highly questionable” (Sewdass and Theron, 2004: 114). The DAC (2010:177) report entitled *The demand for and supply of skills in library and information services* states “the practice of appointing unqualified people as librarians has gone so far that a quarter of the employees currently working as librarians don’t have LIS-related qualifications”. The appointment of non-professional staff by employers to librarian positions has had a “de-professionalisation” effect on the library profession. The DAC (2014), on the challenges facing public libraries, stated that “there are also many examples where inadequately or inappropriately trained people are appointed to positions for which they are not equipped”. Unqualified staff are appointed at lower salaries and are expected to perform the tasks of a qualified librarian (DAC, 2014:55). As Underwood (2003) observes, there is a vital role society expects of professionals and that is to safeguard society against charlatans and incompetents and it is possible that the appointment of non-qualified and under-trained library staff could well undermine this role. The implementation of the South African Public Library and Information Services Bill will require an increased number of librarians who are appropriately qualified, which may be achieved by an expanded bursary scheme (DAC, 2013).

All users should have access to a qualified librarian even if that librarian is not permanently based in one library. It is a waste of resources to have a qualified librarian perform routine circulation functions which can be performed by non-professional staff (IFLA, 2001). “If libraries are to serve as "portals to information" then the staff managing and providing those services should, ideally, have a good general knowledge coupled with an excellent professional knowledge about information sources and services”. – the professional librarian and information manager provides such competence (Underwood, 2003: 51). In Queensland, all public libraries should be “managed by a professional librarian, as managers with formal library qualifications and appropriate experience are best equipped to lead and plan contemporary library services and undertake the required professional duties” (Queensland Public Library Service, 2008: 3). These

statements support the view that having libraries run by professional librarians will be of benefit to users, employers and librarians themselves, just as having unqualified staff holding librarian positions will damage and lead to deterioration in the profession and level of service to users. The National Policy for LIS (DAC, 2018) states that every library must be managed by professionally qualified staff, even entry level professional posts must be at a professional grade. The policy further states that to employ unqualified staff to run public LIS diminishes the standing of the LIS profession (DAC 2018).

2.6.6. Continued professional development (CPD)/continuing education (CE) of librarians

Technological and other advances are having a drastic impact on the LIS profession. It is therefore imperative for information professionals to continually upgrade their skills through continuing education (CE) to discharge their duties to users, employer and profession. Presently, CE initiatives face the following challenges: they are generally run by national institutions, are of short duration, infrequent, claim a high fee, working professionals find it difficult to get sponsorship from their institutions and travelling to and from destinations hampers their regular work (Ram, 2015). Professional development in the library sector has been neglected as no one has taken responsibility for thinking strategically about the manner in which professional capacity building opportunities can be accessed. Training that does occur is ad hoc, organised at short notice and not of an acceptable quality (DAC, 2013). The LIS Transformation Charter (2014: 88) states that “education, training and continuing professional development should aim at producing librarians who are habitual askers of questions and seekers of knowledge, critical thinkers and informed decision makers”.

All public library staff should receive ongoing training and development to be effective in their positions and to keep up with technological advances in the profession. Training opportunities should include training courses, seminars, on-the-job training, job rotation/or staff exchange. Public libraries should provide opportunities for networking, conference attendance and the undertaking of formal library qualifications, or extension of those qualifications in terms of post-graduate studies, for staff. These opportunities are seen as critical to staff development and continuous improvement in service delivery to users. This support can be enhanced by providing financial support, approved leave for courses, and acknowledging and rewarding staff for attainment (Queensland Public Library Standards, 2008). While CE is essential for

library/information staff to deliver good service, action in support of this is not always given. In this regard, IFLA members have approached the IFLA Committee on Continuing Professional Development and Workplace Learning stating that they would like to see administrators giving staff access to, and encouragement for, CE.

There are many barriers to information professionals' CE in some parts of the world. Although there is a general consensus on the value of CE in the library/information profession, efforts to ensure CE is undertaken is often hampered and unsupported at the individual library organisational level (IFLA 2016). The problems associated with CE globally, outlined above, are arguably applicable in the South African context as well. The South African government considers the issue of CE an important one and has launched initiatives through the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act, Act 58 of 1995; the National Qualifications Framework; Skills Development Act, Act 97 of 1998; Skills Levies Act, Act 9 of 1999 and the Employment Equity Act, Act 55 of 1998. The aim of these initiatives is to ensure the training needs of South African employees are met, to encourage training and development of employees, and to ensure that South Africa has a skilled workforce to meet the economic and industrial needs of the country (Sewdass and Theron, 2004). While the South African government clearly acknowledges and invests in CPD of the South African workforce, CPD is not enforced in the library profession. Moonasar and Underwood (2018) point out the South African library profession does not have the same level of control of librarians' CPD as librarians in the United States of America and United Kingdom. In these two countries librarians are required to produce a portfolio of CPD for any hopes of career advancement. Underwood (2003) has also stated that the library and information profession does not have the same level of control as the medical and clerical professions and this leads to some regarding librarianship as a semi-profession. The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) from the United Kingdom is recommended as a framework for LIS professionals in South Africa to follow (Sewdass and Theron, 2004; Underwood, 2003).

LIASA's latest communication on CPD by Satgoor (2018), in her capacity as LIASA chair, stated that LIASA is investigating an online partnership with CILIP in the UK regarding CPD. An online platform in CPD should enable members to interact with personal development plans, track their CPD points and manage their portfolio of evidence. LIASA is required to introduce and implement a formal CPD system for continuing practice as registered Professional

Librarians, Library Practitioners and Library Assistants. LIASA members will have three years in which to accumulate a total number of set points, and failure to do so will result in a member being suspended (LIASA, 2018). The National Policy of LIS (DAC, 2018) states that standards will be established to benchmark quality assurance of LIS education and training, enabling the review of programmes by Council for Higher Education (CHE) review committees and enable the accreditation of education and training programmes. The DAC's LIS Transformation Charter (DAC, 2014) states that in order to counter the shortage of qualified librarians in public libraries, provincial government should create a fund to finance bursaries for suitable candidates to study for a professional qualification. The private sector should be invited to extend their social responsibility to the LIS sector by providing bursaries. In addition, each library authority should develop a CE plan to ensure the systematic updating of skilled staff.

2.7 Summary

Public libraries' ability to ensure the effective management of their resources: library buildings, library collections, library programmes and library staff, will enable them to function effectively within the communities they serve. This will in turn enable them to provide a service that promotes and fosters social cohesion within the community. Therefore, public libraries need to pay careful attention to the management of their resources in order to deliver on their mandate of building social cohesion. This chapter outlined and discussed the above four resources. Where applicable, relevant points clarified in the literature review will be considered in the interpretation and discussion of the research findings as contained in Chapter 5.

Chapter three, the methodology adopted in this study, follows.

Chapter three - Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology used to investigate the contribution of the public libraries of eThekweni Municipality towards social cohesion. The chapter, therefore, covers research design, choice of method, population, data collection instruments and procedure, data analysis, and the validity and reliability of the data.

3.2 Research design

The research design provides a framework for the collection and analysis of data; it provides the structure that guides the research methods (Bryman and Bell, 2017). This view is shared by Babbie and Mouton (2001) who describe a research design as a plan or blueprint of how a researcher systemically collects and examines the data required to answer the research question. Therefore, a research design can be said to be a recursive process as it starts with a question, goes through the process of finding the answers, and returns to the initial question which may then lead to further questions (Du Plooy-Cillier, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014).

There are two broad types of research: qualitative research investigates the underlying qualities of subjective experiences and meaning associated with phenomena which are then converted to data (Du Plooy-Cillier, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014). Quantitative research, on the other hand, investigates phenomena by means of collecting numerical information which is quantified and transformed into data (Bryman and Bell, 2017). Babbie (2014: 24) states that “the distinction between quantitative and qualitative data in social research is essentially the distinction between numerical and nonnumerical data.”

This study was primarily quantitative in design with librarians being given an opportunity to provide qualitative responses to elaborate on their answers. The characteristics of quantitative research are focused on numbers and measurements within a generalised population, generating hard reliable data. The researcher is detached from the subjects (Bryman and Bell, 2017). This

study focused on obtaining quantitative information concerning the relationship between library resources and social cohesion.

3.3 Choice of method

The method used to gather the data was a census survey. Babbie (2014: 95) states that “the U.S. census is used to describe accurately and precisely a wide variety of the population characteristics”. This view is shared by Bryman and Bell (2014) who describe a census as the enumeration of the entire population. The word survey means to inspect something carefully, and within the research context survey refers to the collection of data through a series of questions designed to gather information about a relatively large group of people referred to as the population (Du Plooy-Cillier, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014; Polit and Hungler, 1999). The information that is obtained may be concerned with the prevalence, the distribution, and/or the interrelationships between variables within these groups.

There are challenges that can be experienced with surveys as described by Bryman and Bell (2014: 181). For example, errors can arise in data management and in the coding of answers. In addition, data collection errors connected with the implementation of the survey can “include poor question wording and flaws in the administration of research instruments”. In this study a pre-test survey (see 3.6.2 below) was conducted to address and eliminate the survey errors mentioned above. A survey’s strength is that surveys are useful in describing the characteristics of a large population (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). In this study the survey was conducted by the researcher using a self-administered questionnaire as the data collection instrument (see Appendix 3).

3.4 Research population

eThekwini Municipal Libraries are divided into two zones. Zone One with 49 branch libraries and Zone Two with 43 branch libraries. This gives a total of 92 libraries. It is the librarians in charge of the libraries who were approached to participate in the study. The branch librarians were selected as they are professional staff who manage the libraries situated within the community. They are, in effect, the interface between the public and the library and were thus

considered to have knowledge on the subject of the study and best-placed to answer the questions posed. Given the relatively small size of the population no sampling was done and all 92 branch librarians were approached, making for, as noted above, a census survey.

A description of the population is given in the following chapter and will not be provided here. The response rate is discussed in section 3.6.5 below.

3.5 Data collection instrument

As noted above, the method of collecting data was the self-administered questionnaire and this is now discussed.

3.5.1 Self-administered questionnaire

Bryman and Bell (2014) state that the self-completed or self-administered questionnaire is completed by the respondents themselves.

3.5.1.1 Advantages of a self-administered questionnaire

Bryman and Bell (2014) note that the questionnaire can be distributed in a large quantity at the same time via the internet or email. With the self-administered questionnaire, the interviewer effect, that is the effect of the interviewer's age, ethnicity and gender are eliminated. Research has shown that "respondents are less likely to under-report activities that cause anxiety or about which they feel sensitive in a self-administered questionnaire when compared to an interview". (Bryman and Bell, 2014: 192). Self-administered questionnaires are more convenient for respondents as they allow the respondent to complete the questionnaire at the time and speed they choose, in other words, the respondents can answer at their own convenience (Bryman and Bell, 2017). While one person can conduct a reasonable mail survey alone, the work involved should not be underestimated. The cheapness of the self-completion questionnaire makes it cost effective for both the researcher and the respondent (Bryman and Bell, 2017). Babbie and Mouton (2001:162) summarise the advantages of the questionnaire: it is relatively quick to collect information from a large sample size, it is cost effective when compared to the face-to-

face interview, analysis of collected data is easier, there is a lack of interviewer bias and, finally, there are greater feelings of anonymity on the part of respondents.

3.5.1.2 Disadvantages of the self-administrated questionnaire

There are numerous disadvantages associated with the self-administered questionnaire. Bryman and Bell (2014: 192) state that with the self-administered questionnaire “there is no one present to help the respondents if they are having difficulty answering a question”. The researcher does not have the opportunity to probe the respondent to elaborate on an answer. The self-administered questionnaire needs to avoid asking too many open questions as respondents do not like to write a lot. The researcher is not available to see that the targeted respondents are answering the questionnaire, and not another member of the household or employee. Long questionnaires are rarely feasible, and often result in non-response. Partially answered questionnaires are greater due to a lack of supervision or prompting. Finally, self-administered questionnaires carry a greater risk of a low response rate.

The issues above do underscore the importance of the pre-test of the instrument which is discussed below in section 3.6.3.

3.5.2 Forms of questions

In a survey the raw observations take the form of questions with boxes checked and answers written in spaces (Babbie, 2014). Bryman and Bell (2014) maintain that a survey can comprise of open questions where the respondents can reply however they wish, and closed questions where the respondents choose from a set of fixed alternatives. This questionnaire used in the study consisted primarily of closed questions. Open questions were asked to provide respondents with the opportunity to express their opinions, if they so chose. The two types of questions are discussed further below.

3.5.2.1 Open questions

Babbie (2014) states that open questions are questions in which the respondents are asked to provide their own answers. The respondents may be asked to express their opinion of an

important issue and be given the space in the questionnaire to provide a response. In-depth qualitative interviews rely almost exclusively on open questions. “However, they are also used in survey research” (Babbie, 2014: 263). Open questions need to be coded before they can be processed for computer analysis. The coding requires the researcher to interpret the meaning of a response thus opening the possibility of misunderstanding or bias on the part of the researcher. Some respondents may give responses irrelevant to the researcher’s intent.

3.5.2.2 Closed questions

Babbie (2014: 263) states that closed questions “are questions the respondent is asked to select an answer from among a list provided by the researcher”. Closed questions are popular in survey research as they provide greater uniformity in response and are easier to process than open questions. Closed questions can be easily transferred directly into a computer format. The main shortcoming of closed questions is that the list of responses may not be in line with the response the respondent would like to give. Researchers can eliminate this problem for respondents by including the option “Other (Please specify: _____)”. This was done in the present study.

3.6.1 Content of the questionnaire used in the study

The questionnaire comprised five sections with 25 questions in total. Five open questions and 20 closed questions. (See Appendix 3.) The sections were as follows:

Section A determined the respondents’ gender and sought to obtain information on their qualifications, length of experience working in a branch library, continued professional development, understanding of the term social cohesion and their opinion on whether or not they would benefit from training on the concept of social cohesion within the library context.

Section B sought to obtain data related to the respondents’ views of library buildings and access to technology. Respondents were asked to give their opinion on access to the library building by people with disability, signage, security and access to technology.

Section C obtained data on the library collection. Respondents were asked if the library collection had adequate stock in the language of the community, whether the needs of the

visually impaired user were catered for, whether the books/library material available for librarians to select from were meeting the needs of their users, if their library had a collection development policy and, finally, if the library catered for a multi-cultural community.

Section D sought to obtain data on library programmes. Respondents were asked if the programmes they ran had an impact on social cohesion and were required to indicate what programmes were offered at their library from a provided list of such programmes.

Section E, the final section, clarified what area was of the greatest concern to the respondents and allowed for additional comments related to the topic of public libraries and social cohesion.

3.6.2 Pre-testing of questionnaire

A pre-test of the questionnaire was done prior to the distribution of the questionnaire. The essence of a pre-test is to check that there are no ambiguous questions and instructions and to enable removal of items that would not yield usable data. The pre-test provides the researcher with the opportunity to revise the questionnaire and have it ready for the main distribution (Bell 1999: 127-128). Researchers spend a lot of time and effort in designing a data collection instrument and it is therefore vital to pre-test the questionnaire before the data collection actually begins. The pre-test data is not used in the findings, rather it is used to correct any mistakes in the research instrument (Du Plooy-Cillier, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014). The pre-test questionnaire is also able to gauge the amount of time taken for participants to complete the questionnaire.

For this study branch librarians from the Msunduzi Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal were requested to participate in pre-testing the questionnaire. They were chosen as they experience similar working conditions to branch librarians in the eThekweni Municipality. The questionnaire was emailed to 10 Msunduzi librarians, and four librarians responded, making for a 40% response rate. The responses indicated the respondents were able to answer the questions without any difficulty and no problems were reported. As a consequence, no changes were made to the questionnaire.

3.6.3 Administering the questionnaire

With regard to ethics this study followed the ethical regulations and policy of the University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN). The branch librarians had email access and the questionnaire was, accordingly, emailed to all 92 librarians on 8 September 2017. The librarians were requested to complete the questionnaire as well as an informed consent form which were sent as attachments, and then to email their completed questionnaire and consent form back to the researcher. It was found that a number of the branch librarians did not have access to scanning facilities to scan the signed informed consent form and then email it back to the researcher. In these instances, an alternative arrangement was made to have the hard copy of the forms delivered to EML's Head Office (for later collection by the researcher).

In addition to emailing the questionnaires the researcher distributed the questionnaire at the Joint District Meeting on the 3 October 2017 which all branch librarians attend. This second method of administering the survey questionnaire was an attempt to ensure a good response rate (see below) and took into account the librarians that did not respond to the emails, the non-delivery of emails when the mailbox is full, and librarians who did not get around to completing the survey due to time constraints. Ten questionnaires were handed to librarians who were willing to participate in the survey, seven completed the questionnaire and handed them back to the researcher on the day. The remaining three were asked to complete the questionnaire and return them as soon as possible to the researcher, but this did not occur. Hence a total of 60 completed questionnaires were received.

3.6.4 Response rate

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001:261) "a questionnaire response rate of 50% is adequate for data analysis and reporting. A response rate of 60% is good and 70% is regarded as very good". Williams (2003) in fact argues that a response rate of 20% for a self-administered questionnaire-based survey is sufficient to report the results. As noted, the questionnaire was initially emailed to the branch librarians on 8 September 2017 with the due date given as 21 September 2017. The responses in the first week were slow with only two librarians responding. This was attributed to the many library events taking place which required librarians' presence. In the second week the responses increased to 19 respondents, thus giving

a response rate of 22%. A reminder was sent to all librarians and by the end of September a further 34 respondents had participated bringing the response rate to 54%. Finally, as described above, the researcher also handed out the instrument on 3 October 2017 at the Joint District Meeting which is a meeting attended by all librarians. Seven librarians completed the survey bringing the number of respondents to 60 and thus providing what Babbie and Mouton would refer to as good response rate, namely, 65%. This was considered more than adequate for data analysis and reporting.

