



**The role of school libraries in teaching and learning in the UMhlali Circuit, ILembe District, KwaZulu-Natal: a case study of Dinuphozo Primary School library**

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## Declaration

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Date 8 January 2024

## **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, Mr B.S.R. Mnyandu, who encouraged and supported me throughout this journey. It is also dedicated to my children Minenhle Mthunzi Mnyandu and Aphiwe Ngcebo Mnyandu whose existence made me push myself until I completed this dissertation.

## **Acknowledgements**

First and foremost, I would like to thank God for the wisdom and strength to persevere until I completed this dissertation; without Him I am nothing.

I would also like to thank my supervisor Dr Z. Nsibirwa for her continuous help, support and guidance; without her support and leadership, I would not have completed this study.

To the staff of Dinuphozo Primary School, thank you for allowing me to conduct this study in your school and sacrificing your time to answer my questions.

To my husband and children, thank you for your constant support and words of encouragement.

## **Abstract**

The school library is arguably the backbone of the teaching and learning process in South Africa. The National Curriculum Statement Grade R-12 (28 December 2012) clearly states that schools must “produce learners that can identify, solve problems and make decisions using critical and creative thinking and also learners who can communicate effectively....” and an efficient and effective school library is crucial in this regard. The primary aim of this study was to investigate the role of school libraries in teaching and learning. In pursuing this aim, a case study approach was adopted and the focus was on the Dinuphozo Primary School in the Umhlali Circuit of the ILembe District, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. The resource-based learning model based on constructivism theory underpinned the study. Resource-based learning is a model where learners, teachers and teacher-librarians use a range of print, non-print and human resources efficiently and effectively.

Purposive sampling was used to select the study participants. The participants, who were all members of the School Library Committee, comprised the Acting Principal, the Deputy Principal, Heads of Department, a teacher from each of the phases (foundation, intermediate and senior phases) and the school’s teacher-librarian – a total of nine participants. The study adopted a qualitative approach using telephonic interviews, observation and document analysis as data collection methods.

The findings revealed that teachers and the school teacher-librarian require basic library services training. It was found that teachers do not utilise the library and its information resources sources for daily teaching and learning. It was also found that the library collection does not satisfy either the teachers’ or learners’ needs; hence, they seek information elsewhere. Recommendations included the need for the School Management Team, the School Governing Body and the teachers to be involved in discussions on how to improve the school library and its financing.

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## **List of Acronyms and Abbreviations**

ANA	Annual National Assessment
CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement
CD	Compact disc
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease - 2019
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DoE	Department of Education
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
ELITS	Education, Library and Information Technology Services
ICT	Information and communication technology
IFLA	International Federation of Library Associations
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
LIS	Library and information services
MDET	Manitoba Department of Education and Training
NGSLIS	National Guidelines for School Library and Information Services
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (United Kingdom)
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
SACMEQ	Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
SE	Systemic evaluation
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team
STEM	Science, technology, engineering and math
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation

# **Chapter 1: Introduction**

## **1.1 Introduction**

Studies, for example, Simba (2014) and Omenyo (2016) clearly show that school libraries positively impact learners' literacy and learning outcomes. The learners show improvement in reading, show higher academic achievement, and develop positive attitudes towards learning. The International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) (2015:16) defines a school library as “a physical and digital learning space where reading, research, inquiry, thinking, imagination, and creativity are central to students' information-to-knowledge journey and personal, social, and cultural growth”. This definition demonstrates that school libraries support learners, the school staff, and the community at large. The school library is the heart of the school. It aims to help learners and teachers gain new knowledge and skills they will use throughout their lives. According to Omenyo (2016:11), “school libraries are essential in the education process since they provide the needed materials to support the school's curriculum, and these materials are established to be used by both learners and teachers in the teaching and learning process”. Keith (2004) shares the same sentiment and argues that learners and their teachers need library resources and a librarian's expertise to succeed in teaching and learning. For school libraries to perform their role as the “backbone” of schools, there must be school librarians and the necessary library resources to enhance teaching and learning. The Library and Information Services (LIS) Transformation Charter (2014:48) underscores the importance of books in terms of improving literacy skills,

When learners have everyday access to attractive books in their home languages, they enjoy reading. The more they enjoy reading, the more they will read and the better they will read.

In addition to physical resources (such as books), Kankam and Nsibirwa (2018) point to the need for school libraries to have Internet access and the accompanying need for Internet information literacy instruction to help users (learners) access online information effectively.

What also makes school libraries important in the South African educational context is that there are few public libraries in the rural areas of the country. Despite the importance of the school

library in teaching and learning, according to Mojapelo (2017) and Mojapelo and Fourie (2014), only 7.2 percent of South African schools have functional school libraries and these libraries tend to be found in the advantaged predominantly white schools in urban areas. A newspaper article from the publication *New Frame* by Zandile Bangani (2020) states that budget cuts limit the number of libraries in rural areas and what they can offer. Therefore, learners in rural areas are at a disadvantage. On the other hand, the DBE believes that the school library, as the heart of the school, can play a vital role in helping the educational system achieve its goals (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education 2003:3). The 1995 White Paper on Education and Training proclaims that the state must provide a library as an educationally necessary facility in all state schools (DoE 1995:77) and, given the significant lack of functional school libraries noted above, this proclamation is far from being realised. In KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), the shortage of libraries in the rural areas of the province began to be addressed in 2002 by the introduction of mobile libraries through a project called “Taking Resources to the Underprivileged” (ELITS 2007:38). The above factors and statistics show the realities that schools, especially marginalised rural black schools, are faced with as far as school libraries (and public libraries) are concerned.

## **1.2 Background to the study**

This study concerned the role of school libraries in teaching and learning in the UMhlali Circuit, ILembe District, KZN. The focus of the study was on the Dinuphozo Primary School which is situated in Shakaskraal, Nkobongo, a semi-urban area in the Ilembe District. Most of the people living in this area are from the Eastern Cape, and they speak IsiXhosa. They live in low-cost houses, and there is a high unemployment rate. The Dinuphozo Primary School was built in 2012 and the main reason for it being built was the realisation by the community that their children were walking long distances to attend school and doing so was not safe. The school opened its doors to learners in March 2013. It is called Dinuphozo after the son of Chief Magwaza who provided the plot of land on which the school was built. The researcher chose this school because it was built after 1994 a period when the new democratic government of South Africa was trying to correct the injustices in terms of allocating schools to disadvantaged Africans during apartheid. Importantly, of the 20 primary schools in the circuit, it is the only school that was built with a central library. The other schools in this circuit with access to some form of library service are using classroom libraries (that is, a classroom which serves as the physical venue for the library),

corner libraries (that is libraries in the corners of classrooms), and mobile libraries (that is, a trolley with various resources that can be pushed from one classroom to another) all of which have insufficient resources. Using the Dinuphozo Primary School as a focus for the study was considered advantageous for the researcher as the school's library is in satisfactory condition.

As noted, the area in which the school is based is predominantly rural and poorly resourced, and the learners struggle in terms of reading skills which, in turn, leads to a high failure rate in both primary and secondary schools. The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2016 report painted a concerning picture regarding the literacy reading levels of learners in primary schools in South Africa. The report showed that there has been no significant improvement made since the last report in 2011 and South Africa was placed last out of 50 participating countries in terms of learners' reading skills.

The Dinuphozo Primary School library is essential in terms of exposing learners to a wide range of reading materials. Being exposed to and having access to these materials will assist learners in improving their reading skills; this will enable them to read for fun, help them understand their schoolwork, and decrease the high failure rates. Indeed, the IFLA School Library Manifesto (2021), clearly states that the "school library program" and its qualified school library professionals focus on the learners' growth "by providing equitable access to learning experiences, resources, and learning spaces that enable all members of the school community to become engaged critical thinkers, effective readers, and responsible users, evaluators, and creators of information in multiple formats."

The researcher is a teacher at the school and was thus well-placed to conduct the study.

### **1.3 Statement of the problem**

Before 1994, schools in disadvantaged communities had few if any libraries due to apartheid and the segregation laws which underpinned it. Chapter 16 of the draft National Policy for Library and Information Services in South Africa was published by the Education Department of the African National Congress in January 1994 and later submitted in March 2018 as a final draft. This draft put forward that every educational institution

...will provide its learners with access to an appropriate library and information service and that information skills will form part of the national core curriculum in all educational sectors (African National Congress 2018:81).

The Education Department has acknowledged that school library materials might be under-utilised in the absence of personnel to take responsibility for the material and the school library's operation as well as the lack of teacher training to equip class and subject teachers with the skills to integrate the resources into the school teaching/learning programmes. The employment of the above-mentioned teacher-librarians was, therefore, regarded as critical (African National Congress 1994b:239). Similarly, the National Guidelines for School Library and Information Services (NGSLIS) (2012:19) states that a school library must be managed by an appropriately qualified teacher-librarian or a dedicated trained person.

Anecdotal evidence shows that primary school “libraries” (as noted above, with the exception of the Dinuphozo Primary School library, the school libraries either comprise classroom, corner, or mobile libraries) in the UMhlali Circuit are not playing a useful role in supporting teaching and learning to improve the learners' academic performance, and this leads to a high rate of failures in grades one to seven. To reduce the number of failures teachers simply resort to progressing the learners. The DBE has acknowledged that literacy levels in South African primary schools are low and that remedial action targeting literacy is necessary (Department of Education 2008:4; Department of Basic Education 2015:29; Department of Education 2017b:1-2, 2017c: 6).

Several curriculum changes have taken place in South Africa and this has resulted in the development of different national assessment tools. These include:

- The 1995 Southern and East African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ),
- Systemic Evaluation (SE) which was implemented in 2003,
- The Annual National Assessment (ANA) which was introduced in 2011,
- International literacy assessments such as the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) which was launched in 2015, and



- The Progress in International Literacy Study (PIRLS) in 2016 (Department of Basic Education 2010:46; Department of Basic Education 2015:29).

These assessment tools have revealed that South African learners, as alluded to earlier, demonstrated unacceptably low levels of foundational literacy skills competencies (Department of Education 2008:4-6; Department of Basic Education 2010:46; Howie et al. 2012:6, Department of Education 2014: 47-49).

The above discussion illustrates the significant role that school libraries need to play in teaching and learning in schools and, in particular, in developing reading skills. It is evident that school libraries (in whatever form) are not adequately fulfilling these roles and it is this problem that the current study attempted to address.

#### **1.4 Rationale and aim of the study**

The researcher chose this topic taking into consideration the aim of the National Curriculum Statement Grade R-12 (2012a:2) which is “to produce learners that can identify, solve problems and make decisions using critical and creative thinking and also learners who can communicate effectively using visual, symbolic and/or language skills in various modes” (National Curriculum Statement Grade R-12 (2012a:2). The researcher believes that this aim may be achieved when school libraries are fully utilised by teachers and learners. Therefore, the primary aim of this study was to understand the role of school libraries in helping teachers teach and learners learn, effectively using the Dinuphozo Primary School library as a case study.

#### **1.5 Objectives of the study**

The objectives of this study were to:

1. Determine what resources the Dinuphozo Primary School library has for supporting the teaching and learning in the school.
2. Determine how teachers and learners use the library resources.
3. Determine if the library makes a difference in the academic performance of the learners.
4. Suggest measures that should be taken to address the challenges faced by the school library.

## **1.6 Research questions**

The following research questions were posed:

1. What resources does the Dinuphozo Primary School library have for teaching and learning?
2. How do teachers and learners use the library resources?
3. How does the library make a difference in the academic performance of learners?
4. What measures should be taken to address the challenges faced by the school library?

## **1.7 Definition of key terms and concepts**

The terms and concepts relevant to the study are defined below.

### **1.7.1 Teacher**

This term refers to a person whose occupation is teaching. A teacher is defined by Lohithakshan (2002:401) as “a professional person employed in a school for the implementation of the curriculum.” In the South African context, a teacher is also referred to as an “educator”. In this study, the terms are used interchangeably.

### **1.7.2 Teacher-librarian**

According to Prytherch (2016: 618) the teacher-librarian is “a professionally qualified librarian employed to organize and operate a library within a school.” In this study, the term “teacher-librarian refers to a teacher with a library qualification, who has been assigned to manage the school library. The ELITS School Library Policy (2003) notes that teacher-librarian is a generic term for educators who manage the resource collection, and who are also referred to as librarians, media teachers, media specialists, media centre teachers, resource centre teachers and information specialists.

### **1.7.3 School library**

The IFLA (2015:16) defines a school library as a “physical and digital learning space where reading, inquiring, research, thinking, imagination and creativity are central to students’ information-to-knowledge journey and personal, social and cultural growth.” According to the ELITS School Library Policy (2003) “the name school library is used as a generic form that incorporates all forms and models of collection development and delivery that provides materials relevant to a resource-based teaching and learning approach to learners and educators in schools.”

### **1.7.4 Resource-based learning**

Resource-based learning is defined as “the use and application of available assets to support varied learning needs across contexts” (Hill and Hannetin 2001:38).

### **1.7.5 Resources**

Resources include all media, such as books, periodicals, newspapers, videos, audiotapes, three-dimensional models, posters, charts, slides and CD-ROM discs that can be found in a school library. Resources also include all the equipment and computer hardware and software which enable teachers and learners to access information (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education 2003:vi). The NGSLIS (2012:37-38), similarly, states that resources “are all information sources and/or media, such as books, periodicals, newspapers, videos, DVDs, audio tapes, CDs, three-dimensional models, posters, charts, slides, CD Rom disks, the Internet, online databases, e-books, e-journals, etc.”

## **1.8 Delimitations and limitations of the study**

A delimitation of the study is that participants were drawn from the School Library Committee; thus parents and staff who were not members of the committee were excluded. There were two reasons for drawing on the Library Committee only: First, it would have been costly to telephonically interview every staff member, especially for a coursework masters. Second, the researcher believed that members of the Library Committee would be knowledgeable about the library and its resources and thus in the best position to answer questions concerning it. A second delimitation of the study is that the learners were excluded as participants. As they were minors, ethical considerations required that permission for their participation would need to be obtained

from their parents/caregivers, the school teachers, and the Department of Education (DoE). This would have been a complicated and time-consuming undertaking and the decision was made to focus on the teaching staff (and the librarian) as specified above.

The study faced some limitations, including documents such as meeting minutes and library reports that the researcher requested not being found. The reason was that the former library secretary misplaced these documents and she is now working at another school. Another limitation is that data were collected during the COVID-19 pandemic and as a consequence, the protocols concerning the pandemic had to be followed. Thus, for example, while the researcher would have preferred to use face-to-face interviews for data collection, interviews had to be conducted via the phone.

## **1.9 Outline of the dissertation**

The dissertation has five chapters.

**Chapter 1** introduced the study and outlined and discussed the study background, the research problem, and the study's aim, objectives, and research questions. Definitions of key terms were provided as were the study's delimitations and limitations.

**Chapter 2** presents literature on the role and functions of school libraries in education and the theoretical framework, namely, the resource-based learning model.

**Chapter 3** discusses the methodology used in this study. This will include the research design and method, population and sample, data collection instruments, validity and reliability, and data analysis.

**Chapter 4** presents and discusses the results of the study.

**Chapter 5**, the final chapter, contains a summary of the dissertation as well as the researcher's conclusions and recommendations based on the study's findings.

## **1.10 Summary**

This chapter introduced the study. The background to the study was provided as was the research problem, the rationale and aim, and the objectives and research questions underpinning the study. This was followed by the definitions of key terms, the study's delimitations and limitations, and a brief outline, by chapter, of the dissertation.

Chapter two, the theoretical framework and literature review, follows.

## **Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the theoretical framework of the study which is based on the theory of constructivism and this will be followed by the review of the literature relating to the study. Grant and Osanloo (2014) believe that the theoretical framework is a blueprint of a research study, and critical thinking and planning must be put into developing this blueprint. They further argue that the theoretical framework is one of the most crucial components of the research process and is often overlooked. According to Grant and Osanloo (2014), the theoretical framework is the foundation upon which all knowledge for a research study is built and provides a structure and support for the rationale of the study, the problem statement, the purpose, the significance, and the research questions. They believe that the theoretical framework provides a grounding base for the literature review and, most importantly, the methods and analysis.