3.7 Data analysis

“Data analysis is the process of gathering, transforming and modeling data with the goal of discovering useful information, suggesting conclusions and supporting decision-making. Data analysis involves the interpretation of collected data for the purpose of drawing conclusions that reflect the interests, ideas and theories that initiated the inquiry”(Babbie, 2014: 408). All data was coded and electronically captured to facilitate data analysis. Coding is a system that makes the process of data analysis manageable by organising the data into meaningful categories (Babbie, 2014). The computer programme Statistical Package for the Social Science SPSS 24 was used to perform the data analysis. According to Bryman and Bell (2011) SPSS for Windows is the most widely used computer software for the analysis of quantitative data for social scientists. Qualitative data analysis is described by Du Plooy-Cillier, Davis and Bezuidenhout (2014: 220) as bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of data. The typical process involves reducing the volume of raw data into “significant patterns and constructing a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveals”. In the present study, content analysis was used to analyse the responses to the open questions. Du Plooy-Cillier, Davis and Bezuidenhout (2014) state that content analysis, also known as textual analysis, is used to both collect and analyse data. Themes were identified and, when appropriate, categories created for subsequent input into SPSS 24. With qualitative data the process of analysis is lengthy and may require the researcher to go over and over the data to ensure he/she has been thorough (Du Plooy-Cillier, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014).

3.8 Reliability and validity: evaluation of the method used

An assessment of the collected data (and subsequent findings) hinges upon determining the reliability and validity of the survey instruments. According to Du Plooy-Cillier, Davis and Bezuidenhout (2014) reliability is achieved if the research results would be the same if research were repeated by a different researcher and validity is determining whether the research measures what it was supposed to measure.

3.8.1 Validity

According to Bell (1993: 104) validity is a complex concept with many variations and subdivisions and measuring its extent can be very involved. “Validity means we are measuring what we say we are measuring” (Babbie 2014: 55). There are many ways to ensure validity with the most commonly used one being a pre-test of the instrument (Cohen, Manion, Morrison, 2000: 116). As noted above, the instrument used in the present study was pretested on a group of branch librarians in the Msunduzi Municipality, who were at the same rank as the branch librarians in EML. An effort was also made to ensure that the questions asked related closely to the objectives of the study. The validity referred to here is called “content validity”. A second type of validity is “external validity” which “refers to the degree to which the results can be generalized to the wider population” (*Understanding research*, UKZN 2004: 71). In terms of the present study it could be argued, given the good response rate achieved, that the results can be generalised to all branch librarians within EML. To what extent these results can be generalised to branch librarians in other public libraries is debatable and any generalisation to outside eThekweni Municipality must be made with caution.

3.8.2 Reliability

Babbie (2014: 152) defines reliability as the manner in which a “particular technique applied repeatedly to the same object yields the same results”. Comparing the results from pre-testing and the real tests indicate that the study is, to some extent, reliable. Reliability is about the credibility of research which requires consistency (Babbie, 2014). Bryman and Bell (2014) agree

that reliability is concerned with issues of consistency of measures. According to one source (*Understanding research*, UKZN 2004: 8) the concept applies more in experimental research, when researchers would perform the same experiment over and over again, to ensure that the same results were achieved each time. According to Bless and Higson-Smith (2000: 126) the greater the consistency in the results, the greater the reliability of the measuring procedure. Testing reliability in social science studies such as this one can be both difficult and costly. The researcher is of the opinion that there is nothing to suggest that similar results would not be obtained should the survey be repeated.

3.9 Summary

In this chapter the methodology utilised in the study was presented. Aspects outlined and discussed were the design of the study, population, instrumentation, pre-test of the questionnaire, data collection, and methods of data analysis. Also detailed was the administration of the survey which resulted in a response rate of 65%. The chapter ended with a brief discussion of reliability and validity.

Chapter four, which presents the research findings, follows.

Chapter four: Research findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research findings. This study investigated the contribution of eThekweni Municipal Libraries towards social cohesion. In doing so the questionnaire used was designed to answer the key questions as posed in Chapter one.

4.2 Results of the survey of branch librarians

The questionnaire had five main sections, namely:

- a. Staffing
- b. Buildings
- c. Collections
- d. Library programmes
- e. Miscellaneous (additional information on social cohesion).

As noted in the previous chapter, 60 out of 92 questionnaires were completed and returned by branch librarians giving a good response rate of 65%. Also, as noted, Babbie and Mouton (2001:261) are of the view that a questionnaire return rate of 50% is adequate for data analysis and reporting. A return rate of 60% is good and 70% is regarded as very good. In terms of this view, the response rate can be regarded as being good to very good.

4.2.1 Section A: Staffing

The questions asked in this section investigated respondents' gender, qualifications, years of experience as a branch librarian, contribution to professional development and understanding of the concept of social cohesion.

4.2.1.1 Demographic profile of the population

4.2.1.1.1 Gender

Table 1: Gender of respondents N= 60

Gender	Number	Percentage
Female	43	72
Male	17	28
Total	60	100

As can be seen in Table 1 the majority of respondents were female. This is in alignment with the gender representation in the LIS sector in general.

4.2.1.1.2 Qualifications

The respondents were asked in Question 1 if they hold formal library qualifications. If respondents stated “Yes”, they were then asked to specify their highest library qualification. If the respondents stated “No”, they were then asked to specify if they were holding the position of branch librarian in an acting or permanent capacity.

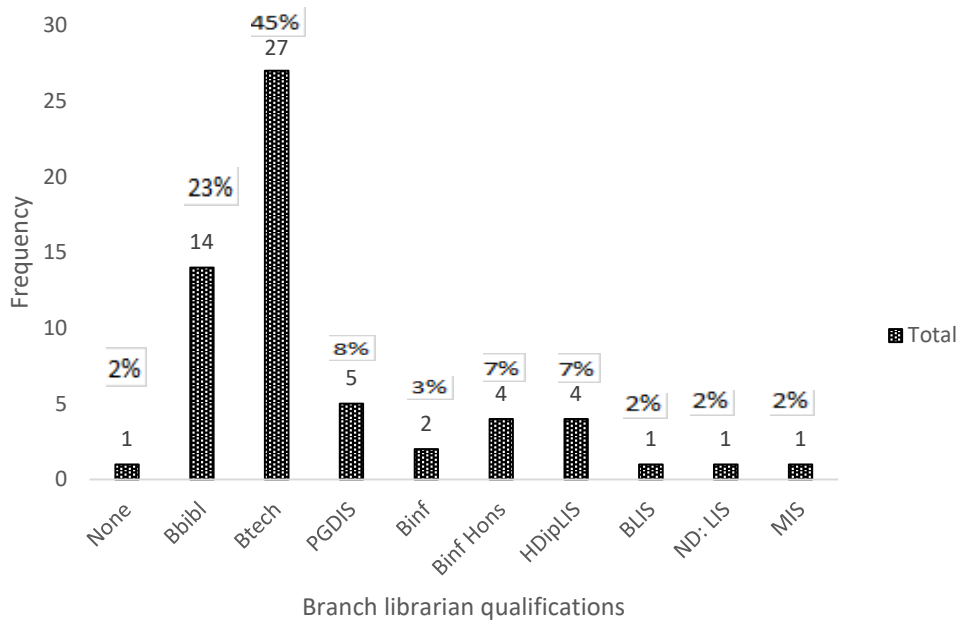


Figure 1: Qualifications of respondents N=60

The results in Figure 1 show that the Bachelor of Technology (BTech) was the qualification that had the highest number of respondents, 27 (45%). Respondents that had post-graduate qualifications numbered 10 (17%), comprising of the Post-graduate Diploma in Library and Information Science (PGDIS) five (8%), Bachelor of Information Honours (BInf. Hons.) four (7%) and Masters of Information Science (MIS) one (2%). Only one (2%) respondent did not have a LIS qualification.

4.2.1.1.3 Years of experience as a branch librarian

Respondents were asked in Question 2 to indicate in what range of years of experience as a branch librarian they fell into.

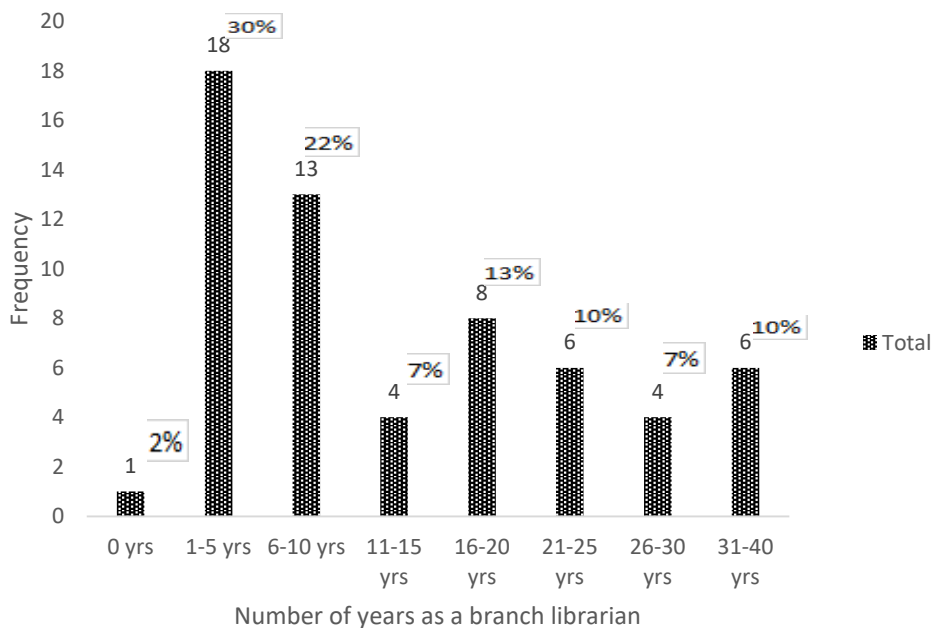


Figure 2: Years of branch librarian experience N=60

The highest number of respondents, as shown in Figure 2, 18 (30%), had 1-5 years of experience. One (2%) respondent had less than one year of experience. The remaining respondents' years of experience were as follows: 13 (22%) had 6-10 years, four (7%) had 11-15 years, eight (13%) had 16-20 years, six (10%) had 21-25 years, four (7%) had 26-30 years and six (10%) had 31-40 years.

4.2.1.1.4 EML's contribution to professional development.

Respondents were asked in Question 3 to indicate if EML contributed to their professional development.

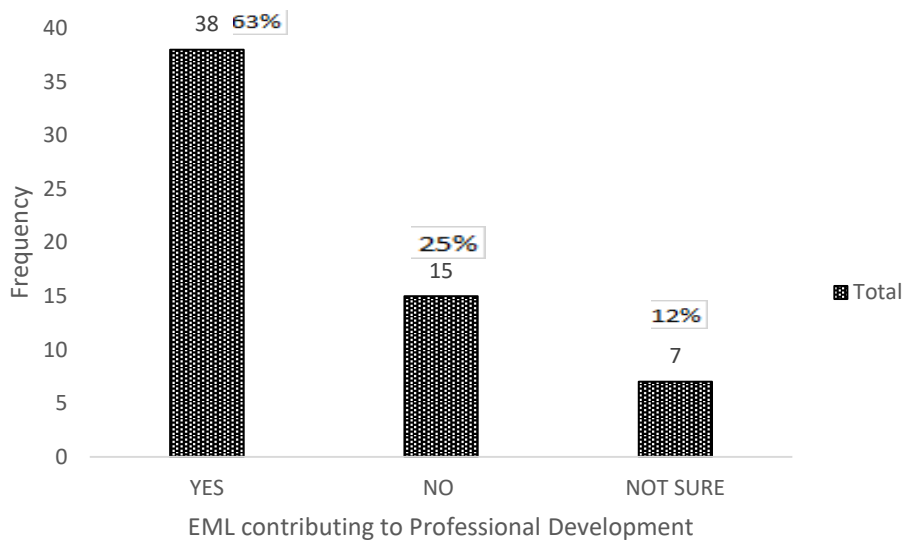


Figure 3: EML contribution to professional development N=60

The majority of respondents 38 (63%) were of the view that EML was contributing to their professional development. Fifteen (25%) respondents stated that EML was not contributing to their professional development, and a further seven (12%) were unsure, as shown in Figure 3.

Results of a comparison between respondents' years of experience and those 22 respondents who either answered no or not sure to whether EML contributed to their professional development indicate (see Figure 3.1 below) that the highest number of respondents who were of the opinion that EML made no such contribution (4) were those with the most years of experience as a branch librarian. Apart from this "spike", Figure 3.1 shows that the "no" or "not sure" responses were almost evenly spread across the range of years of experience.

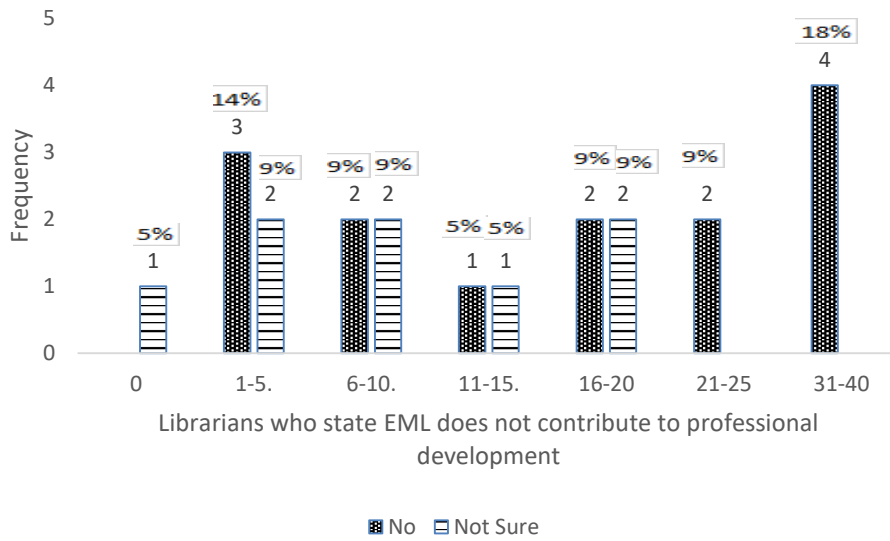


Figure 3.1 EML lack of contribution to professional development cross tabulated with experience N=22

4.2.1.1.5 Own contribution to professional development

Respondents were asked to indicate in Question 4 if they undertook their own professional development.

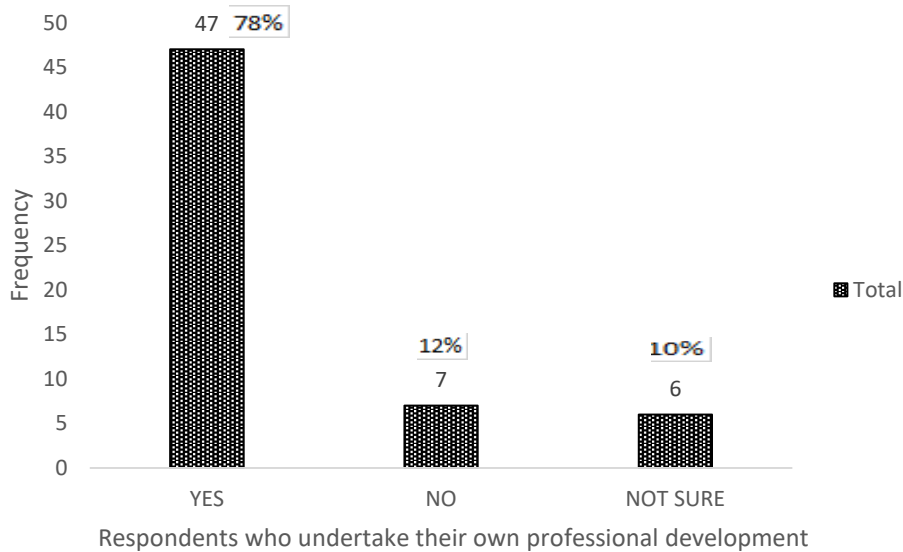


Figure 4: Respondents who undertake their own professional development N=60

The results in (Figure 4) show that the majority of respondents 47 (78%) undertook their own professional development. Of the remaining respondents, seven (12%) did not undertake their own professional development and six (10%) indicated that they were unsure.

4.2.1.1.6 Concept of social cohesion

Respondents were asked in Question 5 to indicate if they understood the concept of social cohesion.

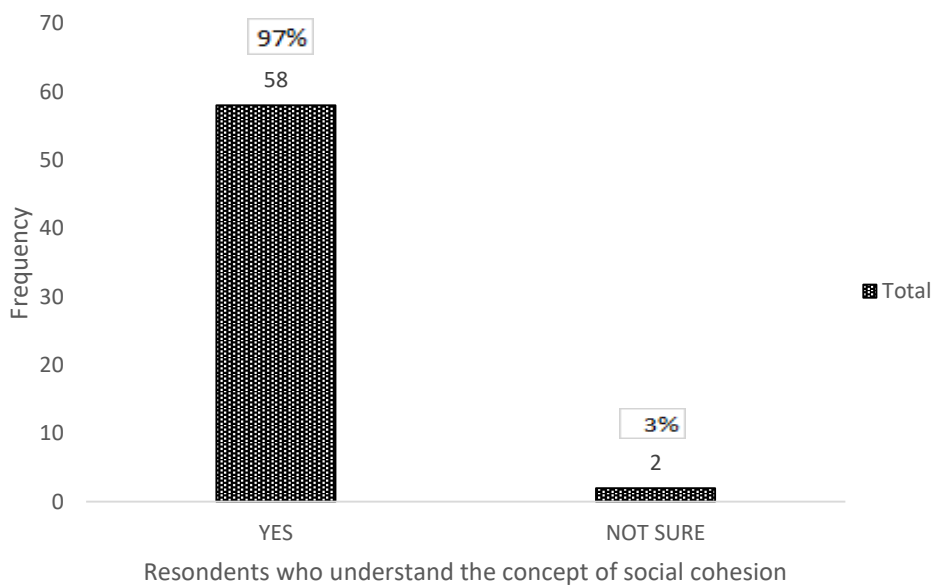


Figure 5: Respondents who understand the concept of social cohesion N=60

The results in Figure 5 show that the vast majority of respondents 58 (97%) stated that they understood the concept of social cohesion. A small minority of two (3%) indicated that they were unsure as to whether they understood the concept.