### **2.2 Theoretical framework**

Thus, given the above, a theoretical framework is vital in research since it helps the researcher construct the study, make meaning of the findings, and write conclusions. According to Dickson, Hussein and Agyem (2018), and in line with Grant and Osanloo (2014), the theoretical and conceptual framework directs the research and acts as a foundation for its reliability. Ravitch and Riggan (2012) and Kheswa (2021) believe that when used well together, a theoretical and conceptual framework provides a researcher with enough assistance to explain the study's need and relevance. Nsibirwa (2012) referring to a conceptual framework, states that it is a tool that helps the researcher make meaningful findings and structures the research.

This study examined the role of the school library in the teaching and learning process; in other words, the study is about learning. Several learning theories have been developed to explain the learning process including behaviorism, cognitivism and constructivism. Each theory is briefly discussed below.

According to the Free State Department of Education of South Africa (2003:5), behaviorism “views learning as something that happens to a person, with the person being passive”. Put

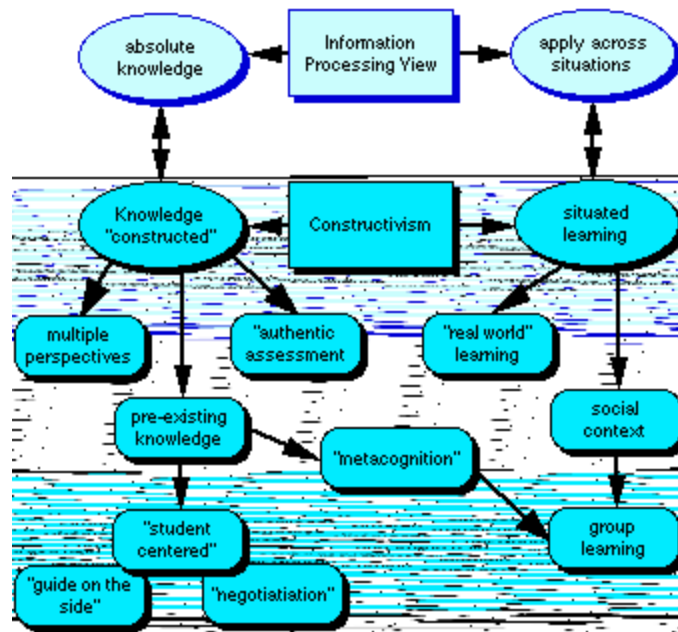
simply, the learning in this theory is teacher-centred, with the teacher himself/herself delivering all the knowledge to the learners (Simba 2014).

According to Simba (2014), “cognitive theory attempts to explain brain-based learning”. He argues that in this theory, learning is about the increased meaning and memorisation of information. He further points out that a shortcoming of this theory is that memorisation does not promote comprehension. On the other hand, Schunk (2012) points out that the social cognitive theory emphasises that people learn knowledge, skills, strategies, beliefs, rules, and attitudes in a social environment. In other words, people gain knowledge, skills, tactics, beliefs, rules, and attitudes through interacting with others. He further points out that people learn about the appropriateness, usefulness, and repercussions of activities through their observations and interactions with other people.

According to Schunk (2000:231) the assumption underlying constructivism:

... is that teachers should not teach in the traditional sense of delivering instruction to a group of learners rather they should structure situations such that learners become actively involved with the content through manipulation of materials and social interaction.

The constructivist theory is illustrated in Figure 1 below, and Figure 2 shows the constructivist learning process.

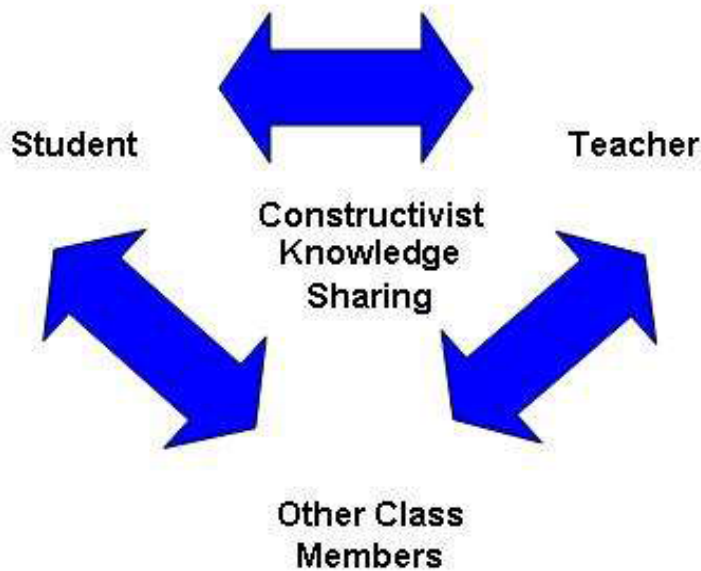


**Figure 1: Constructivist theory**

Source: Hall (1996)

Figure 1 illustrates that in the constructivist theory, the teacher is a facilitator, and the learners become active in their learning. The learners actively construct the meaning of what is heard or seen through the manipulation of materials and social interaction. The figure also shows that learners are not “empty vessels” – they come with previous knowledge and conceptions of the classroom. Learners also learn from each other.





**Figure 2: Constructivist learning process**

Source: James (2012)

Figure 2 shows that the foundation of constructivist education is the notion that knowledge is best acquired through active learning and discovery. The figure also shows that through discussions learners are pushed to think and give an explanation for their reasoning rather than learning by heart and reciting. Furthermore, it is evident that the information moves from the teacher to the student and other class members and back to the teacher. Everyone in the classroom is participating. Both figures portray the teacher as a facilitator or guide rather than a person who only delivers information to the learners.

Simba (2014) agrees that constructivism enables learners to be actively involved in their learning process, leading to a deeper understanding of the subject matter. Simba (2014) also agrees with Douham (2008) who argues that active learners create meaning by combining prior knowledge with new information. Constructivism thus promotes learner-centred learning. Simba (2014) further explains that people are active learners who must develop information for themselves. To

that end, lecturing to learners is no longer regarded as suitable and teachers now use materials that allow learners to become actively involved through manipulation or social interaction (Schunk 2000; Simba 2014). In other words, constructivism allows learners to discover information or answers for themselves without the help of the teacher. Teachers become facilitators, not lecturers. Omenyo (2016) supports this notion by pointing out that learners build knowledge by interacting with or being exposed to learning scenarios in the world around them, such as their families, friends, the media, and libraries. She further points out that as knowledge is learned through every act of social contact this strengthens and grows the knowledge base of learners. Omenyo (2016) believes the creation of knowledge required for meaningful teaching and learning is dependent on the presence of an effective school library.

The resource-based learning model which is based on the theory of constructivism underpinned this study. The model was developed by the Manitoba Department of Education and Training (MDET) in Canada, to facilitate the implementation of resource-based learning in schools' curricula as a "response to the changing information needs of learners in an information-rich society" (MDET 1994; Simba 2014:18). Resource-based learning is a "model in which learners, teachers and teacher-librarians are actively involved in the effective use of a range of print, non-print and human resource" (MDET 1994; Simba 2014:18). According to Simba (2014:21), resource-based learning "empowers learners with the needed skills to inquire, discover and construct meaning, and this is possible through teachers and school librarians' facilitation of the learning process".

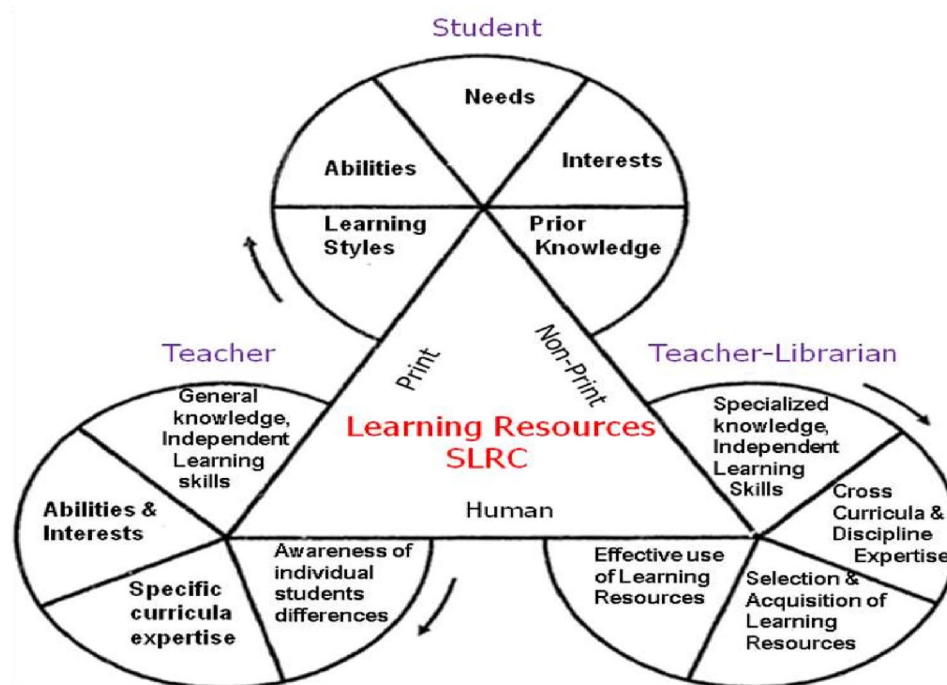
Kilemba (2016) believes that to contextualise resource-based learning, it may be necessary to define some of the current commonly used phrases that apply or are utilised by learner-centred approaches to teaching and these phrases are "independent learning", "student-centred learning" and "resource-based learning". Each phrase is briefly discussed below.

Stephen and Bolton (1998) argue that *independent learning* is also known as "learner autonomy learning" and is applied to postgraduate students searching for literature and doing investigative work unsupervised. However, Kilemba (2016) believes that independent learning can also be

applied to undergraduates and learners in schools when doing their projects and in this regard, the lecturer or teacher will act as a facilitator or supervisor.

According to Arko-Cobbah (2004) and Kilemba (2016), *student-centred learning* is a method of teaching that requires a student to work in groups and individually; it provides students more agency and places a significant emphasis on pursuing goals and information rather than being passive users of knowledge.

Kilemba (2016) pointed out there are similarities between student-centred learning and *resource-based learning*. He noted that both of these learning systems are “based on the principle that learners are responsible for identifying and securing information for their needs and challenges”. According to Arko-Cobbah (2004) and Kilemba (2016), the adaptability of resource-based learning to different learning styles and subject areas is one of its most important characteristics, which works in its favour in terms of increasing student learning autonomy. As noted above, resource-based learning is based on the constructivist theory of learning, which explains how learners individually or socially construct meaning in the process of learning (Hein 1991; Omenyo 2016). The resource-based learning model fits well with the DBE’s aim to provide teachers and learners with high-quality support materials and ensure that these materials are used effectively to produce lifelong learners (National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12:4). Figure 3 below, taken from MDET (1994:10), shows how the model is relevant to this study. School libraries are at the centre of learning where learners are exposed to different resources and teachers and librarians serve as motivators and facilitators.



**Figure 3: Resource-based learning model**

Source: MDET (1994)

### 2.3 Literature review

The second part of this chapter comprises a review of literature relating to the role of school libraries in the teaching and learning process. In addition, the policies and guidelines that influence the governance of school libraries will be reviewed. According to Ramdhani, Ramdhani and Amin (2014:47), a literature review examines the published information in a specific subject area, and sometimes that information is only available for a limited time. The authors state that: A literature review is a survey of scholarly articles, books and other sources relevant to a particular issue, area of research, or theory and by so doing, provides a description, summary and critical evaluation of these works (Ramdhani, Ramdhani and Amin 2016:47-48).

Published information includes reports, dissertations, theses, newspaper articles, journal articles, and books in print and electronic format. Simba (2014:54) argues that the literature review

broadens a researcher's awareness and knowledge of the topic under examination while also providing an overview of past research on the subject. By reviewing previous research, the researcher is able to place his or her research accordingly and also able to reveal the gaps in the literature.

The literature review which follows is divided into different topics all of which are in line with the aim of the study. To begin with, the researcher will start by reviewing the policies and guidelines that influence the governance of school libraries in South Africa.

### **2.3.1 National Guidelines for School Library and Information Services and the Library and Information Services (LIS) Transformation Charter**

According to the NGSLIS (Department of Basic Education [2012b:3](#)), the vision of the Department of Basic Education (DBE) is that schools will have well-resourced and functioning school library and information services (LIS), which will contribute towards ensuring that all learners and teachers are information literate and independent lifelong learners and readers.

The Guidelines stipulate that school LIS must provide teachers and learners with access to various curricular support resources that expose learners to diverse ideas, experiences and opinions. They further stipulate that the service must instil a culture of reading and writing, promote respect for intellectual property and support the acquisition of information literacy skills to access, process and use information resources in various formats including digital formats, where accessible and appropriate (Department of Basic Education [2012b:3](#)).

In a similar vein, the LIS Transformation Charter (2014) points to effective school libraries being critical for the transformation of the South African education system, which strives to deliver quality education to all South African learners. It states that international research clearly shows the vital contribution of school libraries to quality education and student achievement. The Charter (2014) states that during apartheid, schools designated for black learners were purposefully under-resourced by Bantu education. Thus if school libraries and information services are necessary for high-quality learning, the values of redress and equity entrenched in the South African Constitution and educational policy require that they be made available.

Kheswa (2021) cited Du Toit (2008) who noted that learners must interact with a variety of information sources and be less reliant on textbooks in order to become information literate. Kheswa (2021) also argued that people must have unlimited access to information and knowledge in the twenty-first century, resulting in a more informed and reading society, a more efficient and effective workforce, and more responsive and responsible citizens.

In light of the DBE's vision and the points stipulated by the NGSLIS and the LIS Transformation Charter, it is clear that the school library must be the backbone of the teaching and learning process for the DBE's vision to be fulfilled.

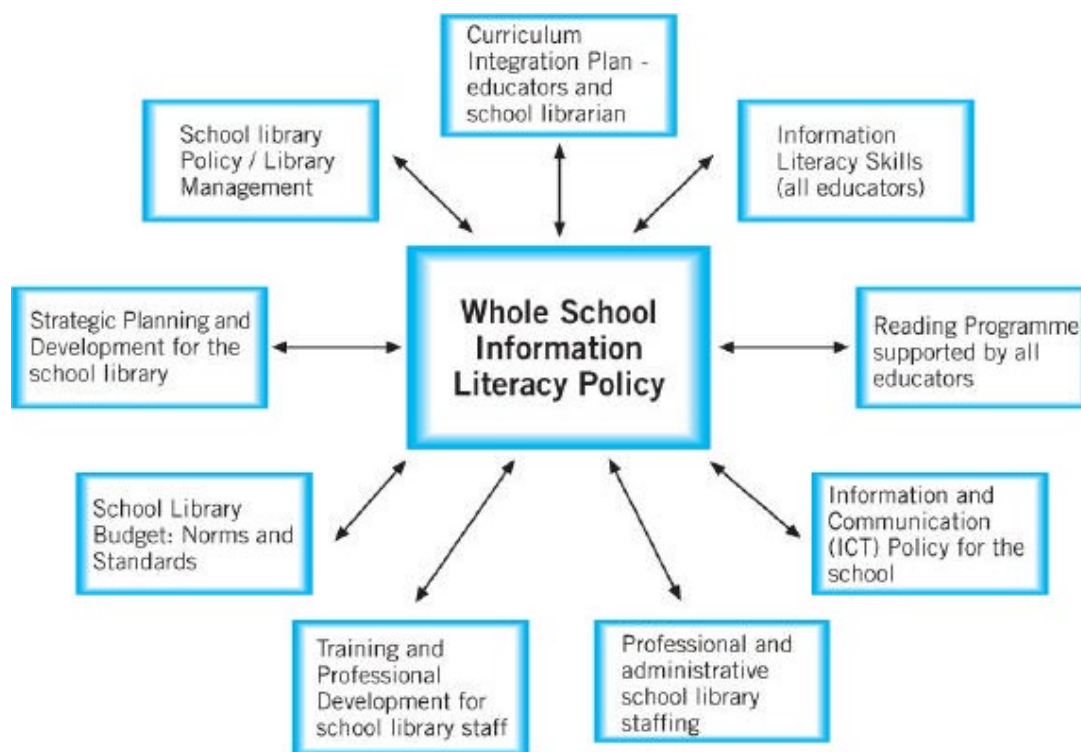
### **2.3.2 Education Library Information Technology Services (ELITS) KZN School Library Policy**