4.2.1.1.7 Workshop/seminar on social cohesion

Respondents were asked in Question 6 to indicate if they believed they would benefit from a workshop or seminar on social cohesion for librarians.

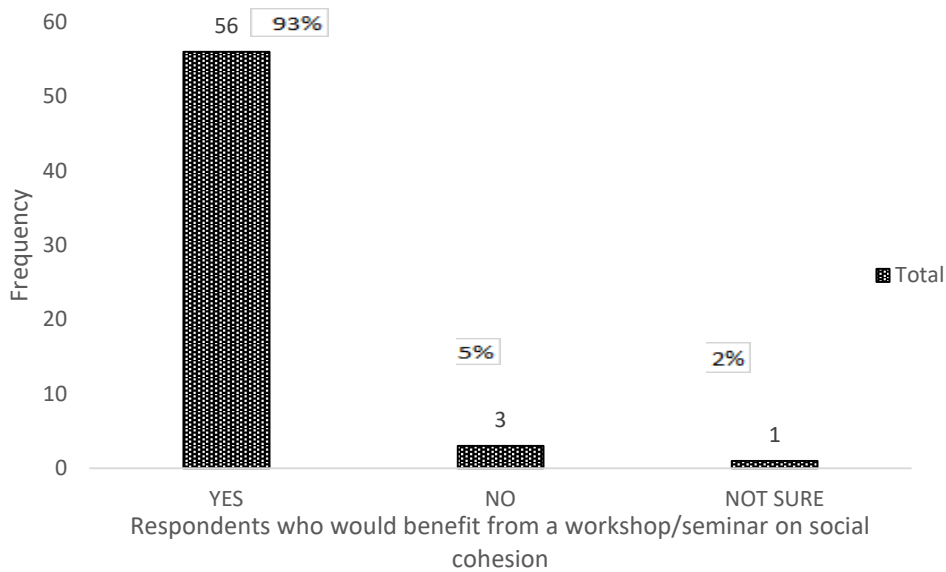


Figure 6: Respondents who would benefit from a workshop/seminar on social cohesion N=60

A very large majority of respondents 56 (93%) said yes, they would benefit from a workshop/seminar on social cohesion for librarians. Of the remaining respondents three (5%) stated “No” they would not benefit from a workshop/ seminar on social cohesion and one (2%) stated they were “Not Sure” if they would benefit.

4.2.1.1.8 Additional comments on professional development and social cohesion

Respondents were offered the opportunity in Question 7 to list any comments they may have regarding professional development and social cohesion.

Thirty-two (53%) respondents did not respond while 28 (47%) did. Those who did respond were not limited to the number of comments they could provide and a total of 40 comments were given. Eighteen of the 28 respondents (64%) provided 30 comments concerning professional development, while the remaining 10 (36%) each provided a comment on social cohesion. The results are provided in Table 2.

Table 2 Additional comments on professional development and social cohesion N=28

Professional development – 18 (64%) respondents
EML was contributing to their professional development – three (11%) respondents. Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing work skills training. • Assisted education is offered. • EML supports training offered by LIASA.
EML was not contributing to their professional development – 15 (54%) respondents. Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSP courses are old and duplicated. • Assisted education is not offered for post-graduate studies. • A lack of managerial training. • A lack of training on new technology. • A lack of support for conference and peer learning workshops; and a general lack of training opportunities.
Social cohesion – 10 (36%) respondents
Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Librarians work in direct contact with the general public from different backgrounds who have different values, norms and languages etc., thus an understanding of social cohesion is important. Training needed. • Cultural diversity needs to be addressed in the workplace. Librarians should teach each other about their different cultures and way of living, thereby ensuring social cohesion is also practiced within EML. Cultural diversity needs to be respected with no religion or culture being dominant over the other.

It is evident that a small majority of the 28 respondents (54%), were of the opinion that EML was not contributing to their professional development and could be doing more to support and encourage such development.

4.2.2 Section B: Buildings

The questions asked in this section investigated disability access to the library, the accessibility of technology, and safety and security in the library.

4.2.2.1 Disability access

Respondents were asked in Question 8 to indicate if the library provided access for people with a disability or not.

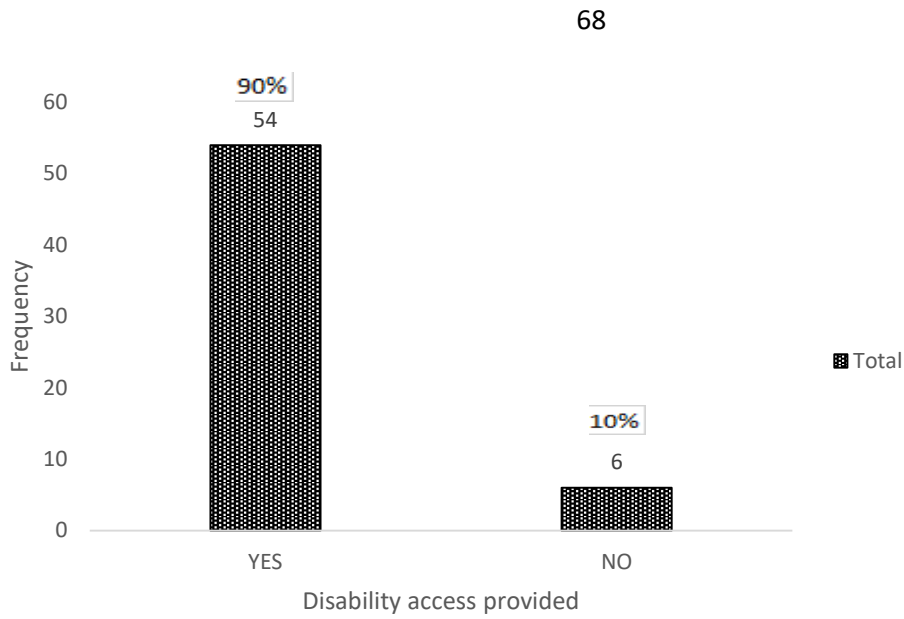


Figure 7: Disability access provided N=60

Figure 7 shows that 54 (90%) respondents said that their library had disability access, while six (10%) said the library did not have such access.

4.2.2.2 Signage

Respondents were asked in Question 9 to indicate if the library provided signage in the language of the community.

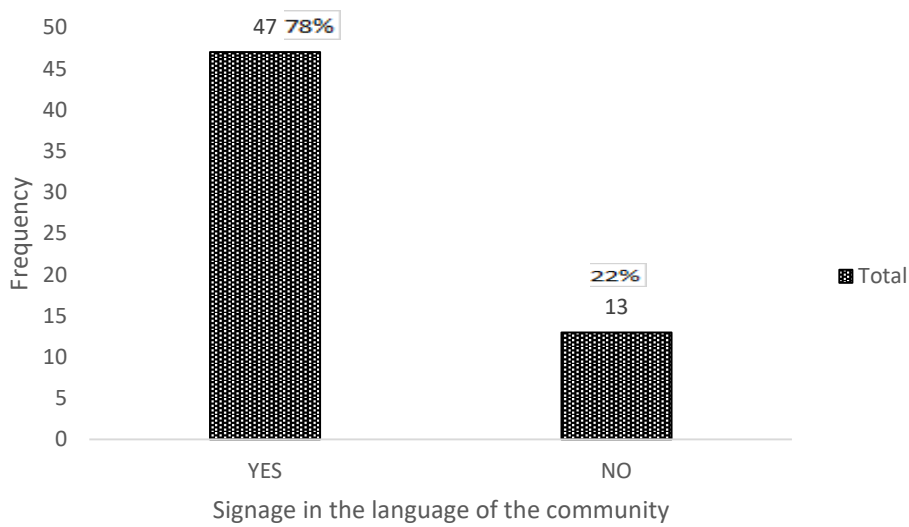


Figure 8: Signage in the language of the community N=60

Figure 8 shows that 47 (78%) respondent indicated that the library had signage in the language of the community, while 13 (22%) respondents indicated that the library did not.

4.2.2.3 Health and safety

Respondents were asked in Question 10 to indicate if the library had passed its last health and safety audit.

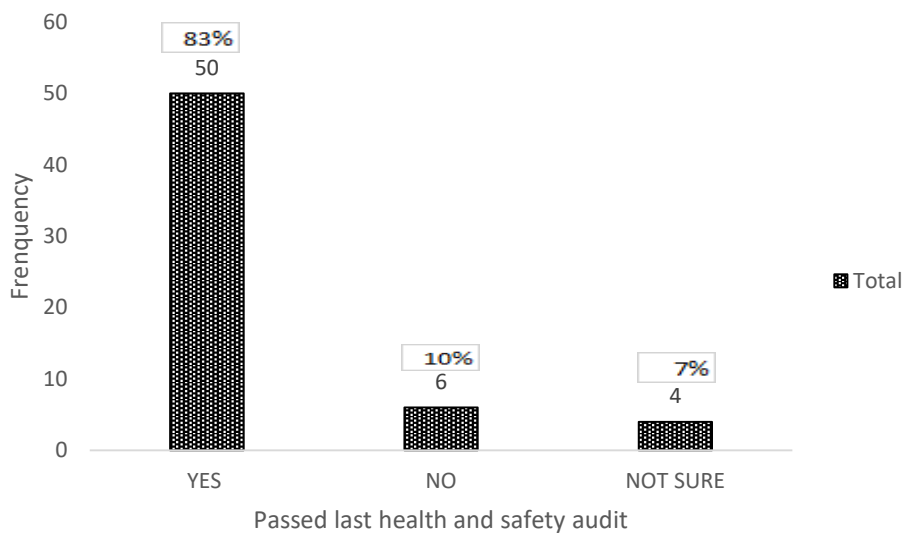


Figure 9: Passed last health and safety audit N=60

Fifty (83%) respondents indicated that the library had passed its last health and safety audit, and six (10%) indicated that the library had not done so. Four (7%) respondents stated that they were not sure if the library had done so or not.

4.2.2.4 Security

Respondents were asked to indicate in Question 11 if the library had a security guard during the opening hours of the library.

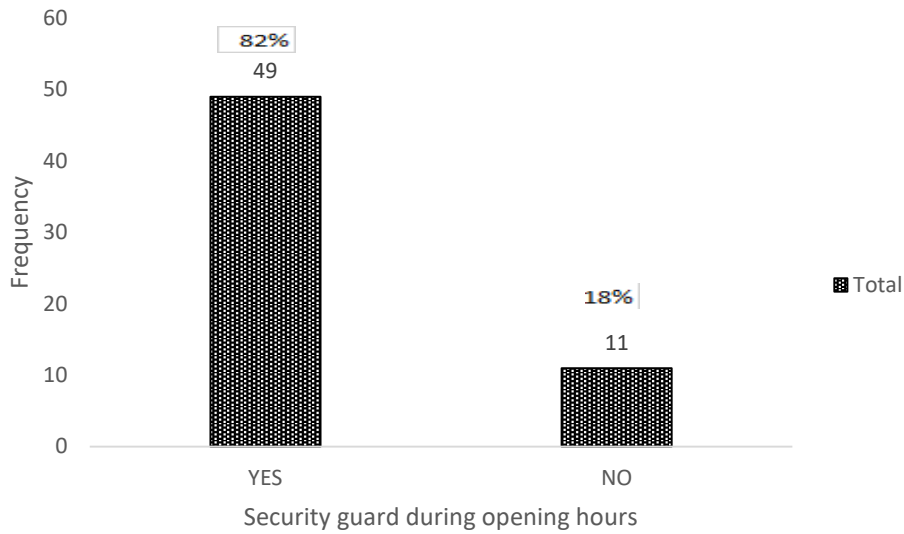


Figure 10: Security guard during opening hours N=60

Figure 10 shows that 49 (82%) respondents indicated that a security guard was present during the hours in which the library was open, while 11 (18%) respondents indicated that the library did not have the presence of a security guard during opening hours.

4.2.2.5 Technology

Respondents were asked to indicate in Question 12 if the library provided access to technology through a range of preselected choices.

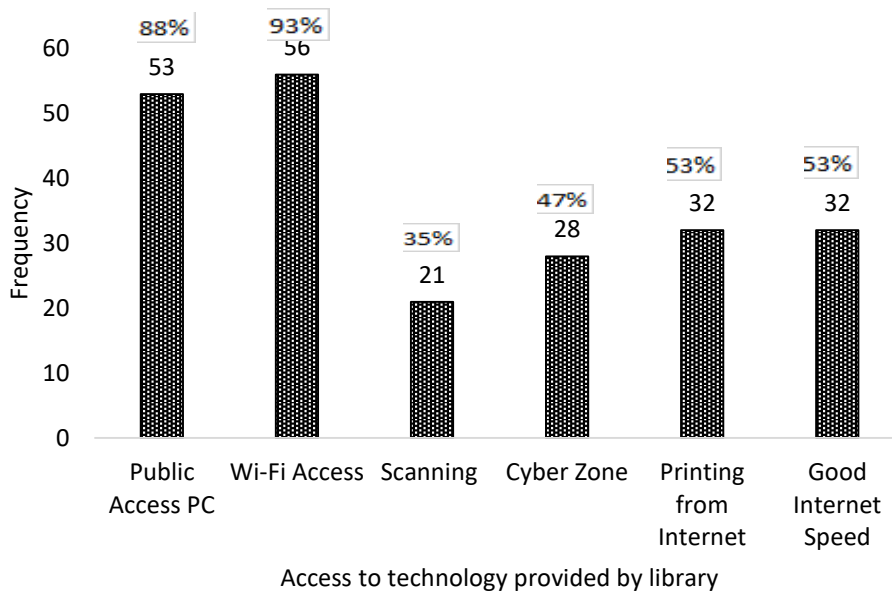


Figure 11: Access to technology provided by library N=60

As per Figure 11, the largest number of respondents 56 (93%) indicated that the library provided Wi-Fi access, followed by 53 (88%) who indicated the library had a public access PC. Thirty-two (53%) respondents indicated that printing from the internet was possible and the same number referred to the good internet speed. Scanning was the least provided technology mentioned by 21 (35%) respondents and this was followed by just under half 28 (47%) of the respondents indicating that their library did not have a cyber-zone.

4.2.2.6 Additional comments on library buildings and access to technology

Respondents were offered the opportunity in Question 13 to list any comments they may have regarding library buildings and access to technology. Thirty-five (58%) respondents gave comments. As with the previous open question respondents were not limited to the number of comments they could provide and a total of 67 comments were received. Results are reflected in Table 3.

Table 3 Additional comments on library buildings and access to technology N=35

Additional comments on library buildings and access to technology
Library buildings 17 (49 %) respondents
<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The library has insufficient space to meet the growing needs to the community. • Concern about libraries occupying leased buildings rather than council owned premises. An opposing view raised was that more libraries should be situated in shopping malls to increase accessibility to the public. • The state of disrepair of library building (more information provided in Question 24) A respondent stated that <i>according to observation EML adopts an attitude of reaction rather than pro-action, allowing libraries building to fall into disrepair before taking action whereas regular assessments together with a proper maintenance and upgrade plan would prevent this from occurring.</i> The disrepair of library building dampens staff morale. • Lack of air conditioning. • Library not meeting the health and safety requirement for staff and public.
Access to technology 28 (80%) respondents
<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More cyber-zones with sufficient PC's to meet the needs of the community staffed by cyber-cadets are needed. Offering printing and scanning facilities. • Computer lessons should be offered to the community in all libraries. • Public are charged R2.00 per page to print from the internet. • Wi-Fi should cover the entire library not be limited to specific areas within the library. • The current internet time limit of one hour is insufficient. • Slow internet and Wi-Fi speeds. • Sites such as YouTube and Pinterest have been blocked without consulting the librarian. These sites were providing valuable information. • EML is lagging behind in the provision of e-books, journals and magazines. • Each library should have a Facebook and Twitter account.

It is evident from Table 3 that the vast majority of the 35 respondents who commented (80%) were concerned about access to technology.

4.2.3 Section C: Collections

The questions asked in this section concerned the contribution of branch libraries' collections to social cohesion and their ability to serve a diverse community.

4.2.3.1 Language

Respondents were asked to indicate in Question 14 if the library had an adequate collection in the language of the community.

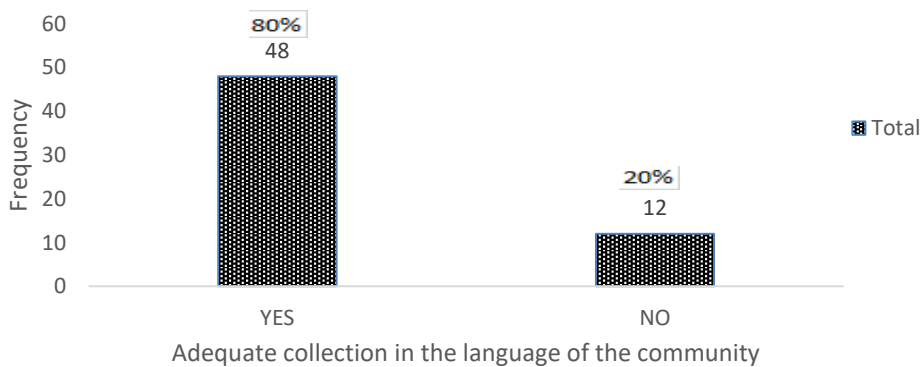


Figure 12: Adequate collection in the language of the community N=60

Figure 12 shows that 48 (80%) respondents were of the opinion that the library had an adequate collection in the language of the community. Twenty percent (12) of respondents were of the view that the library did not have an adequate collection in the language of the community.

4.2.3.2 Collection catering for blind or partially sighted

Respondents were asked to indicate in Question 15 if the library had a collection that catered for the blind or partially sighted.