The ELITS KZN School Library Policy (2003) was established to guide the development of functional school libraries and support all those involved in the school library field in the province – a purpose in line with the KZN Department of Education (2003:8). The Policy encourages teacher-librarians to be part of the School Management Team (SMT) and teachers to develop a school library policy. It recommends that a teacher-librarian must manage and promote the library and its resources with the help of the library committee and all teachers in the school. The Policy emphasises the important role of the teacher-librarian in establishing and implementing an information literacy policy in the school and integrating print, non-print, and information and communication technology (ICT) resources into classroom teaching and learning. It goes on to state that the teacher-librarian should:

- develop, jointly with the educator team, and drive the implementation of a whole school information literacy policy
- chair the school library committee set up to
  - develop a management policy for the school library
  - ensure that services are accessible to all members of the school community
  - determine and secure an adequate budget for the school library
  - select suitable resource material to develop a balanced library collection that will serve the needs of all its users
- be part of the school's management committee

- perform the following roles within the school:
  - information specialist (with specialist knowledge and experience of ICT)
  - library manager
  - curriculum and literature enrichment specialist working with the educator team (KZN School Library Policy 2003).

Figure 4 below highlights the fact that the teacher-librarian is not an island and must work with other teachers in the school as a team to ensure that relevant literacy policies are created such as the “whole school information literacy policy”. The primary aim of such a policy is to ensure that reading and information literacy abilities are continuously developed and evaluated across the whole school, using a contextualised learning approach (KZN School Library Policy 2003).



**Figure 4: Interactive nature of a whole school information literacy policy**

Source: ELITS KZN School Library Policy (2003)

The IFLA/UNESCO School Library Manifesto (2006) provides a brief overview of the school library’s mission pointing out that in today’s information and knowledge-based culture, the

school library delivers information and ideas that are essential for success. On the other hand, the LIS Transformation Charter (2014) refers to the contradiction between the new resource-based curriculum and the shortage of resources in schools and points out that this has hampered transformation. As was mentioned, the LIS Transformation Charter (2014:15) argues that if school libraries are important for quality education, then the principles of redress and equity need to be followed and ways found to ensure that each and every school in South Africa has a school library. Also, with the introduction of a new curriculum in 2005 premised on outcomes-based education (OBE), it was and remains crucial for schools to have libraries or information centres and strategies for their implementation needed to be devised. The KZN School Library Policy (2003), as noted, promotes a variety of school library models with the goal of bringing about change. It chose to use learners' enrolment as a guideline for funding allocations to provide schools with starter collections. According to the latest KZN Library School Policy (2018), to ensure effective use of these collections, the School Library Section (ELITS) must provide the following services to assist the school libraries in the various districts (such as Ilembe):

- Processing library materials
- Setting up school libraries
- Conducting workshops for teachers and teacher-librarians
- Marketing school library services
- Conducting school visits for monitoring and support.

The ELITS School Library Implementation Plan (which began in 2004/5) for 2018 to 2023 is shown in Table 1 below. As can be seen, ELITS continues to provide various services including the establishment of centralised and classroom libraries and the training of teachers in library management. Also indicated in the table is the number of schools that will be serviced each year and how much money is allocated per service. ELITS, in the past, worked with the University of KwaZulu-Natal and the University of Zululand to train teachers in library and information science. The aim was to provide teachers with the knowledge and skills to create and manage functional school libraries.

**Table 1: School Library Implementation Plan**

Source: ELITS KZN School Library Policy (2018)



Activity	Estimated Budget	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
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No. of Schools

Establishment of centralized school libraries	R36 million x 5yrs= R180 million (starter collection)	120	120	120	120	120
Establishment of classroom libraries	R7,2 million x 5 = R30 million	144	144	144	144	144
Establishment of digital libraries	R2,4 million x5 = R12 million	24	24	24	24	24
Management of mobile library services	R3,9million x5 = R19,5 million	13 reaching out to 20 schools = 260	13 reaching out to 20 schools = 260	13 reaching out to 20 schools = 260	13 reaching out to 20 schools = 260	13 reaching out to 20 schools = 260
Training of teachers on library management.	R5million x5 R25 million	600	600	600	600	600
Reading promotion		600	600	600	600	600
Monitoring		600	600	600	600	600

### 2.3.3 Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement

Since 1997, when it was decided to replace the apartheid education curriculum, there have been several waves of curriculum reform in South Africa starting with Outcome-based Education (OBE) in 1997, the National Curriculum Statement in 2004 (which was revised several times), and now the National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) implemented in 2012. According to the DBE (2019), the CAPS is a single, comprehensive and concise policy

document for all disciplines specified in the National Curriculum Statement for Grades R through 12 and provides extensive instructions for teachers on topics that need to be covered and how to assess their learners. The document clearly states that schools need to create lifelong learners. However, creating lifelong learners will only be possible when teachers and teacher-librarians empower learners with needed skills of independent learning, critical thinking, research, reading and writing skills. These skills are included in the CAPS document and, given the discussion above, it can be strongly argued that school libraries have a crucial role to play in ensuring these skills are developed.

In the next section, a brief overview is provided of school library-related studies both internationally and locally.

#### **2.3.4 Studies done on school libraries internationally and locally**

Several studies have been done internationally on school libraries in countries such as India and the United States of America (USA). Subramaniam, Ahn, Fleischmann and Druin (2012) explored how school library programmes can play a critical role in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) learning. They also examined the contributions of school library programmes as hybrid places for such learning.

Bleidt (2011) investigated middle school students' library usage and their perceptions of the usefulness of their school libraries in the USA. Bleidt (2011) believes that literacy is vital to all school curriculum areas; therefore, robust middle school literacy programmes are imperative for learners to reach their academic potential. Bleidt (2011:67) notes that a "strong school library" is an important factor in this regard. These (and many other) studies underscore the significant role that needs to be played by the school library not only in literacy (reading and information) but in learning and teaching generally.

There are also studies on the role of school libraries that have been conducted in African countries such as Tanzania, Nigeria and Ghana. For example, Dent's (2006) study explored the impact of the school library in two rural Ugandan schools. It was found that the presence of a school library

impacts learners' reading habits, use of materials for extracurricular activities, and academic performance, among other things.

Malekani and Mubofu (2019), also in Tanzania, examined the challenges of school libraries and quality education. Their study found that management in the schools typically does not acknowledge school libraries and does not recognise their value in promoting high-quality education. The study also revealed that both print and electronic sources of up-to-date, pertinent knowledge are required.

Moruf (2015) investigated school library usage by secondary school students in Nigeria. Findings indicated that school libraries were not fully utilised due to a shortage of resources and a lack of funding among other factors.

Omenyo's (2016) study examined the role of the school library in teaching and learning in primary schools in Ghana. This study found that both teachers and learners value having a school library and the resources it offers, and they both view the library as being crucial to the functioning of schools.

Studies drawn from the African context thus show that school libraries are vital in supporting curriculum implementation, that is, the teaching and learning taking place in the school, but this view is not always shared and problems, such as the lack of resources and funding, are encountered.

The following studies on various aspects of school libraries were conducted in KZN as well as outside of the province. In KZN, Dubazana and Karlsson's (2006:1) study concerned "the integration of the school library into the taught curriculum". It found that the integration of the school library into the teaching and learning curriculum of the school was somewhat limited.

Also in KZN, Hoskins (2006) investigated the status of school libraries and the use of ICTs, such as computers in libraries. The findings revealed that many of the schools functioned without libraries and those with libraries did not have adequate resources and a dedicated teacher-librarian

on staff who could promote the efficient use of information. It was also found that ICT resources and expertise were typically lacking in libraries and among educators.

Du Toit and Stilwell (2012) analysed and critically assessed the adequacy of the KZN School Library Policy and its implementation strategy to test the policy's feasibility for implementation in the province. The results of the study offered guidelines for reviewing and refining the provincial policy intervention and brought to the fore several issues that need to be resolved to facilitate school library development in South Africa.