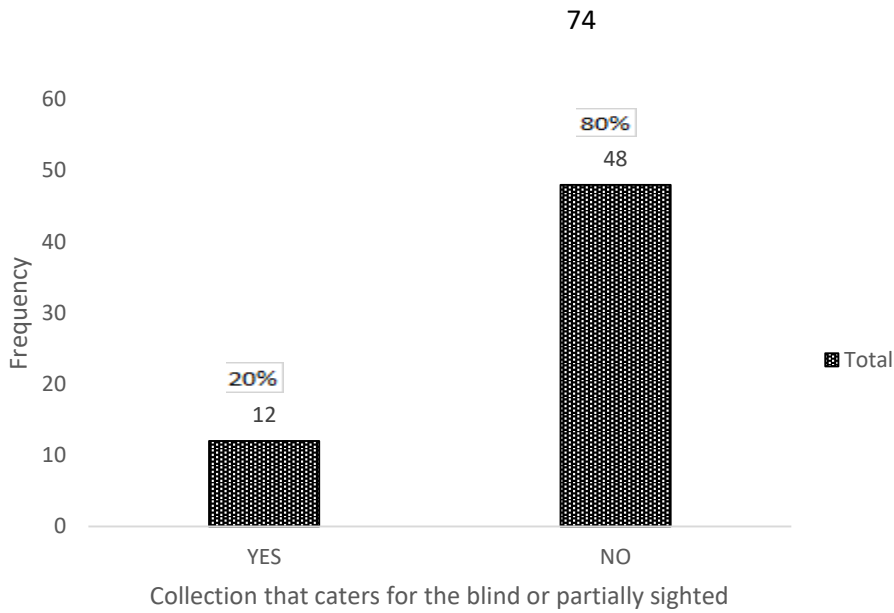


Figure 13: Collection that caters for the blind or partially sighted N=60

Figure 13 shows that a large majority 48 (80%) of respondents indicated that their library does not have a collection that caters for the blind or partially sighted and 12 (20%) indicated that their library did have such a collection.

4.2.3.3 Book selection

Respondents were asked to indicate in Question 16 if the books/library material provided at book selection was meeting the needs of their users.

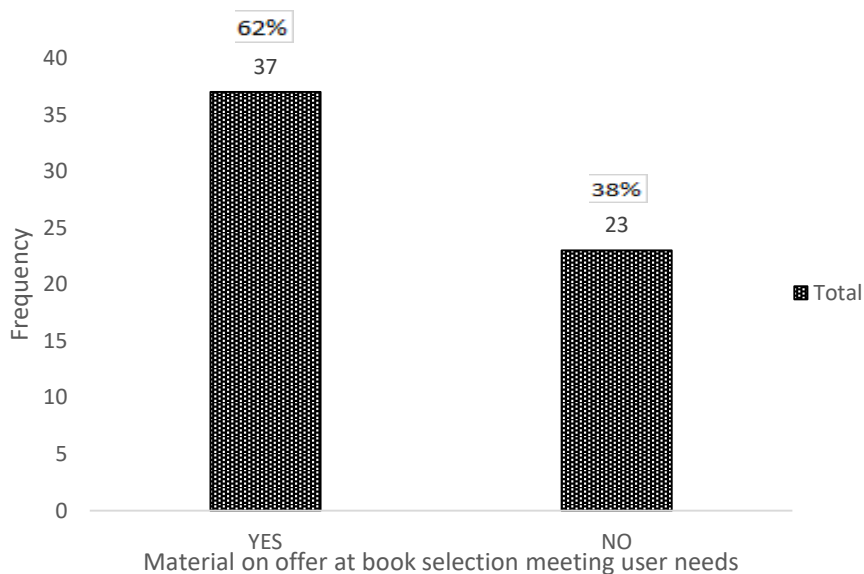


Figure 14: Material on offer at book selection meeting user needs N=60

Figure 14 shows that 37 (62%) respondents were of the opinion that the material on offer at book selection was meeting the needs of their users. A fairly large minority, 23 (38%) indicated that the material on offer was not meeting users' needs.

4.2.3.4 Collection development policy

Respondents were asked in Question 17 if the library had a collection development policy.

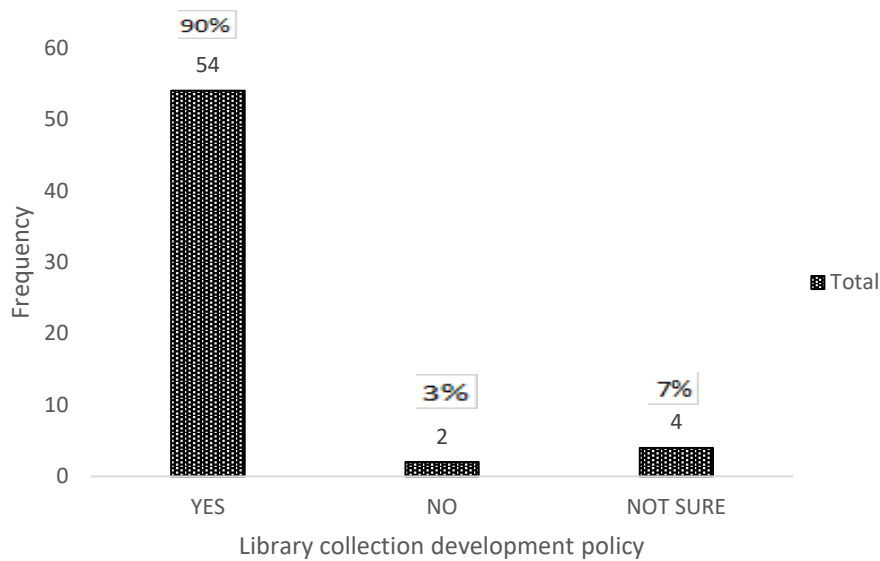


Figure 15: Library collection development policy N=60

As can be seen in Figure 15 the vast majority 54 (90%) of respondents indicated that the library had a collection development policy. Four (7%) respondents were unsure and two (3%) indicated that the library did not have such a policy.

4.2.3.5 Multicultural community

Respondents were asked to indicate in Question 18 if the library collection catered for a multicultural community.

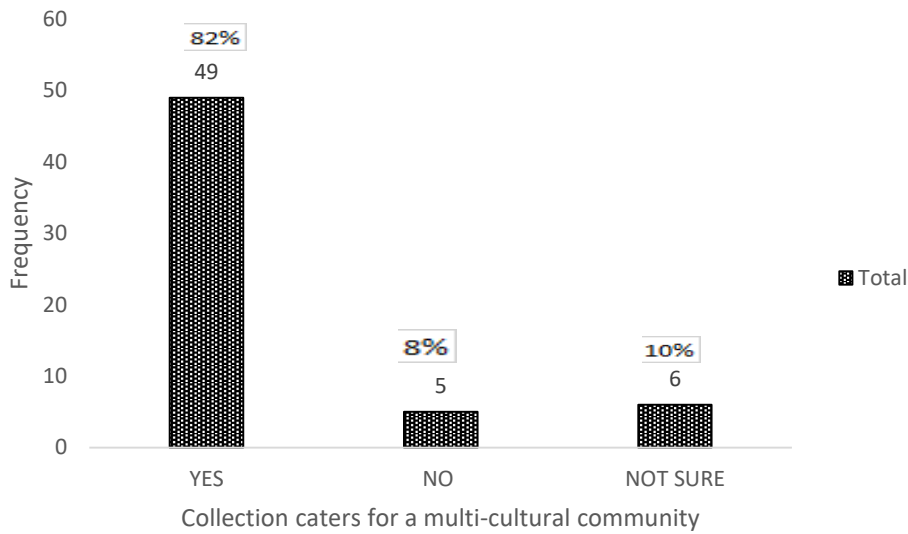


Figure 16: Collection caters for a multi-cultural community N=60

As evident in Figure 16, 49 (82%) respondents indicated that the library had a collection that catered for a multi-cultural community. Five (8%) respondents indicated that the library did not have such a collection while six (10%) were not sure.

4.2.3.6 Additional comments on collection development

Respondents were offered the opportunity in Question 19 to list any additional comments they may have had regarding collection development. Non-responses totalled 27 (45%) while 33 (55%) respondents gave one or more comments. A total of 62 comments were received. Table 4 provides the comments given.

Table 4 Additional comments on collection development N=33

Additional comments on collection development
<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current items that are offered at book selection do not meet the needs of the community. • The stoppage of book shop visits to purchase items is viewed as detrimental to collection development. • Lack of indigenous language material on offer at book selection. • Current best seller and books in high demand are no longer in demand due to the time taken for the item to come to the library. • Items in Indian languages are not provided for. • There is a need for more books by local authors. • Public libraries must not be restricted from purchasing academic text books if this is the requirement of their community. • The awarding of book tenders to limited suppliers has an adverse effect on collection development. • At the last book selection of 2017 librarians were expected to spend 3 million rands, in one book selection which is poor planning by management. • In order to expedite orders placed at the last 2017 book selection a system of bulk ordering was created. A selected team ordered items in bulk for libraries, which cancelled out in some cases the original orders placed by librarians. • There are no dedicated Junior librarians in EML who specialise in children's collection. • The lack of e-books and other online services means people who wish to access an electronic collection do not use the library.

As can be seen in Table 4 comments covered a wide variety of issues relating to collection development. While no one response predominated, it is evident that a number of the responses concerned the nature of the collection, while the book selection and purchasing processes were also of concern.

4.2.4. Section D: Library programmes

The questions asked in this section investigated the library programmes run at branch libraries and their contribution to social cohesion.

4.2.4.1. Programmes contributing to social cohesion

Respondents were asked in Question 20 if the programmes they run have an impact on social cohesion in the community.

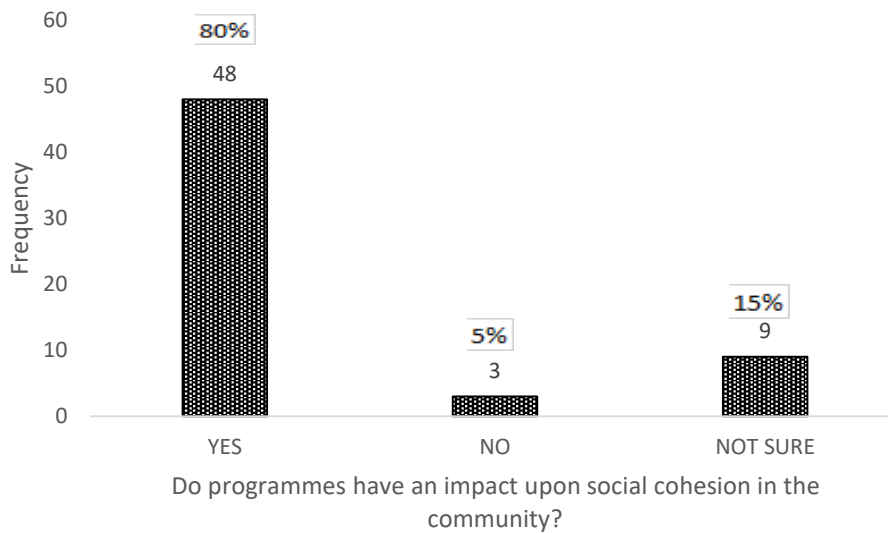


Figure 17: Programmes have an impact upon social cohesion in the community N=60

The majority of respondents 48 (80%) believed that the programmes run by the library have an impact upon social cohesion in the community. A small number, three (5%), did not believe their library programmes contributed towards social cohesion and the remaining nine (15%) respondents were not sure.

Respondents were offered the opportunity to provide further comments on their answers to Question 20. Respondents that chose to provide further comments numbered 43 (72%). Respondents were not limited to the number of comments they provided and a total of 51 responses were received.

Of the 43 (72%) respondents who provided further comments, three (7%) said that they were not aware of their programmes having an impact on the community. Nine (21%) respondents pointed to insufficient funding to hold successful programmes. The remaining majority of respondents, 31 (72%) of the 43, all went on to list one or more of the library programmes they offered and which they believed contributed to social cohesion. These were: Storytelling,

Business Corner, Library Orientation, Holiday Programmes, Spelling Bee, Adult Literacy and Refugee Programmes.

Library programmes is expanded on in Section 4.2.4.2.

4.2.4.2 Library programmes offered

Respondents were provided a list of library programmes and were required to tick the programmes offered at their library. They were also asked to specify any other programme offered by the library not listed. (Question 22.)

Figure 18, lists the programmes run by the libraries in the order given on the questionnaire while Table 4, which follows, lists the programmes in order of frequency – highest to lowest.

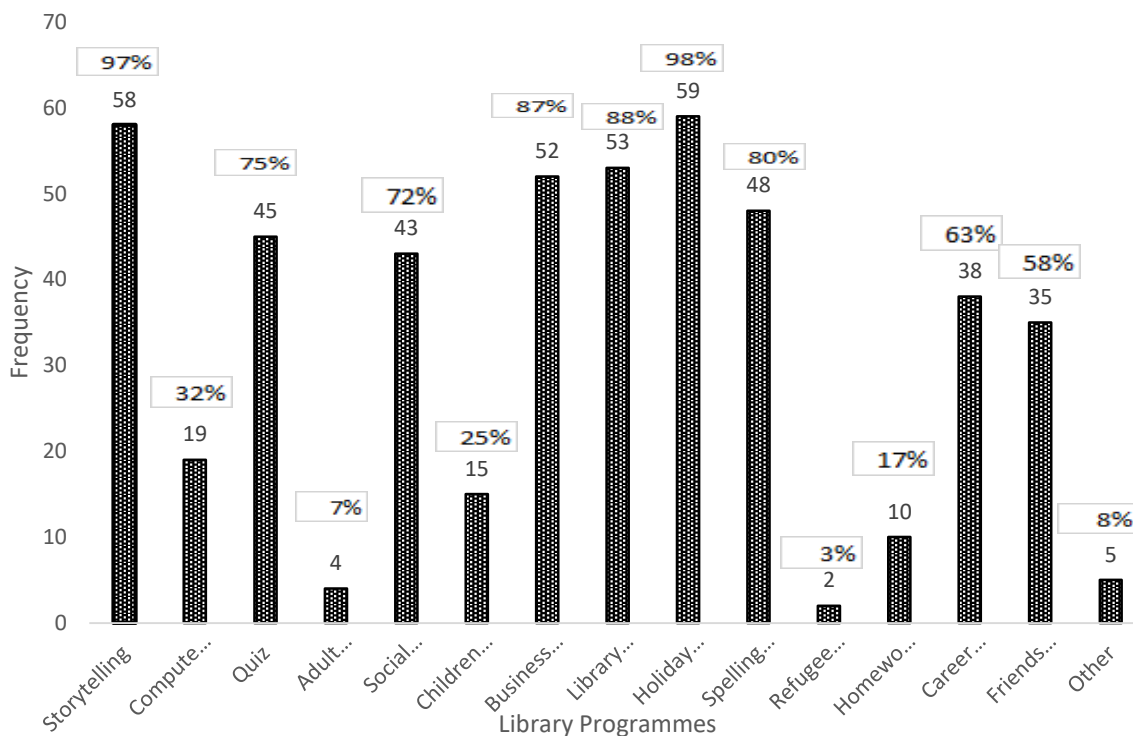


Figure 18: Library programmes offered by branch libraries N=60

Table 5 Library programmes in order of highest to lowest frequency N=60.

Ranking	Programme	Frequency	Percentages
1	Holiday programmes	59	98
2	Storytelling	58	97
3	Library orientation	53	88
4	Business corners	52	87
5	Spelling bee	48	80
6	Quiz	45	75
7	Social cohesion	43	72
8	Career awareness programmes	38	63
9	Friends of the Library	35	58
10	Computer training by a cyber-cadet	19	32
11	Children literacy classes	15	25
12	Homework clubs	10	17
13	Other	5	8
14	Adult literacy classes	4	7
15	Refugee programmes	2	3

Figure 18 and Table 4 show the library programmes that are run by EML and the number of branch libraries offering them. It is evident that there are five commonly run programmes (80% or more of the libraries doing so) which are Holiday programmes 59 (98%), Storytelling 58 (97%), Library orientation 53 (88%) Business corner 52 (87%) and Spelling bee 48 (80%). Quiz 45 (75%), Social cohesion 43 (72%) and Career awareness 38 (63%) are also popular programme offerings. The programmes with the lowest involvement of libraries were Adult literacy offered by four (7%) and Refugee programmes two (3%). Only five (8%) respondents indicated that their library held programmes other than the preselected list provided to the respondents and these are as follows: Martial arts, Line dancing, Mum's support, Women's club, Knitting club, Chess, Youth programmes, Reading club, Speech and drama, Weighless, Senior citizens' club, Programmes for disabled and mentally challenged children, and School visits. One respondent indicated that the Women's club hosts numerous activities for the upliftment of the community.

4.2.4.3 Additional comments on library programmes

Respondents were offered the opportunity in Question 23 to list any comments they may have regarding library programmes.

Twenty-four (40%) respondents provided further comments and 36 (60%) did not. Once again, respondents were not limited to the number of comments they provided and a total of 31 responses were received. The comments by the respondents have been categorised according to themes and these are listed in Table 5.

Table 6 Additional comments on library programmes N= 24

Additional comments on library programmes
Lack of funding 6 (25%) respondents
Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having funding withdrawn for planned events. A respondent stated that if no funding is allocated for an event then the event should not be included in the performance management agreement (PMA) of librarians. The lack of funding makes hosting programmes difficult which is demotivating. Funding that is provided cannot be used to buy food for invited learners and guests.
Groups of people not being adequately served 7 (29%) respondents
Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents felt that the homeless, refugee and immigrant communities were not served. Lack of adult and children's literacy classes which staff need to be trained in running. Lack of programmes for the blind and deaf community. Lack of programmes targeted at secondary school learners.
Need for more library programmes 9 (38%) respondents
Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmes that needed to be run or expanded within EML were drug awareness, teenage pregnancy, bullying in schools, debating for secondary school learners, sewing, gardening and literacy classes for both adult and children.
Programmes being well supported 5 (21%) respondents
Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmes considered well supported (and successfully run) at their library were storytelling hour, business corner and holiday programmes.

4.2.5 Section E: Additional information

In the last section of the questionnaire respondents were asked to list their main area of concern regarding library resources. They were then asked for any final comments on social cohesion. The latter comments have been categorised according to themes emerging from the responses.

4.2.5.1 Main area of concern

In question 24 respondents were asked to indicate, from a range of options provided, which one option was their current main area of concern in the library. Respondents were also asked to expand on their answer.

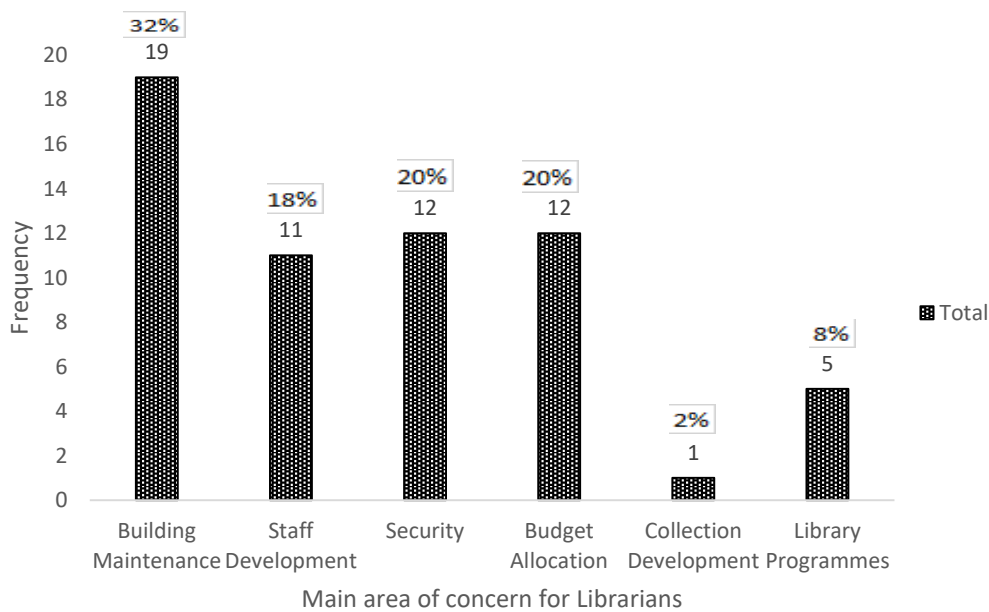


Figure 19: Main area of concern for Librarians N=60

Figure 19 shows that the area of highest concern to librarians was building maintenance with 19 (32%) respondents indicating this. The area least mentioned by respondents was collection development practices with only one (2%) respondent doing so, followed by library programmes with five (8%) respondents. There were almost equal levels of concern for staff development 11 (18%), security 12 (20%) and budget allocation 12 (20%).

As noted in Figure 19, respondents were asked to elaborate on the area of concern stated.

Findings are reflected in Table 6.

Table 7 Additional comments on main area of concern N=60

Additional comments on main areas of concern
<p>Building maintenance 19 (32%) respondents</p> <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents raised their concerns over the condition of the library building which were in a state of disrepair requiring maintenance and revamping. Comments such as the roof leaks, ceiling falling down, ablution facilities, air conditioners, paraplegic toilets, staff kitchen, staff workroom and paving for wheelchairs, were raised as maintenance and facilities that were required in the library. • One respondent stated that <i>the library needs to be upgraded and maintained to meet health and safety requirements.</i> • The expansion or upgrading of the library to better cater for the needs of the community e.g. need for a study area. Respondents stated that there was a need for a general upgrading/revamping of the libraries that were old and no longer met the needs of the community adequately. • The speedy resolution of maintenance problems was seen as a concern. One respondent stated: <i>I would prefer library department can personally handle maintenance rather an architectural service that creates a delay in terms of compliance.</i> • Other statements made by respondents included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Buildings are not receiving the necessary level of care. There is currently a fire-fighting approach to building maintenance. Problems with block sewer lines results in interruptions to service delivery. Also a large percentage of library managements time is consumed in undertaking building maintenance duties. This obviously results in the performance of the librarians core duties suffering.</i> ▪ <i>The library is very old and looks outdated, in need of renovation to improve the facilities and appearance. The budget of maintenance is decreasing instead of increasing. Contractors appointed to do work do shoddy work then leave.</i> • The maintenance budget was raised as a concern as the budget was too small to undertake the maintenance required.
<p>Staff development 11 (18%) respondents</p> <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff training for librarians was raised. Library profession is changing due to technology and staff are not trained to meet the new changes. Lack of training in book selection, project management and library programmes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some of the comments by respondents are listed below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Training done by WSP is not sufficient. Staff should be sent for training for management. No progression plans in place for staff development for the minority group.</i> • The training of library assistants was raised as a concern by respondents as they are front line staff most often serving the public. Respondents pointed to a lack reading and customer service skills amongst staff. Staff are not motivated to develop beyond their current position. Comments by some respondents are listed below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Staff need intensive training on the modern context of the library world in the community needs, social norms, professional behaviour, excellent customer service, the role of the library in achieving the goals of the NDP, IDP, etc.</i> ▪ <i>Staff development this is a priority. We have front line staff who is library assistants. They are not readers they are merely there for the job. They do not intend to study to empower themselves. Much needs to be done in terms of staff development.</i>

Security 12 (20%) respondents
<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss control systems, security gates in many libraries were not working – resulted in an increase in theft of library material. • Libraries had been burgled due to inadequate security. • South Africa has a high crime rate which is of concern to staff who felt that their safety and security was compromised. Respondents listed having experience of stalkers, hijackings, burglary, theft of personal items from members of the public. • Some of the comments by respondents were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>We do not have a security guard as we are situated in a shopping centre but I believe each and every library needs a security guard. We have had patrons coming to report that their laptops/phones were stolen inside the library. We keep cash on the premises.</i> ▪ <i>The library is a high risk area and theft of motor vehicles are high. 2x security and CCTV cameras [is required].</i> ▪ <i>Security should be more tight in library and management should ensure that the library is provided with armed securities at least each library should have 3 security guards.</i>
Budget allocation 12 (20%) respondents
<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient budget allocation to meet the needs of the library. This was raised for book budget, maintenance budget, library programmes and technology such as PC's, gaming etc. Budget allocation is not fairly determined as the budget is currently allocated according to issue statistics. • Supply chain management (SCM) processes hinder service delivery, however this is a financial compliance requirement. <p>Comments by respondents included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>We have a crisis with the budget almost every year. SCM policies tender procurement are some of the reason for the inconsistency on book purchases. It is an ongoing battle with a very negative impact on service delivery. Purchasing books for a library is a core function and we fail to get the process right then we fail as a Department.</i> ▪ <i>Due to less circulation stats the budget allocated is not enough to meet community needs.</i> ▪ <i>If adequately provided and efficiently and effectively managed could be wisely used to assist in some other areas mentioned on your list e.g. improve urgent building maintenance issues, assist with resources to run excellent and solid library programmes.</i>
Library programmes five (8%) respondents
<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding a major deterrent in hosting library programmes. Funding can be cut or non-existent which has an impact on the quality of the programmes run. Speakers at events are not paid so no conditions can be placed on them.
Collection development practices one (2%) respondent
<p>Comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The collection needs to be developed around the needs of the community. The collection can be developed through adequate budget allocation.</i>

4.2.5.2 Additional comments on social cohesion

Respondents were offered the opportunity in Question 25 to list any further comments they may have had regarding social cohesion and the library. A quarter of the respondents, 15 (25%),

provided a total of 20 comments. Respondents that chose not to provide further comments numbered 45 (75%). The comments provided by the 15 respondents have been categorised and reflected in Table 7.

Table 8 Additional comments on social cohesion N=15

Additional comments on social cohesion
Lack of funding 3 (20%) respondents
Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The budget to conduct social cohesion programmes was (once again) raised by three (20%) of the 15 respondents as a concern and as a deterrent to hosting successful social cohesion programmes.
Programmes well supported 5 (33%) respondents
Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social cohesion was supported by five (33%) respondents who expressed the manner in which they support social cohesion programmes, and their desire to bring unity into their community as well as uplift the lives of those they serve. • One respondent stated: <i>We are coming from a past of deep racial and cultural divides. We have been taught to highlight our differences and not our similarities. Therefore it needs to be understood that promoting social cohesion is going to be a battle. We must not expect miracles or quick-fix remedies. The role of libraries in promoting social cohesion must be viewed as a journey and not an event.</i>
Ways to promote social cohesion 7 (47%) respondents
Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seven (47%) respondents expressed the manner in which they were or would like to see social cohesion promoted in EML. The responses were: wanting children's furniture and a revamp of the library, fostering a closer relationship with schools in the community, using innovative means to interact with patrons such as Facebook, and hosting programmes for the LBGT (lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgender) community.

4.3 Summary

In this chapter the results of the questionnaire-based survey were presented. The study sought to determine the contribution of EML towards social cohesion through its resources of staff, buildings, collections and library programmes. The order of presentation followed that of the questionnaire and the findings were presented in the form of bar charts, tables and text. It is evident from the findings of the survey that there is a need for EML to continue to pay attention to its resources which in turn will play a positive role in social cohesion.

This and other findings are discussed in Chapter five which follows.

Chapter five – Discussion of findings

5.1 Introduction

The results of the study are discussed in this chapter. The purpose of the study was to investigate the contribution of public libraries towards social cohesion within eThekweni Municipal Libraries (EML), and to explore and determine how successful EML have been with the mandate from local government to implement social cohesion. Social cohesion has been defined in Sections 1.6 and 1.8.2 as:

The degree of social integration and inclusion in communities and society at large, and the extent to which mutual solidarity finds expression among individuals and communities (DAC, 2012: 1).

Social integration and inclusion refer to how strongly people feel they are a part of the community and have a sense of belonging to the community; there should be no exclusion based on ethnicity, gender, class, age or disability. Hart (2012) states that while libraries are considered to be agents of social inclusion and social justice, this however, required leadership and vision in transforming the role of libraries from just disseminating information to holding outreach programmes for the community. Public libraries, as a space where people can freely gather, can play an important role in contributing to social cohesion. This they can do by being a meeting space for people as well as a learning space where people can empower themselves through library programmes such as information literacy classes.

According to the LIS Transformation Charter (2014:58) “social cohesion and the fostering of appreciation of cultural diversity, and Information literacy [can] allow citizens to participate in the knowledge society”. The LIS Transformation Charter (2009) states that its “hope for the future is libraries being within reach of all, places for everyone and forces for social cohesion and justice”. Cardo (2014: 10) notes that the Human Science Research Council (HSRC) uses social cohesion as a descriptive term to cover the extent to which society is coherent, united and functional, providing an environment in which citizens can grow. “Social cohesion is deemed present to the extent in which participants and observers of society find the lived experience of citizens to be relatively peaceful, gainfully employed, harmonious and free from deprivation”.

Hart (2012) states that libraries can play a role in teaching people how to use information to their benefit, thereby creating an environment supportive of sustained economic, social and civic development. Stilwell (2016:139) points out that “eThekweni municipal libraries have social cohesion programmes which target the marginalised community and elderly” .

Public libraries have a vital developmental role to play in alleviating information poverty and building social cohesion. However, the role of public libraries and their staff as agents of development and social cohesion have not been sufficiently recognised or achieved (DAC, 2014).

This study investigated the programmes on offer by EML as well as three other resources which facilitate social cohesion, namely, library buildings, the library collection and library staff (specifically branch librarians). The findings relating to these resources are discussed below. To begin with the research questions underpinning the study and which provide a basis for the discussion are once again outlined. This is followed by a discussion of the demographic characteristics of the respondents as well as their understanding of social cohesion.

5.2 Research questions

The research questions were as follows:

- Is the library building designed/structured in a functional manner to foster social cohesion and meet the needs of the community it serves?
- Does the library collection support social cohesion and address the needs of the community?
- What library programmes are run by staff to address and foster social cohesion in the communities?
- Do the librarians’ education, skills and on-going training equip them to address and foster social cohesion in their communities?

5.3 Discussion of results

As reported in Chapter three, a self-administered questionnaire was used as the means of data collection. Ninety-two questionnaires were distributed to EML branch librarians and 60 were completed and returned, giving a response rate of 65%.

5.3.1 Section A: Demographics

In the first section of the questionnaire various demographic-type questions were asked of respondents. These comprised questions determining gender, qualifications, experience, and professional development. This was followed by a question on social cohesion. The findings are discussed below.

5.3.1.1 Gender

The results of the survey show that of the respondents the majority, 43 (71.7%) were female and 17 (28.3%) male. Thus, female respondents predominated and this reflects the gender distribution in EML as a whole. Figures provided by eThekwini Human Resources (2016) show a figure of 122 librarians of which 94 (77%) are female and 28 (23%) male. As Olin and Millet (2015) state, librarianship is a predominantly female profession and they point out that since the 20th century women have comprised 75% of the library profession indicating that the gender “imbalance” is not just a local but also a global phenomenon. eThekwini Municipality, as per legislation, subscribes to employment equity and according to the Municipality’s current Employment Equity Plan 2014 - 2018 African females are the most under-represented group. Therefore, the trend of greater representation of female librarians is set to continue.

This section discusses the respondents’ qualifications, years of experience as branch librarians, contribution to professional development and understanding of the concept of social cohesion.

5.3.1.2 Qualifications

The question determining staff qualifications was based on the premise that staff with library qualifications and experience are best suited to serve the community and fulfil the municipality's social cohesion mandate. This premise is supported by the very definition of a librarian as a professionally trained person (Section 2.6.1) (Reitz 2004). All respondents, bar one, held formal LIS qualifications. The respondent who did not hold a LIS qualification held the position in a permanent capacity. The ND: LIS held by one (2%) respondent is a three-year qualification which is not accepted in EML for the position of librarian and the respondent was holding the position of librarian in an acting capacity. UNISA has in recent years updated its syllabus, changing the BInf from a four-year qualification to a three-year one which is also not accepted by EML as a qualification for librarians. LIASA's website lists "librarian qualifications as a four-year university degree in Library and Information Science (BBibl); or a three-year general university degree followed by a one-year post-graduate diploma in Library and Information Science. A four-year University of Technology degree in Library and Information Studies (BTech), consisting of the three-year National Diploma in Library and Information Studies plus one additional year of study" (LIASA, 2017) is also recognised as a librarian qualification. The two (3%) respondents who held the BInf studied when the qualification was a four-year degree. EML lists on job advertisements for librarians that a BBibl, HDLS (a post-graduate diploma), BTech (Library and Information Studies) or accredited equivalent are accepted.

Satgoor (2015) (Section 2.6.3.) has noted the confusion among educators, students and employers with regard to what comprises a recognised qualification in LIS. There is a lack of uniformity in the curriculum offered by the nine universities, resulting in confusion among educators, students and employers. This is a matter of concern as students study expecting to be employed in the profession and are shocked to discover their qualification will not allow them to apply for a position as librarian in EML. Staff who find themselves in this position feel excluded from employment opportunities that arise for the position of librarian in EML which is in contrast to employment opportunities for librarians offered at other LIS organisations including academic libraries. (The researcher checked the qualification criteria in job descriptions for the position of librarian in other LIS organisations.) The question of cohesion amongst librarians from academic institutions trained under different syllabi has not been investigated in this study.

It does, however, suggest the need for continuing education to be emphasised within EML to ensure social cohesion amongst librarians.

5.3.1.3 Experience as a branch librarian

In the literature review (Section 2.6.5.) it was stated that public libraries should be managed by a professional librarian as persons with formal library qualifications and appropriate experience are best equipped to lead and plan contemporary library services and undertake required professional duties. A majority, 42 (68%), of respondents had more than five years of experience as a branch librarian and 16 (27%) had more than 20 year's experience. Only one (2%) respondent (who was in an acting capacity) had less than one year's experience. Given the above, the respondents on the whole were, in terms of their working experience, well qualified thus making them suitable to render informed opinions on the questions posed. The findings indicate that EML has librarians of varying age groups and experience. Where age, experience and cultural differences exist there is an ongoing need for an organisation to find ways to unify their workforce to the benefit of the organisation.

5.3.1.4 Professional development

The importance of information professionals to continually upgrade their skills through continuing education (CE) to discharge their duties to users, employers and the profession was emphasised in Section 2.6.6. Professional development is considered a crucial aspect of staff development and continuous improvement in service delivery to users. The respondents were asked in Question 3 if EML was contributing to their professional development and if they were contributing to their own development. The results showed that 38 (63%) of respondents believed EML was contributing to their professional development while 15 (25%) believed that EML was not and seven (12%) were unsure. A majority 47 (78%) of respondents believed they undertook their own continuing professional development. Figure 3.1 in Chapter four shows that as respondents' length of service increased in EML the greater the indication that EML was not contributing to their professional development. Respondents were given an opportunity to expand on their opinions in Question 7.

Respondents who stated EML contributed to their professional development, listed that EML offered

- Assisted education
- Work skills training programme (WSP)
- Support for LIASA training

Respondents who said EML was not contributing to their professional development mentioned

- WSP courses as being old and duplicated
- Assisted education not being offered for post-graduate studies
- Lack of material training
- Lack of training on new technology
- General lack of training opportunities
- Lack of support for conference attendance and peer learning workshops

The researcher is aware of post-graduate studies being supported and funded through assisted education within other departments within eThekweni Municipality. Apart from the funding, this allows an employee an allocated amount of time to attend to their studies as guided by the organisations assisted education policy. This leaves EML employees feeling excluded from the educational benefits and opportunities afforded to their colleagues within other departments. The findings support the IFLA (2016) statement that staff would like to see administrators give them access to, and encouragement for, continuous learning. Professional development is considered of vital importance in a rapidly changing and developing field such as library and information work, yet there are barriers to accessing continuing professional development. According to Ram (2015) the challenges relating to training are that it is generally run by national institutions, is of short duration, infrequent and expensive. In addition, working professionals find it difficult to get sponsorship from their institutions and travelling to and from training destinations hampers their regular work. These issues are consistent with the findings of this study. As noted above, a majority 47 (78%) of respondents said that they undertook their own professional development, seven (12%) said they did not and six (10%) were unsure. Respondents were asked in Question 24 to indicate what their current main area of concern in the library was. Staff development emerged as the second most chosen area with 11 (18%) respondents. When asked to provide a reason for their concern responses underscored the importance that respondents attached to staff

development. It was pointed out that the library profession is changing due to technology and staff were not trained to meet the new changes. Also noted was a lack of training in book selection, project management and library programmes. In this regard a verbatim comment by one respondent was that:

Training done by WSP (work skills programme) is not sufficient. Staff should be sent for training for management. No progression plans in place for staff development for the minority group.