Kheswa (2021) evaluated the Advanced Certificate in Education School Library Development and Management (ACESLD) Programme offered by the UKZN by surveying the educators who graduated from the programme to determine the influence the programme had on the development of school libraries in KZN.

Outside of KZN, Wessel's (2010) study was part of a longitudinal reading and literacy intervention project conducted over five years in two disadvantaged primary schools in an urban township. The study found that many educators lacked reading habits and were products of an education system which undervalued literature. As a consequence, these teachers were unaware that literacy is a vital learning tool for primary school education and beyond and that strong reading abilities are essential to the educational process. The study revealed that if teachers cannot navigate the complicated information environment, then they cannot assist learners in achieving this.

Paton-Ash and Wilmot (2015:1) examined the "issues and challenges facing school libraries in selected primary schools in Gauteng". The results indicated that school libraries in the province are not doing a good job of supporting and enabling high-quality education for all learners because of the lack of national policy, funding and resources.

Hart and Zinn (2015) examined the significant developments in school librarianship in South African schools since 2007 during which time the drive to address huge backlogs in school library provision took place. The authors found that there were thousands of schools with library "rooms"

that were not functioning as libraries because they lacked the necessary components of a library such as reading and information resources and dedicated staff.

The studies mentioned above showed that even though libraries are very important in teaching and learning in schools, several issues need to be addressed for the libraries to function to their full potential. These include the lack of resources, the lack of funding, and the lack of reading by the teachers themselves. However, there is still a gap in the literature that the researcher of the current research wanted to address, namely, the role in teaching and learning of a functioning centralised school library in a rural primary school in KZN. In addressing this aim, the study can provide a new perspective on the links between the use of school library resources and primary education, that is, teaching and learning, in a rural context.

The studies reviewed above have all, to a greater or lesser degree, underscored the importance of the role of the school library in teaching and learning and it is this role that is the focus of the next section of this literature review.

### **2.3.5 Role of the school library in the teaching and learning process**

Omenyo (2016:13) believes that the critical role of the school library is the promotion and development of reading among learners. Omenyo (2016) argues that school libraries are essential in the education process since they provide the needed materials to support the school's curriculum, and these materials are used by both learners and teachers in the teaching and learning process. According to the IFLA (2015:12), school libraries in their various forms the world over, share a common goal, namely, to improve "teaching and learning for all." As a result, school librarians advocate for equality of opportunity for every learner. School library personnel uphold the values of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1959), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1989), the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (2007), and of the core values of the IFLA:

- The endorsement of the principles of freedom of access to information, ideas, and works of imagination, and freedom of expression as embodied in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

- The belief that people, communities, and organisations need universal and equitable access to information, ideas and works of imagination for their social, educational, cultural, democratic, and economic well-being.
- The conviction that delivery of high-quality LIS helps guarantee that access.
- The commitment to enable all members of the Federation to engage in and to benefit from its activities without regard to citizenship, disability, ethnic origin, gender, geographical location, language, political philosophy, race, or religion (IFLA 2015).

The IFLA (2015:17-18) states that the role of the school library is to serve as a teaching and learning centre within a school, offering an active educational programme that is integrated into curricular content, with a focus on the following:

- Resource-based capabilities – talents and dispositions associated with locating, evaluating and accessing resources in several media, including people and cultural artifacts as sources. These abilities also include the development of digital and print-based literacies, as well as the use of information technology tools to search for and assess sources.
- Thinking-based capabilities – abilities and attitudes that emphasize substantive interaction with facts and information through research and inquiry processes, higher-order thinking processes, and critical analysis, all of which lead to the creation of products that reflect profound knowledge and comprehension.
- Knowledge-based capabilities – abilities and dispositions in research and enquiry that focus on the invention, building and common use of knowledge products that indicate profound knowledge and understanding.
- Reading and literacy capabilities – abilities and dispositions associated with reading enjoyment, pleasure reading, learning through reading across many platforms, and the transformation, transmission, and distribution of text in its various forms and modes to permit the development of meaning and understanding.
- Personal and interpersonal capabilities – abilities and dispositions associated with social and cultural participation in resource-based inquiry and learning about oneself and others as researchers, knowledge users, knowledge creators and responsible citizens are important.

- Learning management capabilities – abilities and dispositions that enable learners to organise, prepare, and complete a curriculum-based inquiry unit successfully.

The IFLA (2015:16) defines a school library as a physical and digital learning environment which includes reading, inquiry, research, thinking, imagination, and creativity and which are central to learners' information and knowledge acquisition and personal, social, and cultural development. The IFLA School Library Guidelines (2015) agree with the American Association of School Libraries (2012) which states that school libraries provide targeted high-quality, diverse collections such as print, multimedia, and digital that support the school's formal and informal curriculum, including individual projects and personal development. The Association (2012) further states that a library is a collection of books and other resources that are there to be used by teachers and learners, and these resources should meet the needs of both teachers and learners. Kheswa (2021:2) argues that libraries are essential resources in institutions that provide knowledge (such as schools) and enable those institutions to achieve their objectives.

In the next section, the question of what comprises a functional school library is addressed.

### **2.3.6 Functional school library**

A functional school library is well-stocked with educational materials of all kinds such as books, periodicals, magazines and newspapers, films and filmstrips, slides, videotapes, audio recordings of all forms, maps and charts, computers and other information-bearing resources. These educational materials have to meet the needs of both teachers and learners in the school, not forgetting the entire school population. The functional school library must also be well-staffed with a teacher-librarian and assistants who are well-skilled. According to the IFLA (2015:18), research has shown that having a qualified school librarian is the most important requirement for a successful school library programme and without a pedagogical programme, a school library will not be able to have the kind of impact on teaching and learning that research shows is feasible with a skilled teacher-librarian. The IFLA (2015) clearly states that a school library should be run under a well-defined policy framework that recognises the school library as a hub for reading, research, and cooperation. The school library policy should be developed in consideration of the school's policies and needs, and it should reflect the school's ethos, mission, goals and objectives,

as well as its realities. The IFLA (2015) further states that the school library provides a variety of services to fulfil the requirements of the learning community and these services are:

- Professional development for the teaching faculty, that is, reading and literacy, research processes and technology
- Vibrant literature/reading program for academic achievement and personal enjoyment and enrichment
- Inquiry-based learning and information literacy development and
- Collaborations with other libraries such as public, government, and community resource centres.

It is also important for the school library to be supported by the school management to function effectively. For school libraries to achieve the redress of the past, it is essential to change the attitude of principals towards school libraries and teacher-librarians. The Office for Standards in Education United Kingdom (OFSTED) (2006) confirms that the principal's commitment to improving the school library is significant in schools having functional libraries. This suggests that when the school management recognises the vital role played by the school library in the teaching and learning process, it can be budgeted for and provided with the necessary support whenever possible.

The KZN School Library Policy (2003) stipulates the minimum standards for creating a functional school library. These minimum standards are:

- The establishment of a school library committee.
- Choose the appropriate school library development model.
- Develop a school library policy which covers library management and book selection issues.
- Be represented on the education team developing the whole school information literacy policy.
- Support the development of learner reading and information skills across the curriculum at all grade levels.
- Select and evaluate resources on the basis of the needs of the school.



- Appoint at least one educator to be responsible for the school library (ELITS KZN School Library Policy 2003).

Table 2, using the three library models advocated by the Policy, specifies the basic prerequisites for establishing a school library collection servicing a school. Dinuphozo Primary School, as noted, has a centralised school library. However, the position of teacher-librarian is not a full-time one because the incumbent also has teaching duties (this will be elaborated on below).