The training of library assistants was raised as a concern by respondents as they are the front-line staff most often serving the public. Respondents pointed to staff lacking the motivation to read, not having adequate customer service skills, and not being motivated to develop beyond their current position. Verbatim comments included:

- *Staff need intensive training on the modern context of the library world in the community needs, social norms, professional behaviour, excellent customer service, the role of the library in achieving the goals of the NDP, IDP, etc.*
- *Staff development this is a priority. We have front line staff who are library assistants. They are not readers they are merely there for the job. They do not intend to study to empower themselves. Much needs to be done in terms of staff development.*
- *Staff development has an impact on service delivery.*

These findings support the statements in the literature review made by the Queensland Public Library (2008) regarding staff undertaking training courses and being offered financial support to further their education. In particular, information and communication technology (ICT) developments such as data curation, digital preservation, data management planning, institutional repositories, social media, online learning, publishing, e-books and mobile technology are highlighted in the literature as areas that librarians desire to be developed in and which offer wonderful new opportunities in the delivery of information services and the way libraries are managed (LIASA, 2017).

5.3.1.5 Understanding of social cohesion

Respondents were asked (Question 5) to indicate if they understood the concept of social cohesion. The overwhelming majority, 58 (97%), said they did while the remaining two (3%) were unsure. Respondents were then asked to indicate if they thought they would benefit from a workshop or seminar on social cohesion for librarians (Question 6). Again, the vast majority of respondents 56 (93%) said they would benefit – this despite 97% of respondents indicating that they understood the concept of social cohesion. Social cohesion, as mentioned, can be seen as a “tricky” concept and the fact that so many respondents felt that they would benefit from further training suggests that their understanding of the concept was not clear-cut and could be improved upon. South Africa has legislation which supports and encourages skills development, economic empowerment and poverty alleviation which are integral to social cohesion. They open up opportunities for people to grow and develop and feel more as if they are an important part of society, thereby meeting the needs of the country. The relevant legislation is the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act, Act 58 of 1995/National Qualifications Framework; Skills Development Act, Act 97 of 1998; Skills Levies Act, Act 9 of 1999 and the Employment Equity Act, Act 55 of 1998.

5.3.1.6 Professional development and social cohesion

Respondents were offered the opportunity to list any comments they may have regarding professional development and social cohesion (Question 7). The verbatim comments are listed below:

- *Social cohesion is not a static phenomenon. It is dynamic and context specific. Culture and cultural practices change. Therefore there is a need for on-going professional development for us to comprehend the changing social dynamics. It is only through on-going professional development that we can equip ourselves with cutting edge knowledge on social dynamic.*
- *There is a need for ongoing training as they work in direct contact with the general public, from different background whom have different values, norms and languages etc., thus an understanding of social cohesion is important.*
- *Cultural diversity needs to be addressed in the workplace. Librarians should teach each other about their different cultures and way of living, thereby ensuring*

social cohesion is also practiced within EML. Cultural diversity needs to be respected with no religion or culture being dominant over the other.

Given South Africa's racially divided past, the comments by respondents to have a greater sense of social cohesion among their colleagues are valid ones. One respondent raised the very contentious issue of language stating that EML should have meetings in English as the respondent is unable to understand the meeting when another language is used and, as a result, feels excluded and unable to contribute to the meeting. A second respondent expressed feelings of exclusion when vegetarian food was not catered for at EML functions and meetings where food is provided. In a department that is mandated to promote social cohesion it is essential that EML practice social cohesion from within. The respondents' comments on social cohesion, not being a static phenomenon succinctly capture the reason ongoing training on social cohesion is important for librarians. The training will not only address enhanced service delivery to the community but will also create a more socially cohesive environment amongst colleagues within EML.

5.3.2 Section B: Buildings

In this section the findings relating to the library building are discussed. This includes disabled access to the library, signage, health and safety, security, technology, and the library building itself.

5.3.2.1 Disability access

In the literature review, Section 2.2.1, it is stated that a library building is a public space and should be easily accessible by all members of the public irrespective of age or disability (Queensland Public Library, 2009). Discrimination prevents people from exercising their rights, including the right to access information resources in libraries and information centres (Chaputula and Mapulanga, 2016). Respondents were asked to indicate if their library provided disability access, that is, access to disability parking and wheelchair ramps (Question 8). Fifty-four (90%) respondents stated that their library did provide such access and the remaining six (10%) answered in the negative. According to Bodaghi and Zainab (2012) the fundamental right of "all members of a society, is the right to access all facilities, sources and services, despite

their varying abilities or limitations”. Given the findings above, it does appear that EML is doing well with regard to disability access but there is still room for improvement as six libraries remain without such access. People with disability being denied their right to access a public library makes such persons feel excluded from the services offered by the library, and exclusion is the antithesis of social cohesion.

5.3.2.2 Signage

Effective signage (Section 2.2.4) can contribute much to improve access and usability (Swanepoel and Swanepoel, 2010). Respondents were asked to indicate if the library provided signage in the language of the community (Question 9). A majority of respondents 47 (78%) indicated that the library had signage in the language of the community. Respondents that indicated there was no signage in the language of the community numbered 13 (22%). This latter finding would suggest that those libraries would not be as easy for the community to navigate, had the signage been in the first language of that community. In order for members of a community to not only feel welcome but have a sense of ownership of their local public library, the library needs to be a space that can be easily navigated with signage that speaks to a person in his/her own language.

5.3.2.3 Health and safety

Health and safety were discussed in Section 2.2.6. Public libraries by the very nature of their business are open and accessible to all and libraries need to ensure the safety of staff, public and library material (Queensland Public Library Standards and Guidelines, 2009). Respondents were asked to indicate if the library had passed its last health and safety audit (Question 10). The findings showed that 50 (83%) respondents said yes, six (10%) said no and four (7%) were unsure. Thus, most of the EML libraries were compliant with health and safety. However, it is concerning that there are six (10%) libraries which had not passed their last health and safety audit. This would indicate that the building is unsafe for both library patrons and staff. Section 2.2.6 of the literature review discussed the vital importance of a library building being compliant with regard to health and safety laws – not only is this a moral and ethical obligation, it is also a legislative requirement which can result in eThekweni Municipality facing fines and other sanctions as imposed by the Department of Labour. The South African Occupational Health and

Safety Amended Act (OHSA) No 181 of 1993, provides for the health and safety of people at work. The Act requires the employer to have health and safety representatives who conduct inspections of the work premises. A health and safety committee is also required for the fulfilment of the Act. The committee is tasked with identifying health and safety risks in the workplace and rectifying these at the earliest opportunity (Department of Labour, 2016). Where members of the public are injured on municipal premises such injuries can cost the municipality a great deal of money, not to mention negative publicity. A public library that does not undergo regular checks and balances to ensure their premises are safe for staff and employees is failing not just in social cohesion but in its moral and legal obligations to staff and member of the public alike.

5.3.2.4 Security

As stated in the literature review (Section 2.2.6), with “any building freely accessible to the public, staff will occasionally encounter users who behave in an unpleasant and anti-social manner” (IFLA, 2001: 69). South Africa has a very high crime rate which makes security essential for an environment that is so openly accessible to all members of the public, hence it is vital for library management to plan for the safety and protection of both library patrons and employees. Respondents were asked to indicate if the library had a security guard during the opening hours of the library and 49 (82%) said that their library did. Respondents who indicated their main concern as security 12 (20%) in Question 24, provided responses which will be discussed here. The responses received indicated that the security of library material and the safety of staff and patrons were of concern to librarians. Respondents listed having experienced stalkers, hijackings, burglary, and theft of personal items from members of the public. It is evident that crime has affected staff and patrons alike. In December 2010, librarian and author Nelly Phewa was shot and killed in her office at the Hamabanathi Library (*eThekwini news*, 2010). While libraries have panic buttons installed, in most cases these are situated only at the circulation counter. In addition, according to the researcher’s experience, these panic buttons are not regularly tested to ensure they are operational. Furthermore, during the time when the library is without electricity, panic buttons and security gates will not work.

According to the Head of Parks, Recreation and Culture Unit, Thembinkosi Ngcobo (2017), each year over R10 million is spent purchasing books but the unfortunate part is that books to the

value of R3 million are lost every year as a result of theft and vandalism. He went on to say that “While we encourage the culture of reading, we also want people to value books and protect them” (*eThekwini News*, 2017). The researcher has come across websites and videos informing people how to steal library items. The findings and comments by respondents indicate that security is a concern for EML and the statement by *Library Security Guidelines* (American Library Association, 2010) is apt here. In terms of the statement, the responsibility for library staff, patrons, the library building, its contents and surrounds and “the development and integration of protection programs for emergencies, as well as fire, floods, earthquakes, and other natural disasters” (American Library Association, 2010) , is in the hands of the Library Director, or his or her designee.

Given the discussion above, library security needs to be regarded in a serious light. The funding from the conditional grants awarded to municipalities can be used to address some of the safety and security concerns mentioned (DAC, 2013). Public libraries, by their very nature, are spaces that are accessible to all members of the public. Not providing adequate safety and security measures can deter members of the public from visiting the library for fear of being robbed of personal possessions or attacked. Librarians who work under the threat of violence will not be able to perform their jobs optimally, keeping their focus on uplifting the community they serve. Nor will community members support the library and its programmes or encourage their children to attend these programmes if the library is considered unsafe. This, in turn, would undermine the social cohesion role the library could be, or is, playing.

5.3.2.5 Technology

“Library planners should keep in mind that automation has changed library service patterns and the design and size of the library must take current and future technology into account” (IFLA, 2001). Respondents were asked to indicate if their library provided access to technology through a range of preselected choices: public access PCs, Wi-Fi access, scanning, cyber-zone, printing from the internet, and good internet speed (Question 12). The findings show that the vast majority of respondent 56 (93%) indicated that the library provided Wi-Fi access, followed by 53 (88%) who indicated the library has a public access PC. However, only 28 (47%) of the libraries had a cyber-zone – an area in the library where computer and other electronic devices such as a printer and scanner are made available to users, staffed by a cyber-cadet who is skilled

to assist in their usage. As pointed out in Section 2.2.5 the internet has clearly created a demand for electronic information and public libraries are seen by government as one of the sites in which the public can access information free of charge.

While EML is doing well in providing access to free Wi-Fi and free internet access via a public access PC, the findings show the rate of provision is exceeded by the demand. Respondents were offered an opportunity to expand on the issue of technology in Question 13. Respondents commented on the manner in which a lack of technology was hampering service delivery and the manner in which these challenges could be addressed. These included the unblocking of restricted websites, increasing access to Wi-Fi and internet access PCs, and reducing internet printing tariffs. The right to access information is viewed as a human right which public libraries, through free access to technology, address. However, barriers to accessing information negatively impact on the lives of people who are seeking information for employment, education and as a means to improve themselves and their standard of living. Without such access, which public libraries do provide, social cohesion within a community is undermined.

5.3.2.6 Library building

Public libraries are continually adapting their services to meet their user needs, thereby ensuring their relevance to the communities they serve. Public library user needs have changed through the years, requiring public libraries to provide facilities to meet the need for educational, recreational and vocational services. The library building plays an important role in this regard. In Question 13 respondents were given an opportunity to express their opinions on library buildings (as well as access to technology). Seventeen of the 35 (49%) respondents who answered, provided comments on library buildings. In addition, Question 24 asked respondents to indicate from a range of options provided which one option was their current main area of concern in the library. Nineteen (32%) respondents chose building maintenance as their main area of concern. The comments to these two questions are discussed below:

- Space

Respondents indicated that the libraries had insufficient space to meet the growing needs of their communities. This is in part due to the need for technology related services which has resulted in many libraries facing a shortage of space to offer such services. Respondents stated that there is

a need for space for study areas, general activities rooms and cyber-zones. It was also mentioned that the older libraries need to be revamped to meet community needs.

- Leased buildings verses council-owned buildings

Respondents had differing views on leased buildings verses council-owned buildings. A respondent raised concerns about libraries occupying leased buildings rather than council owned premises. He/she pointed out that rental costs were high and the rented space was not originally designed to be a library. An opposing view raised by another respondent was that more libraries should be situated in shopping malls to increase accessibility. In this regard a proposal for the establishment of a municipal library at the Galleria Mall in Amanzimtoti was approved on the 8 December 2016, which indicates that EML supports the view that libraries can be situated in shopping malls (*eThekwini News*, 2016).

- Maintenance

It is evident from comments given that much needs to be done in terms of maintenance in some of the libraries. Respondents raised their concerns over the condition of the library buildings which were in a state of disrepair requiring maintenance and renovation. There were respondents who indicated that the library did not meet the last health and safety inspection (as noted above) and this raises concern for the health and safety of both staff and the public. One respondent was of the view that EML adopts an attitude of reaction rather than pro-action – allowing libraries buildings to fall into disrepair before taking action. Regular assessments, together with proper maintenance and upgrade plans would prevent this from occurring.

These statements are supported by information from eThekwini Municipality's website which had an article on the roof of Whetstone Library in Phoenix, Unit 11, collapsing at around 8h00 pm on the 16 January 2013. There was one guard on duty at the time who fortunately did not sustain injuries. The eThekwini Municipality Council minutes of the 31 March 2013, recorded councillor B. Singh questioning the delay in maintenance to the Whetstone Library which had the roof cave in due to structural defects. The councillor was informed that there was a dispute between the contractor and the municipality and the former had abandoned the project. A new contractor needed to be appointed, which had to go through the supply chain management (SCM) process (*eThekwini News* 2013).

A second example concerns the storm damage to 20 libraries in October 2017. Libraries formed a portion of the cost of R7.7 million that was required by the Parks and Recreations Department to repair its facilities (*eThekwini News*, 2017). How much of this damage could have been prevented and costs mitigated had facilities been regularly and properly maintained. This is information the researcher does not have access to.

The condition of library buildings has not only been the concern of municipal staff. A member of the public wrote to the municipality: "... it appears that the condition of the Westville North Library is deteriorating, unkempt verge damaged fencing, alien trees, washout of sand onto Iver road" (*eThekwini news*, 2017).

The speedy resolution of maintenance problems is seen as a concern. One respondent stated: *I would prefer library department can personally handle maintenance rather an architectural services that creates a delay in terms of compliance.* The maintenance budget was raised by another respondent as a concern, as the amount of money allocated to the maintenance budget was insufficient to undertake the maintenance required. Some further statements regarding maintenance made by respondents are listed below:

- *Buildings are not receiving the necessary level of care. There is currently a fire-fighting approach to building maintenance. Problems with block sewer lines results in interruptions to service delivery. Also a large percentage of library managements time is consumed in undertaking building maintenance duties. This obviously results in the performance of the librarians core duties suffering.*
- *The library is very old and looks outdated, in need of renovation to improve the facilities and appearance. The budget of maintenance is decreasing instead of increasing. Contractors appointed to do work do shoddy work then leave.*

The maintenance of library buildings is required and budgets should never be a cause to not undertake essential maintenance. Not doing so can endanger the lives of staff and the public. It also, as pointed out above, interrupts service delivery and takes up librarians' time – time which could be put to better use.

The library building is the primary site for library activities to take place in the community. When the library space is not conducive for this purpose, either due to a lack of safety,

accessibility, or space to offer essential services such as a cyber-zone, the library is failing to deliver on its full potential and to fully realise the valuable role it can perform in contributing towards social cohesion. Librarians are skilled in information access and delivery, not building maintenance. Librarians having to use their time dealing with maintenance-related issues impacts negatively on the tasks they have been trained to perform thereby denying both themselves and the community of those skills. Through their skills librarians can address their communities' information needs and by so doing uplift the communities and fully contribute to their role in promoting social cohesion.

5.3.3 Section C: Collection

In this section the findings relating to branch libraries' collections and their contribution to social cohesion and ability to serve a diverse community are discussed. Public libraries need to have collections that cater to the needs of their entire community in order for all members of the community to feel a sense of inclusion and belonging which is essential in building social cohesion.

5.3.3.1 *Language*

Libraries should be providing books in one's mother tongue in order to promote the National Language Policy of South Africa (DAC 2003) and to foster reading. Doing so will encourage both linguistic and cultural diversity, and affirm language rights in a multilingual society (DAC, 2009). In Question 14 respondents were asked to indicate if the library had an adequate collection in the language of the community. Forty-eight (80%) of the respondents said yes, while 12 (20%) said no. The latter finding of 20% is concerning given Lor's (2012) view that librarians need to be concerned with how they can serve users speaking indigenous languages – they need to identify materials in indigenous languages as a means of, or tools for, reaching out and ensuring the relevance of their services to communities. South Africa has a low literacy rate as has been indicated by Spaul (2016). One of the factors attributed to this poor rate is not having access to books in the mother tongue. The National Library of South Africa is working with other organisations to address this problem. However, public libraries must also play their role in combating illiteracy and enabling South Africa to lift itself out of the triple scourge of poverty, inequality and unemployment and, by so doing, facilitate social cohesion.

5.3.3.2 *Blind or partially sighted*

Respondents were asked to indicate if the library had a collection that catered for the blind or partially sighted (Question 15). The findings show that the majority of respondents, 48 (80%), did not have a collection catering for the blind or partially sighted while 12 (20%), a minority, indicated that they had such a collection. It is the researcher's view that public libraries, as part of a government organisation, need to support and uphold the Constitution and the values and rights mentioned therein. This will include, if needed, the provision of services to the blind and partially sighted members of the community (DAC, 2013). While it is not known how many members of the community belong to this group, Da Silva Rodrigues (2009) points to the very little evidence available of the blind and partially sighted being catered for and the need for systematic and continuous needs assessments by the public sector. The fact that blind and partially sighted are not being catered for is of concern, as a sector of the community is excluded from the services offered by the public library. Libraries are not just places of information they are also considered to be a space in which community members can meet and interact with each other thereby creating and building social cohesion. This will not be possible for members of the blind or partially sighted community who will have no reason to go the library as their needs are not being catered for. This will prevent them from having a sense of community and belonging, which is integral to social cohesion.