**Table 2: Minimum requirements for a school library or library collection serving the school**

Source: ELITS KZN School Library Policy (2003)

	Classroom	Cluster	Centralised
<b>Policy:</b> A whole school information literacy policy which includes a School Library policy (refer to diagram on p15)	✓	✓	✓
Library Committee	✓	✓	✓
Needs assessment and evaluation by library committee	✓	✓	✓
Learner access to resources	Frequently during school hours	Timetabled, as determined by the cluster library committee	Timetabled, as determined by the library committee
Staffing	1 full-time educator per class or grade, assisted by all other educators	1 Part/full-time trained teacher-librarian	Full-time trained teacher-librarian and volunteers
Allocated library time	Once a day for an hour in school hours or at breaks	As timetabled for learners to access the collection	½ day every school day
Teaching of information skills	<b>Responsibility of all educators</b>		
	Grade educators	Learner site workshops	Joint educators and teacher-librarian
<b>Furniture</b>			
Shelving	Sufficient for number of books plus expansion	Sufficient for number of books plus expansion	Sufficient for number of books plus expansion

	Classroom	Cluster	Centralised
Book trolley	-	-	1 book trolley
Issue desk	-	1 desk or table	1 desk or table
Display stands	-	As required	As required
Pin-boards	-	As required	As required
Catalogue cabinet (where applicable)	Suitable container for cards	Suitable container for cards	Catalogue cabinet if no automated system
Chairs	As available in classroom	Enough for learners' study and reading area	Sufficient for 3 classes at once or per space available
Tables	As available in classroom	Enough for learners' study and reading area	Enough for learners' study and reading area
Magazine racks and newspaper stands	As required	As required	As required
Minimum number of resources	Core collection (Minimum of 3 items per learner)	Core collection (Minimum of 3 items per learner)	Core collection (Minimum of 3 items per learner)
Balanced resource collection	<p>Reference materials</p> <p>Non-fiction</p> <p>Fiction</p> <p>Collection of mother tongue resources</p> <p>Newspapers and magazines</p> <p>Some non-print resources (e.g. games, puzzles and models)</p>	<p>Reference materials</p> <p>Non-fiction</p> <p>Fiction</p> <p>Collection of mother tongue resources</p> <p>Newspapers and magazines</p> <p>Some non-print resources (e.g. games, puzzles and models)</p> <p>Audio-visual resources as per budget limit</p> <p>CD Rom reference discs</p>	<p>Reference materials</p> <p>Non-fiction</p> <p>Fiction</p> <p>Collection of mother tongue resources</p> <p>Newspapers and magazines</p> <p>Some non-print resources (e.g. models, games and puzzles)</p> <p>Audio-visual resources as per budget limit</p> <p>CD Rom reference discs</p>
Information and Communication Technologies	Access to an online computer with a CD Rom drive and printer	1 online computer with a CD Rom drive and printer	2 online computers with a CD Rom drive and printer
Funding	As per Department of Education Norms and Standards budget	As per Department of Education Norms and Standards budget	As per Department of Education Norms and Standards budget

The final section of this literature review concerns the school librarian – his or her duties and attributes.

### **2.3.7 School librarian**

According to Kheswa (2021:2), school libraries are hubs of the learning environment; hence, they need to be managed by skilled people who are well aware of their functions, purpose and role in terms of the school's vision, mission and goals. This suggests that the school librarian should have the necessary skills to manage and organise the school library. In agreement with the NGSLIS (2012), Kheswa (2021) states that it is essential that a school library be under the management of an appropriately qualified teacher-librarian or a dedicated trained person. The IFLA (2015) states that the teacher-librarian is responsible for the school's physical and digital learning space where reading, inquiry, investigation, thinking, imagination, and creativity are fundamental to teaching and learning. The IFLA (2015) highlights the qualifications of a professional school librarian which include:

- Teaching and learning, curriculum, instructional design and delivery;
- Program management – planning, development/design, implementation, and evaluation/improvement;
- Collection development, storage, organization, and retrieval;
- Information processes and behaviours – literacy, information literacy, digital literacies;
- Reading engagement;
- Knowledge about children's and young adult literature;
- Knowledge of disabilities that affect reading;
- Communication and collaboration skills;
- Digital and media skills;
- Ethics and social responsibility;
- Service for the public good – accountability to the public/society;
- Commitment to lifelong learning through continuing professional development; and
- Socialization to the field of school librarianship and its history and values.

According to the IFLA (2015:44), a trained teacher-librarian collaborates with other teachers to give learners the best possible learning environment. It also states that a school librarian should

ideally co-teach with other educators so that they can each contribute their unique areas of expertise to the planning and execution of the teaching and learning activities. Kankam and Nsibirwa (2018) suggest that librarians also have to provide Internet information literacy instruction to help users access online information effectively.

## **2.4 Summary**

This chapter comprised a review of literature from different parts of the world on various aspects concerning the role of school libraries in the teaching and learning process. Policy and guidelines that influence the governance of the school library were also discussed. However, the chapter began with a discussion of the theoretical and conceptual framework underpinning the study, that is, the resource-based learning model based on the theory of constructivism.

Chapter 3 follows and comprises the research methodology of the study.

## **Chapter 3: Research Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

In Chapter 2, literature from different parts of the world on the role of school libraries in teaching and learning was reviewed. Furthermore, the policy and guidelines that influence the governance of the school library were discussed. This chapter presents the research methodology adopted for the study. The research paradigm, design, population and sampling, data collection techniques and procedures, trustworthiness and credibility of the techniques, and data analysis and management are discussed. Finally, the issue of ethical considerations is addressed.

According to Gounder (2012:3), “Research is an investigation of finding solutions to scientific and social problems through objective and systematic analysis”. He also argues that research is all about discovering hidden facts and these facts can be gathered from a variety of sources, including experience, people, books, journals, and nature. Research methodology describes how a researcher performs his or her research and includes learning the various procedures employed in the conduct of tests, experiments, surveys, and critical studies (Gounder 2012). Gounder (2012) adds that research methodology is the technique by which researchers describe, explain, and forecast events; it is a way to systematically solve the research problem. According to Babbie and Mouton (2001:74), Majinge (2014) and Kilemba (2016), research methodology comprises the methods, techniques and procedures that are used in the process of putting research plans or research designs into action. Kumar (2005:19), Nsibirwa (2012:144) and Kilemba (2016) state that research methodology is, in simple terms, the way one’s research questions are answered.

### **3.2 Research paradigm**

This study adopted the interpretivist research paradigm because this paradigm aims to learn more about modern occurrences (Creswel 2014). According to Thanh and Thanh (2015:1), to uncover reality, researchers who use the interpretivism paradigm and its associated qualitative methodologies (see below) frequently seek experiences, insights, and perceptions for their data. Kheswa (2021) and Plowright (2011:177) argue that the research paradigm, as a system of ideas, is significant because it decides, maintains, and reinforces a researcher’s way of thinking about an issue and serves as a critical road map for their actions. Kheswa (2021:82) points out that the

term research paradigm “describes the type of research, the nature of the world and how to investigate it” and that this means our perception of the world influences how we explore or research it. Kheswa (2021) argues that working with a specific paradigm significantly impacts the types of questions asked, what should be observed and studied, how data is collected, and how results are evaluated.

### **3.3 Research design**

Creswell (2014) points out that there are two types of research approaches, namely, qualitative, which uses interviews and documentary sources, and quantitative, which entails collecting numerical data using questionnaires. This study adopted a qualitative approach because it is a method that explores attitudes, behaviour and experiences and also attempts to get in-depth opinions. According to Creswell (2009:1), a qualitative research design is a form of systematic empirical inquiry to understand how people make sense of their experiences. Kalu and Bwalya (2017) state that qualitative research is utilised in various areas, including the behavioural and social sciences, to learn about people’s cultures, beliefs, and values. The authors further state that qualitative research is particularly beneficial for delving into complicated phenomena that are difficult to quantify using quantitative methods (Kalu and Bwalya 2017). They do, however, point out that despite the benefits of qualitative research, readers and academics frequently question its reliability. It is thus vital for a researcher to be transparent and account for every decision made throughout the research process.

#### **3.3.1 Case study**

A case study was adopted because it allows the researcher to understand a complex issue and gain insight into the phenomenon under investigation (Omenyo 2016). Dooley (2002:338) and Omenyo (2016) note that observation, interviews, documents, questionnaires and other data collection methods can all be used in a case study. Starman (2013) points out that case studies are commonly utilised in the social sciences and are useful in practice-oriented sectors such as education and management. He further points out that the definition and qualities of a case study are strongly tied to the interpretive paradigm as adopted in this study and as described above.