5.3.3.3 *Book selection*

IFLA's Collection Development Policy (2001) and *Public Library Service Guidelines* (2001) state that an analysis of the needs of the community must take place in order for the library collection to be reflective of the community being served. The needs of each community will differ and therefore the collection development policy of a branch library, while linking to the mission statement of the parent organisation, must be tailored to reflect the needs of the community it serves. Respondents were asked to indicate if the books/library material provided at book selection was meeting the needs of their users (Question 16). The findings show that 37 (62%) respondents replied in the affirmative while a fairly substantial minority 23 (38%), replied in the negative. Respondents were given an opportunity to elaborate on their answer in Question 19 and the responses provided are discussed below.

Those 23 (38%) respondents who were of the opinion that material was not meeting the needs of the community pointed to:

- A lack of indigenous language material on offer at book selection including a lack of items in Indian languages
- A need for more local authors
- Public libraries not being restricted from purchasing academic text books if this is the requirement of their community
- A lack of e-books and e-resources
- No longer having book shop visits to purchase items
- The awarding of book tenders to a limited number of suppliers has an adverse effect on collection development

eThekwini Municipal Libraries does not have dedicated children's librarians and a respondent was of the opinion that this affects the quality of selection and the development of the children's collection. Respondents raised their concern with having to spend R3 million at a single book selection meeting in 2017, which was regarded as poor planning by management. A further complaint was the creation of a system of bulk ordering to expedite orders. A selection team ordered items in bulk for libraries which, in some cases, cancelled out the original orders placed by librarians. Respondents believed this undermined their collection development planning strategy and also undermined their professional position. It was pointed out that the members of the selection team would not have knowledge of the community and respondents questioned whether all selectors were experienced branch librarians.

Supply Chain Management (SCM) is one of the factors that influence the effective development of a library collection. eThekwini Municipal Libraries is required to appoint dedicated suppliers via a tender process for a specified period (three to five years) who are required to procure and supply the library with materials. The tender is usually divided into categories (for example, English fiction or non-fiction) to ensure business is not allocated to one supplier only. All tenders are adjudicated and the winning bids supply. Richard Hargraves, the owner of Hargraves Library Supplier (an EML supplier), states "as library suppliers our main concern, besides diminishing budgets, is of Supply Chain Management (SCM) and its involvement in the

procurement of books. We are not against their involvement but we do have an issue in their lack of understanding as to the nature of books and the uniqueness of the product and its supply routes” (Hargraves, 2016). He elaborated that the restrictions imposed by the SCM processes could change the reading habits of some library users and this affects the relevance of libraries as users will look elsewhere to have their information needs more speedily addressed. SCM restrictions, according to Hargraves, make for an administrative nightmare – dealing with reams of paperwork and having duplicate sets of original and certified copies of documents at all times. Hargraves (2016) points out that a lack of understanding of the nature of books and their supply routes ultimately affects the supply of books to the library.

The findings support the information provided in the literature review (Section 2.3) on collection development, which states that worldwide fiscal restrictions are having an effect on library collections (LIS Transformation Charter, 2014). The findings also highlight the challenges imposed by SCM procedures which have an impact on the purchasing of library books which in turn has an impact on service delivery.

5.3.3.4 Collection development policy

Public libraries have the responsibility of accountability for using public funds to provide a library service as stated in Section 2.3.3 of the literature review. A collection development policy is of value only when it is a public document, informing the community why and for whom it is providing resources and how it is intended to make them available. The public are entitled to know how funding is being allocated and what items are being prioritised for purchase and this will be reflected in the collection development policy. In Question 17 respondents were asked to indicate if the library had a collection development policy. The vast majority, 54 (90%) of respondents indicated that the library had a collection development policy, two (3%) of the respondents said it did not, while four (7%) respondents were unsure of the existence of a collection development policy. In question 24 where respondents were asked to list their area of greatest concern one respondent (2%) listed collection development practices as their area of concern, stating the collection needs to be developed around the needs of the community and that the collection can be developed through an adequate budget allocation.

The collection development policy is a written document taking into account the needs of the community and explains how funding is allocated to purchase library material. The development of the policy should be done in consultation with the community thus enabling the community to feel a sense of ownership of their local public library. The policy also explains to officials who allocate funding how the library is striving to address the needs of the community and that when library material is purchased it is to support library programmes aimed at uplifting the community. Public libraries that fail to develop a collection development policy based on a careful analysis of the needs of the community are, arguably, failing to provide an effective service to members of the community. As such they are also failing to adequately address their mandated role of contributing towards social cohesion.

5.3.3.5 Multi-cultural community

A multi-cultural approach in public libraries ensures that all members of the community are able to use the library where the materials and services are representative of the needs of the community. Respondents were asked to indicate if the library collection catered for a multi-cultural community (Question 18). Forty-nine (82%) respondents indicated that the library had a collection that caters for a multi-cultural community, five (8%) said it did not and six (10%) respondents indicated that they were unsure if the library had such a collection or not.

South Africa is a multi-cultural country and people of all races, religions, cultures, ethnic and linguistic groups need to view the public library as a place in which they can feel a sense of belonging and inclusion. Public libraries need to assess the communities they serve to ensure that no sector of the community regards the library as existing only for other sectors of the community to their exclusion. When this occurs, public libraries have failed to address their social cohesion mandate by failing to bring these sectors into the library and making them feel a part of the community.

5.3.4 Section D: Library programmes

In this section the library programmes run at branch libraries and their contribution to social cohesion are discussed.

5.3.4.1 Library programmes contribution to social cohesion

As stated by IFLA (2008) in Section 2.5.2, public institutions, including libraries, have a responsibility to contribute to a culture that celebrates diversity and inclusion. Public libraries have a role to play in creating an atmosphere that is embracing and inclusive of all people. Respondents in Question 20 were asked if they believed the programmes they run contribute to social cohesion in the community. The majority of respondents 48 (80%) were of the opinion that the programmes run by the library did contribute to social cohesion in the community, three (5%), said no and the remaining nine (15%) respondents said they were unsure. One of the three respondents who did not believe the programmes their library ran had an impact on social cohesion provided the following response: *The programmes that are run are designed for the community they serve which is not multi-cultural.* The researcher looked up the demographic profile of the community mentioned by the respondent and found that 70% of the population was of one race group while 30% of the community was made up of other races groups. The conclusion that can be drawn is that the respondent has not created programmes to reach out to 30% of the population. A lack of funding is one of the factors which prevents successful programmes from being run. The respondents who were of the opinion that their library programmes had an impact on social cohesion provided more detail in Question 22 and this is discussed below.

5.3.4.2 List of library programmes and additional comments on library programmes

Rodrigues (2013) states that South Africa is comprised of a culturally diverse people. It is the role of the public library to reach all members of society taking into account the multi-cultural composition of their community in the services they offer. In Question 22 respondents were provided with a list of library programmes and required to indicate the programmes offered at the library. Respondents were also asked to specify any other programme offered by the library not listed. The findings indicate that there are five commonly run programmes: Storytelling mentioned by 58 (97%) respondents, Business corner 52 (87%) respondents, Library orientation 53 (88%) respondents, Holiday programmes 59 (98%) respondents and, fifthly, Spelling bee mentioned by 48 (80%) respondents. The programmes with the lowest responses were Adult literacy mentioned by four (7%) respondents and Refugee programmes with two (3%) respondents. Only five (8%) respondents indicated that their library held programmes other than

those provided. Respondents were offered the opportunity to list any additional comments they may have had regarding library programmes (Questions 23 and 24) and those who did stated the following:

- Funding was a concern mentioned by six (25%) respondents. This included funding being withdrawn for planned events, speakers not being paid and not being able to use funding to buy food for invited learners and guests. One respondent stated that if no funding was allocated for an event then that event should not be included in the performance management agreement (PMA) of librarians. It was mentioned that the lack of funding makes hosting programmes difficult which is demotivating.
- Seven (29%) respondents mentioned groups of people that they believed were not adequately served. These were the homeless, and refugee and immigrant communities. Also mentioned were the lack of adult and children's literacy classes (which respondents felt they needed to be trained in running); a lack of programmes for the blind and deaf community; and a lack of programmes targeted at secondary school learners.
- Nine (39%) respondents mentioned programmes that they would like to see run or expanded within EML. These were drug awareness, teenage pregnancy, bullying in schools, debating for secondary school learners, sewing, gardening and literacy classes for both adult and children.
- Five (21%) of respondents listed programmes that they believed were successfully run at their library being well received and supported by the community and these were storytelling hour, business corner and holiday programmes.
- As one respondent stated with regard to the use of the library for programmes:
It [the library] creates spaces that allow people of various ethnic, cultural, religious and racial backgrounds to meet socially and share their unique life experiences, engage intellectually, brainstorm holistic solutions to deal with various aspects that affect them as members of the community such as education, crime, unemployment, environmental issues etc. in an enabling environment thereby promoting a sense of unity of purpose and togetherness in the community.

The findings support the information provided in Sections 2.4 to 2.4.6 in the literature review that public libraries have a vital role to play in literacy, life-long learning, culture and technology. However, as the findings indicate, adult and children's literacy programmes are run at very few of the libraries comprising EML. The National Library of South Africa and

government agencies mentioned in the literature review have successfully implemented literacy programmes which have uplifted lives and which can be implemented in public libraries (DAC, 2018; DBE, 2015; NLSA, 2017). Public libraries need to play a role in addressing the literacy levels within the country to enable people to empower themselves through information and knowledge which can often only be accessed by the literate. IFLA (2004) made the point that public libraries and librarians need to change and adapt to new demands, professional tasks and working conditions, always aiming at empowering the user. The findings show that although the majority of respondents indicated they have a multi-cultural collection, a significant number 11 (18%) of respondents were of the view that their library did not have a collection that catered for a multi-cultural community. The literature review states that libraries have a responsibility to contribute to a culture that celebrates diversity and inclusion and this need to be extended to all libraries which comprise EML.

Nineteen (32%) respondents stated that their libraries ran computer training provided by a cyber-cadet which, as indicated in Section 2.5.4 of the literature review, is viewed by government as essential to help enable citizens to overcome the triple scourge of poverty, inequality and unemployment. This in turn is essential in promoting social cohesion among citizens. As Matalong (2016) points out, “Enhanced online access to informal and formal learning opportunities; health and life skills information; employment and career building opportunities will greatly assist people from previously disadvantaged communities to lift themselves out of the poverty cycle”. To enable citizens to access the services and opportunities available to them, these services need to be expanded to all communities (Matolong, 2016). As stated by the keynote speaker (name not mentioned) at the opening of the IFLA Conference in Durban on 19 August 2007, “KwaZulu-Natal began introducing ‘cyber-cadets’ into their community libraries, this innovative programme, will undoubtedly capture the imagination of the youth, roll out across the province and later across the country”(DAC 2007: 1). Eleven years have passed since this statement was issued which shows that the pace of the roll-out is slow and that the demands have exceeded delivery.

5.3.5 Section E: Additional information

In the final section of the questionnaire respondents were asked to indicate their main area of concern regarding library resources and to provide any additional comments on social cohesion and the library that they may have.

5.3.5.1 Main area of concern

The information given below serves to confirm and solidify the information already given by respondents and discussed above. The area of highest concern to librarians was building maintenance with 19 (32%) respondents indicating this, while the area of least concern was collection development practices mentioned by one (2%) respondent. The areas of staff development with 11 (18%) respondents, security 12 (20%) respondents and budget allocation also 12 (20%) respondents reflected similar levels of concern. Staff development, security, building maintenance, library programmes and collection development practices were discussed in the appropriate section above. Budget allocation practices will be discussed below.

Budget allocation

According to the respondents there was an insufficient budget allocation to meet the needs of the library and this included books, maintenance, library programmes and technology such as PCs and games. It was felt that the budget allocation was not fairly determined given that it was based on issue statistics and as a result some libraries were prejudiced. It was pointed out that their users often come to the library to access the internet and for reference material and study purposes and this usage was not reflected in the issue statistics on which the budget allocation is determined. Verbatim comments made by respondents in terms of the above:

- *We have a crisis with the budget almost every year. SCM policies tender procurement are some of the reason for the inconsistency on book purchases. It is an ongoing battle with a very negative impact on service delivery. Purchasing books for a library is a core function and we fail to get the process right then we fail as a Department.*
- *Due to less circulation stats the budget allocated is not enough to meet community needs.*

- *If adequately provided and efficiently and effectively managed could be wisely used to assist in some other areas mentioned on your list e.g. improve urgent building maintenance issues, assist with resources to run excellent and solid library programmes.*

5.3.5.2 Additional comments on social cohesion and the library

As noted above, respondents were offered, in Question 25, the opportunity to list any comments they may have regarding social cohesion and the library.

- The lack of a budget to conduct social cohesion programmes was raised by three (5%) respondents as a concern and as a deterrent to hosting such programmes successfully.
- Social cohesion was supported by five (8%) respondents who expressed the manner in which they support social cohesion programmes as well as their desire to bring unity into their community and to uplift the lives of those they served.
- One respondent stated:
We are coming from a past of deep racial and cultural divides. We have been taught to highlight our differences and not our similarities. Therefore it needs to be understood that promoting social cohesion is going to be a battle. We must not expect miracles or quick-fix remedies. The role of libraries in promoting social cohesion must be viewed as a journey and not an event.
- Four respondents (7%) expressed the manner in which they were promoting, or would like to see social cohesion being promoted, in EML. They pointed to the need for more children's furniture and renovation of the library. Also mentioned was the need to foster a closer relationships with schools in the community, to use innovative means to interact with patrons such as Facebook, and the need to host programmes for the LBGT (lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgender) community.

The final comments by respondents on social cohesion and the library, support and emphasise comments made and discussed in earlier sections. In particular, they highlight the role public library resources namely: library buildings, library collections, library programmes and staff play in contributing and advancing the national government's mandate of social cohesion. These resources could be seen as forming a "social cohesion chain", and when any one of these "links"

is broken the flow to the intended goal of building a socially cohesive community through public libraries is broken. It is therefore imperative that public library managers and government officials ensure that library resources are operating at optimal capacity for public libraries to fully deliver on their social cohesion mandate.

5.4 Summary

This chapter comprised a discussion of the findings as contained in Chapter four. The basis of the discussion was provided by the research questions underpinning the study which revolved around ascertaining how the branch librarians of EML viewed their resources of staffing, buildings, collections and library programmes, contributing towards social cohesion. While the majority of the resources were favourably viewed by respondents, there is still room for improvement within the resources to ensure equitable services to all communities. What emerged from the discussion is that there is a need to improve library resources within EML to ensure that the organisation is able to effectively deliver on its mandate of social cohesion.

Chapter six, the concluding chapter which contains the main findings and recommendations, follows.

Chapter 6: Main findings, conclusions and recommendations

6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the contribution of public libraries to social cohesion within eThekweni Municipal Libraries (EML) from the perspectives of the branch librarians. Their perspectives were sought about the four main resources which comprise the library service, namely, library staff, buildings, collections and programmes and which play a role in addressing and fostering social cohesion. In doing so it was anticipated that the strengths and weaknesses of the existing library service concerning its contribution to social cohesion would be identified.

In order to accomplish the above purpose, the following research questions were posed:

- Is the library building designed/structured in a functional manner to foster social cohesion and meet the needs of the community it serves? (thereby addressing and fostering social cohesion in the community)
- Does the library collection support social cohesion and address the needs of the community? (thereby addressing and fostering social cohesion in the community)
- What library programmes are run by staff to address and foster social cohesion in the communities?
- Do the librarians' education, skills and on-going training equip them to address and foster social cohesion in their communities?

In this chapter a summary of the thesis is provided. This is followed by a listing of the main findings in terms of the research questions posed. Conclusions are made and recommendations based on the findings are presented. The chapter and the thesis end with some suggestions of areas for further research, the chapter summary and an afterword.

6.2 Summary of the thesis

Chapter one, the introductory chapter, covered the research problem; the purpose, objective and research questions underpinning the study; the rationale; conceptual framework; and the

delimitations of the study. The chapter also provided the definitions of key terms used and a brief outline of the structure of the study.

Chapter two comprised the literature review. Examined in the review was the literature relating to public library buildings, staffing, collections and programmes with a focus on how they contribute to social cohesion within the communities they serve.

Chapter three presented the research methodology. Aspects described and discussed included the design of the study, population, sampling techniques, instrument used, and the data collection and analysis.

Chapter four reported the results of the census survey of the population of branch librarians of EML, which was conducted by means of a self-administered questionnaire. Results were presented in the form of bar charts, tables and text.

Chapter five discussed the results presented in the previous chapter. The findings were discussed in the light of the research questions underpinning the study and the literature review.

6.3 Summary of the main findings

The findings will be discussed in the order of the research questions that guided the purpose of the study.

6.3.1 The first research question concerned whether the library staff's training and skills equip them to address and foster social cohesion in their communities. This was asked to gauge gaps in staff training and skills and areas that staff would benefit from in further training and development.

- All but one of the respondents held a formal LIS qualification with the highest percentage (45%) of respondents holding the BTech degree.
- Respondents held varying qualification in librarianship from different institutions with the University of South Africa's (UNISA) three-year Bachelor of Information (BInf) currently unrecognised in EML.

- While a majority of respondents were of the opinion that EML contributed to their professional development a substantial minority (37%) stated that EML did not contribute to their development or were not sure. Many (78%) of the respondents said they undertook their own professional development.
- When asked for additional comments, training needs and skills development were identified by respondents. While training courses are offered by eThekweni Municipality's Work Skills Programme (WSP) it is evident that these need to be updated and greater access to training in information technology provided.
- Respondents also identified barriers to further professional development. Support for continued development via assisted education for post-graduate studies is lacking and conference/workshops/seminar attendance, including peer learning, need greater support.
- The majority of respondents, despite stating that they understood the concept of social cohesion, indicated that they would benefit from a workshop/seminar on social cohesion for librarians. This high rate of acceptance for a workshop/seminar on social cohesion is an acknowledgement of the need for further training on the concept.

6.3.2 The second research question concerned the library buildings and whether they were designed/structured in a functional manner which allowed the facility to meet the needs of the community it serves (thereby addressing and fostering social cohesion in the community).

- The various components of the library building, namely, disability access, signage in the language of the community, health and safety, security and access to technology were mentioned by the majority of respondents (78% and above) as being present in their library. However, that this was not the case for all respondents is a cause for concern and additional comments provided also pointed to this concern.
- Although in the minority, there were library buildings without access for persons with disability. This, in effect bars persons with a disability from exercising their constitutional right to enter and use a public library.
- Respondents indicated that some libraries did not pass the last health and safety audit which has ethical and legal implication for staff and patrons safety. The Department of Labour can fine any organisation in violation of the Occupation, Health and Safety Act (OHSA). When safety is neglected the consequences can be dire – injury and even death.

- While the majority of libraries had security guards there were 11 (18%) libraries that did not. This rendered staff and patrons of those libraries vulnerable to crime and would pose a deterrent to members of the public from frequenting the library. Staff who work in an environment where they fear for their safety will be unable to perform their duties efficiently and effectively.
- The size and design of some library buildings made rendering an effective service extremely challenging, as some libraries were unable to keep up with the provision of technology due to limitations of the library building. The limitations imposed by the library building have a direct impact on effective service delivery, especially the much in demand service of access to information technology, as there is no room for expansion to offer the service.

6.3.3 The third research question determined if the library collection addressed the needs of the community (thereby addressing and fostering social cohesion in the community).

- In terms of three of the components of the library collection, namely, having an adequate collection in the language of the community, whether the library had a collection development policy, and whether it catered for a multicultural community a large majority (over 80%) of respondents answered in the affirmative.
- The above was not the case with the remaining two components. Only 62% of respondents were of the opinion that the books/library material provided at book selection were meeting the needs of their users. Collections that catered for the blind and partially sighted were meagre and completely lacking in certain libraries with only 20% of respondents providing such a collection.

Additional comments again provided further insights and findings in this regard are mentioned below:

- Collections in the language of the community were found to be lacking in some of the libraries, which limited service provision to a multicultural community.
- Respondents indicated the challenges they faced in establishing collections to serve their communities due to an inadequate selection of books at book selection meetings, the stopping of bookshop visits, orders being cancelled as suppliers were unable to deliver the items within the financial period specified, and the lengthy response time for the delivery of orders placed.

- A formal collection development policy was not established for all branch libraries. As public libraries serve their communities through their collections, each library requires a collection development policy based on the needs of the community.

6.3.4 The final research question concerned the library programmes run by staff and whether they addressed and fostered social cohesion in the communities served.

- A substantial majority (80%) of respondents were of the opinion that the programmes run at their libraries had an impact on social cohesion.
- A range of library programmes were offered by respondents to foster social cohesion in the community with Holiday programmes, Storytelling, Library orientation, Business corners and Spelling bees being offered by 80% or more of respondents.
- There is a lack of programmes that the government would like to see run in libraries, for example, those targeting adult and children's literacy. Training programmes in technology (computer training) could be improved upon, as well as programmes for refugee communities.
- There were 20% of respondents who were either unsure or did not believe that the programmes they ran had any impact upon social cohesion in the community. These respondents listed the challenges they face in running effective programmes. An inadequate supply of funding was listed as one of the main challenges.

Linking in with the main findings above, respondents were asked what their current main area of concern in the library was.

- Building maintenance emerged as the area of most concern followed by security, budget allocation and staff development. No concern scored above 50%.

6.4 Conclusions

As has been noted, EML has a mandate to implement social cohesion and the intention of this study was to assess EML's contribution towards doing so. This was done by examining the resources which comprise the library service, and these as mentioned, were EML's buildings, collections, programmes and staff (the branch librarians).

Given the main findings above, the following conclusions are made:

Research question 1:

- The respondents (branch librarians), with one exception, all hold formal library qualifications and could be considered as well-qualified to perform their duties and to take their libraries forward in terms of meeting the mandate of social cohesion.
- Professional development did emerge as both a concern and a need and it is evident that there are problems with the system currently in place.
- Respondents understood the concept of social cohesion but this conclusion needs to be treated with some caution given the need expressed by respondents for a seminar/workshop on the concept.

Research question 2:

- In the majority of the library buildings, disability access, signage in the language of the community, health and safety, security and access to technology were mentioned as being present. However, in libraries where this was not the case the services to those communities are, in effect limited, and the social cohesion contribution of the libraries equally so.
- Most libraries had security guards during opening hours thus providing staff and library users with a secure environment. In those libraries where no security guard is provided, the safety and security of staff and the community are at risk. This is a cause for concern given the high crime rate in South Africa and incidents such as the burning of libraries and the murder of a librarian as previously mentioned (section 5.3.2.4). This also emerged as a concern in the comments made by respondents.
- Library building maintenance emerged as the area of most concern to the respondents, despite the majority of the respondents indicating that their libraries had passed their health and safety inspections. Building maintenance is crucial for health and safety and if not regularly provided for, the safety of both staff and members of the public is compromised. The example of a library roof collapsing (section 5.3.2.6) is pertinent here.
- The size of, and space in, most libraries are adequate for the provision of library services. However, this was not the case in all libraries with some respondents stating that the size

and space had a direct impact on their ability to provide an effective service to the community especially with regard to offering the community access to technology.

Research question 3:

- A substantial majority of respondents (80% and above) were of the opinion that their libraries had an adequate collection in the language of the community, a collection development policy, and a collection that catered for a multi-cultural community.
- Less clear-cut was a smaller majority (62%) of respondents, who did not view the material on offer at book selection as meeting their users' needs. This is of concern given the vital role of the collection in library service provision, and, if not rectified will impact negatively on the ability of the library to meet user needs.
- Of most concern with regard to the library collection was the lack of a collection catering for the blind or partially sighted in the majority of the libraries. The mandate of social cohesion requires all members of the community to feel included and have a sense of belonging. This is largely lacking for members of the blind and partially sighted in the communities served by EML.

Research question 4:

- It is evident that the variety of programmes offered by the libraries were viewed by respondents as having an impact on social cohesion with respondents pointing to their importance and success.
- Programmes most commonly on offer included Holiday programmes, Storytelling, Library orientation and Business corner. The programmes least offered included children and adult literacy classes, and refugee programmes. It is these latter programmes which are considered by national government as a high priority in bringing about social cohesion in the country. It is evident that more could be done by the libraries in this regard.
- Funding was the challenge most commonly mentioned in terms of running successful library programmes.

6.5 Recommendations

The findings revealed that while the majority of the respondents were satisfied with the resources (library buildings, library collection, library programmes and staff (the branch librarians)) managed by EML, there is still room for improvement in order for EML to fulfil its contributory role in promoting social cohesion. The following recommendations are thus put forward to assist in improving the services offered to eThekweni citizens by EML and in so doing ensure that their contribution to social cohesion is enhanced.

- It is recommended that EML establish a team of staff members whose dedicated task is to manage the maintenance of library buildings. This will include ensuring all library buildings are compliant with healthy and safety legislation, assessment of the safety of staff and public with regard to crime, and working with security agencies to ensure the safety of the staff, public and library buildings. This team would be responsible for liaising with other departments within eThekweni Municipality including the supply chain management department to ensure maintenance is conducted in an efficient and timely manner. This recommendation is made to stream-line maintenance, address the challenges mentioned by librarians and allow librarians to give greater focus to their core duties of building a culture of reading within their communities and providing access to information. The importance of the latter has been highlighted by the LIS Transformation Charter (DAC, 2012) which states that access to information is a source of wealth and power.
- A holistic collection development policy for EML needs to be developed which allows for tailoring to the needs of specific communities. The policy will be a written document that indicates the manner in which the organisation intends to service the public through its collection, taking into account EML's aims and vision (section 1.2). The document needs to be made available to all staff and the general public, so staff and the public are aware of where and how resources are allocated and spent.
- The procurement of library material has proved to be complex and it is therefore recommended that a meeting/s be held with all departments within eThekweni who are key role players in the collection development process, that is, finance, SCM, book

suppliers, librarians, community representatives and library management to forge a way forward.

- The final recommendation with regard to the collection is that the current model of allocating funding to libraries based on issue statistics of library material needs to be re-examined. Apart from acknowledging in-library use of materials, the model needs to take cognisance of reading patterns in communities new to library usage as opposed to communities that have had well established libraries for generations. What also needs to be borne in mind is that apartheid prevented certain communities from having libraries and undermined the development of a reading culture. The examination of the demographics of the community is a possible alternative model, taking into account the population that resides in a particular ward (an area demarcated for electoral purposes). Ward demographics include estimated size of the population, gender, age, disability, and educational level. The ward demographic also considers which members of the community are employed, unemployed, not economically active and pensioners. The recommendations above aim at ensuring that the needs of the community are met by the collections provided at their branch libraries.
- Workshops and seminars on social cohesion be held for EML staff as a vast majority of staff indicated that they would find such training beneficial. The workshops and seminars need to assist staff in understanding their colleague's cultures as well as how to serve a diverse community and provide effective library programmes that promote social cohesion in the community.
- It is recommended that EML hold meetings with all key role-players to address the issue of staff qualifications offered by the various academic institutions. Role-players would comprise the academic intuitions, LIASA, labour, human resources (HR), library management and affected employees.
- It is recommended that EML fund post-graduate studies to encourage staff to continue to develop in the profession to the benefit of the organisation.
- The matter of staff exclusion is a very sensitive one which needs to be addressed, as staff mentioned feeling excluded when a language they do not understand is spoken. It is recommended that interpreters are used to ensure that no staff member feels excluded at meetings.

- It is recommended that the usage of technology, which is in great demand, be expanded to meet the needs of the community. This includes Wi-Fi access, cyber-zones with cyber-cadets and PCs with internet access.
- eThekweni Municipal Libraries does host a range of programmes at their libraries. However, the two programmes which ranked very low in the findings, those for literacy and refugees rank high on the South African government's priorities. It is recommended that literacy and refugee programmes be given greater prominence in EML, which can be run together with existing organisations via collaborative agreements, or EML can host such programmes on their own.
- It is also recommended that programmes listed by branch librarians as programmes they would like to see implemented be considered by EML for implementation.
- Funding for programmes was found to be a cause of concern for librarians. It is therefore recommended that EML management and branch librarians meet to discuss the issue.

The above recommendations can be seen as being in the "hands" of EML and should they be considered and implemented, would go some way towards further strengthening EML's contribution towards social cohesion. Before outlining suggestions for further research mention needs to be made of one current development taking place in South African LIS. While this is not a recommendation *per se* it should have a positive impact on public libraries generally and the communities they serve. This development is the Public Libraries and Information Services Bill, which, when enacted, will provide public libraries with the vital legislative mandate to undertake their functions. This, along with recommendations made by the researcher, should mark positive changes that will benefit EML, public libraries and the communities they serve. EML's mandate of social cohesion in a country in which many have suffered the effects of segregation and oppression, including limited or non-existent library services and access to information, can help uplift the lives of thousands of South African whose only access to information is through their public library.

6.6 Suggestions for further research

- Each resource, that is, buildings, collections, programmes and staff need to be individually researched along with the support departments within eThekweni Municipality and external stakeholders, to gain a more in-depth perspective. More specifically, the departments involved in staffing are HR, the Municipal Institute of Learning (MILE), labour represented by staff unions, and LIASA. The departments involved in collection development are the librarians, book suppliers, SCM and finance. The departments involved in buildings are architecture, suppliers who undertake building maintenance, SCM and finance. The departments/stakeholders involved in library programmes are library managers, librarians, members of the community, ward councillors, and members of non-government organisations (NGOs) and non-profit organisations (NPOs) that are willing to partner with EML to the benefit of local communities.
- The communities that are the recipients of the programmes promoting social cohesion and provided by EML need to be researched to ascertain their views. The view of the success, or lack thereof, of library programmes in this research is based solely on the opinions of branch librarians. The actual success, or lack thereof, can only be truly gauged by the recipients of the programmes.
- This study or one similar could be duplicated in other municipal public libraries. This study was based on national government's vision for public libraries, that is, to assist government in transformation through social cohesion which then cascades to the local government level. Therefore, this study could be beneficial to other municipal public libraries in South Africa.
- A theoretical framework for public libraries and social cohesion needs to be researched and developed. The researcher relied upon the conceptual model of social cohesion by Struwig et al (2011) which in turn was based on the conceptual model developed by Bernard (1999). A social cohesion model for public libraries would be able to depict the complex government environment and community structures within which public libraries operate thereby making future research easier to conduct.

6.7 Summary

This chapter provided a brief summary of the thesis. To begin with the research questions which underpinned the study were given and this was followed by the presentation of the main findings. Conclusions were formulated and recommendations for the improvement of EML in relation to the four main resources of library buildings, collections, programmes and staff were put forward. The essential role that these resources play in service delivery and the and the concomitant deliverance of the social cohesion mandate have been repeatedly pointed to. Finally, suggestions for further research were made.

Afterword

Ali (2007) states that public libraries are not just buildings with library material but are agents of educational, social, economic, cultural and political change or revolutions in the community and their doors are open to all who need the dissemination of information in whatever format it might appear. As South African public libraries are open to all members of the community, they therefore have the ability to impact the lives of communities by offering an equitable service that is representative of all members of the community. This indicates the vital role public libraries have to play in building the communities they serve and contributing towards a socially cohesive environment in the community.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Letter of Consent

eThekwini Municipality Library
99 Umgeni Road , Durban, 4001
P.O. Box 917, Durban 4001
Tel: (031) 311 2410
Email: Tebogo.Mzizi@durban.gov.za



Dear Mohini Padayachee,

Application to conduct Research in eThekwini Municipal Library

Thank you for expressing an interest in conduct research in eThekwini Municipal Library Department.

Permission to conduct research has been granted.

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to conduct your research at our institution.

Wishing you a successful career.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tebogo Mzizi'.

Tebogo Mzizi (Ms)

Senior Manager: Library and Heritage

eThekwini Municipality

Appendix 2: Letter of Informed Consent

Informed Consent Document

Dear Participant,

My name is Mohini Padayachee (student number 216072796). I am Masters candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus. The title of my research is: *The contribution of eThekweni Municipal Public Libraries (EML) towards social cohesion*. The aim of the study is to shown how EML libraries contribute to such cohesion, through its resources namely library collections, programmes, building and staff. I am interested in your experiences and observations on the subject matter. Your participation is thus important!

Please note that:

- The information that you provide will be used for scholarly research only.
- Your participation is entirely voluntary. You have a choice to participate, not to participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.
- Your views in this research will be presented anonymously. Neither your name nor identity will be disclosed in any form in the study.
- The questionnaire will take about 20 minutes to complete.
- The record as well as other items associated with the research will be held in a password-protected file accessible only to myself and my supervisors. After a period of 5 years, in line with the rules of the university, it will be disposed by shredding and burning.
- If you agree to participate please sign the declaration attached to this statement (a separate sheet will be provided for signatures)

I can be contacted at: School of Social Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg. Email: mohini.padayachee@durban.gov.za Cell: 082 061 9977

My supervisor is Athol Leach who is located at the School of Social Sciences, Pietermaritzburg Campus / Howard College Campus, Durban of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Contact details: email Leach@ukzn.ac.za. Phone number: (033) 2605098.

The Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee contact details are as follows: Ms Phumelele Ximba, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Research Office, Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za, Phone number +27312603587.

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

DECLARATION

I..... *(full names of participant)* hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

I understand the intention of the research. I hereby agree to participate.

I consent / do not consent to have this interview recorded (if applicable)

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

Appendix 3: Questionnaire



QUESTIONNAIRE

eTHEKWINI MUNICIPAL PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND SOCIAL COHESION

Thank you very much for participating in this study. Please respond as clearly as possible and for the questions that request to mark the answer, use [X] to do so.

Gender: Female Male

Section A: Staffing

1. Do you have a formal library qualification? NO YES ...proceed to B

A: If NO, please state in what capacity are you in the position of branch librarian? (X for the appropriate response)

Acting Permanent If other, please specify: _____

B: If YES, please indicate the highest library qualification that you have? (X for the appropriate response)

BBibl HDipLIS
 BTech: Library and Information Studies BLIS
 PGDIS National Diploma in LIS
 BInf MIS
 BInf Hons If other, please specify: _____

2. How many years have you been a branch librarian?

1- 5 years 6 -10 years
 11 -15 years 16 – 20 years
 21 – 25 years 26 -30 years
 31 – 40 years 41 years and above

3. In your opinion is EML contributing to your professional development?

YES NO NOT SURE

4. Do you undertake your own continued professional development?

- YES NO NOT SURE

5. Do you believe you understand the concept of social cohesion?

- YES NO NOT SURE

6. Would you benefit from having workshops/seminars on social cohesion conducted for librarians?

- YES NO NOT SURE

7. Please add any comments below regarding professional development and social cohesion

Section B: Buildings

8. Does the library have Disability Access?

- YES NO

9. Does the library have signage in the language of the community?

- YES NO

10. Has the library passed its last health and safety audit?

- YES NO NOT SURE

11. Does the library have a security guard during operating hours?

- YES NO

12. Does the library provide access to technology through the following means? (X for those that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public access PC's | <input type="checkbox"/> Cyber zone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wi-Fi access | <input type="checkbox"/> Printing from the Internet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scanning of documents | <input type="checkbox"/> Good internet speed |

If other, please specify:

13. Please add any comments below regarding library buildings and access to technology

Section C: Collections

14. Does the library have an adequate collection in the language of the community?

- YES NO

15. Does the library have a collection to cater for the needs of the blind or partially sighted?

- YES NO

16. Is the current selection of books/library material offered at Book Selection meeting your user needs?

- YES NO

17. Does your library have a collection development policy?

- YES NO NOT SURE

18. Does your library collection cater to a multi-cultural community?

- YES NO NOT SURE

19. Please add any comments below regarding library collections

Section D: Library Programmes

20. Do you believe the programmes you run have an impact upon social cohesion in the community?

- YES NO NOT SURE

Please could you elaborate on your answer?

25. If there is anything else that you would like to add regarding social cohesion and your library please do so below.

Many thanks for your participation!