Thus, using the Dinuphozo Primary School library as a case study, the researcher aimed to extrapolate the information gained to better understand the role of the school library in the teaching and learning process. As noted earlier, the school was chosen because it was built after 1994 when the new democratically elected government began to correct the injustices, as a result of apartheid, in allocating schools to disadvantaged Africans. Also as noted, it is the only school in the circuit that was built with a library with adequate resources. Other public schools in this circuit use classrooms, corner libraries, and mobile libraries all of which have insufficient resources.

### **3.4 Population of the study**

According to Creswell (2012), a population is a collection of people who share similar traits. Budhu (2017) and Bertram and Christiansen (2014) suggest that the term population refers to the total number of persons, groups, or organisations included in a study. Similarly, Kilemba (2016) states that population is the total number of persons or items that can be sampled as possible participants or respondents in terms of research. The researcher's goal is to extract as much information from a population, even though it is usually impossible to reach out to everyone. Dinuphozo Primary School has a total population of 41 teachers comprising a Principal, two Deputy Principals, four HODs, 15 teachers in the foundation phase and 19 teachers in the intermediate and senior phases. Interviewing the whole population, given time and resource constraints and the scope of the study, was not feasible and purposive sampling was thus used to select study participants.

#### **3.4.1 Sampling**

A purposive sampling method is both cost- and time-effective. Purposive sampling involves selecting participants "purposively" because one believes that they are in a position to offer insight into one's research problem (Creswell 2014). Thus, the researcher purposively selected members of the School Library Committee as the study participants. Participants comprised the Principal, one Deputy Principal, a HOD, a teacher from each of the three phases (foundation, intermediate, and senior) as well as the teacher-librarian – a total of nine participants. The Principal and the Deputy Principal's attitudes toward the school library will influence the library's effectiveness. According to NGSL (2012), the school library needs the principal's



comprehensive and multifaceted support. As part of the SMT, they decide on the library's budget and the HODs, as managers, are also important in this regard. The teachers were included because their views on the use of the school library resources in their teaching (and learners' learning) were considered valuable. The School Librarian was included because she knows the resources available and which resources are used the most. In addition, as all the participants were members of the School Library Committee, it was assumed that they would be more knowledgeable about the library and its role in teaching and learning, and thus in the "best" position to answer the questions posed.

### **3.5 Data collection techniques and procedures**

The instruments that were utilised to collect data are described in this section. According to Kabir (2016), data collection is the systematic process of acquiring and measuring information on variables of interest to answer research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes. He believes that data collection is one of the most crucial steps in doing research and even if you have the best research design in the world, you will be unable to complete your project if you are unable to collect the required data. Omenyo (2016) and Yin (2012:190) point to the importance of triangulation in the case study methodology. Triangulation is using different data collection tools from various sources to strengthen the evidence foundation. The tools used in this study were interviews, an observation schedule, and an analysis of documents all of which assisted in the verification of the data. The sub-sections below provide details on how data was acquired using the various tools.

#### **3.5.1 Interviews**

According to Ugwu and Eze (2023), Kabir (2016) and Cohen and Crabtree (2008), the interviewer in a study asks questions and receives participants' responses. Cropley (2021) and Kabir (2016) highlight that interviews can be structured, semi-structured and unstructured and that telephone or other electronic devices can be used to ask and answer questions. The researcher chose interviews as the data collection method in order to have a thorough conversation with the participants to obtain information pertinent to the study. Mwita (2022) and Kilemba (2016) mentions that in the context of research, an interview is a two-way, in-depth discussion between the interviewer and the interviewee with the goal of gathering data for the study. Kilemba (2016)

also mentions that the benefit of the interview is that while a researcher can receive the data they were after, they may also discover unanticipated, amusing or helpful data. The researcher created three semi-structured interview guides (see Appendix 2), each of which comprised a list of questions to ask during the interviews. One guide was for the SMT participants, one for the teachers, and one for the teacher-librarian. The researcher used telephonic interviews to collect data from the participants due to restrictions posed on face-to-face contact as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The interview guides (also referred to as schedules) were pretested during the first week of November 2021 on three educators from the Dinuphozo Primary School who did not form part of the sample. This was done to ensure the validity of the interview schedules, that is, to rectify if there were mistakes and to check if the questions were understandable. Fortunately, the questions were straightforward and understandable and there was no need for the researcher to make any changes to the guides. The telephonic interviews were conducted during the second and third week of November 2021.

### **3.5.2 Observation**

An observation guide (see Appendix 3) was used to facilitate observation. It contained a checklist of aspects to observe and whether these were satisfactory or not. Observation was used to determine the library resources (including furniture), how things are organised and prioritised in the library, what books the learners are interested in, and the frequency of teachers' and learners' use of the library. It was anticipated that the findings would supplement and contextualise the results obtained from the interviews. The researcher asked to be provided access to the library when it was not in use due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the country was on alert level 2 (which indicated a moderate COVID-19 spread with a high health system readiness) and this access was granted.

### **3.5.3 Analysis of documents**

Document analysis was also used as a data collection tool. Here, the researcher examined documents such as the school library policy, the library attendance register, the minutes of Library Committee meetings, and the library's circulation statistics and reports. The aim of

analysing these documents was to determine how they reflected perceptions of the library and the importance attached to it and, as with the observation above, to supplement (either re-enforce or contradict) and contextualise the findings obtained from the interviews with the study participants. It was also to determine whether the school library practice is strengthened by policies, rules and guidelines. These documents were obtained manually and through the relevant websites.

### **3.6 Trustworthiness and credibility**

According to Barton and Bartlett (2009), the reliability of a measure indicates how repeatable a research instrument is, while the validity of an instrument relates to a tool's capacity to produce true, accurate, or reliable research data. Simba (2014) states that examining the method's consistency or the amount to which respondents consistently respond to the measure, in the same way, is referred to as reliability. Barbie (2007) notes that the degree to which an empirical measure accurately reflects the true meaning of the concept under investigation is referred to as validity. According to Kheswa (2021), an instrument has low reliability when it produces different scores each time it is used to assess an unchanging value. However, an instrument with high reliability (also referred to as dependability) always provides the same score each time it is used to measure an unchanging value. As mentioned above, the interview schedules were pretested on three educators from Dinuphozo Primary School who did not form part of the study to help ensure their validity. As noted, it was found that the questions were easily understood and there was no need for the researcher to make any changes to the schedules.

### **3.7 Data management and analysis**

After requesting permission from the participants to do so, the researcher recorded the telephone interviews and these were subsequently transcribed to facilitate analysis. The researcher listened to the recorded interviews numerous times to ensure that what transpired was correctly transcribed. Once the transcriptions had been done, they, together with notes she had made, were read and re-read to familiarise herself with the content. The researcher also typed all the findings from the observation schedule and recorded all the relevant information from the documents that were analysed. Since the research was qualitative, content analysis was used in the analysis of

the collected data. The researcher used O'Connor and Gibson's (2003) guide to qualitative analysis. The steps involved in the data analysis were as follows:

- Organise the data.
- Find and organise ideas and concepts.
- Build overarching themes in the data.
- Ensure reliability and validity in the data analysis and the findings.
- Find possible and plausible explanations for findings.
- Provide an overview of the final steps (O'Connor and Gibson, 2003: 65).

The results of the data analysis are presented in the chapter that follows.

### **3.8 Ethical considerations**

Ethical considerations, in line with university protocols (that is, the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Research Ethics Policy) were adhered to. Thus the participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time. They were also assured that their responses would be confidential, that is, their names would not be used in the study and that the information gathered would only be used for academic purposes. The participants signed an informed consent form (see Appendix 1) whereby they gave their consent to participate in the study. The consent form acted as an agreement of trust between the researcher and the participants. The researcher also obtained the gatekeeper's permission, that is, the Deputy Principal (see Appendix 4) to conduct the study at the Dinuphozo Primary School. Finally, the data collection process did not begin until the Social Science and Humanities Research Ethics Committee at the UKZN gave their approval for the study (see Appendix 5).

### **3.9 Summary**

This chapter addressed the research methodology adopted for the study. In doing so it discussed the research paradigm and research design used, the study population and sampling procedures, data gathering methods or tools and the data management and analysis process. A case study method was used and the collected data was analysed following the steps provided by O'Connor and Gibson (2003).

Chapter 4 follows and it presents and discusses the results of the study.

## **Chapter 4: Presentation and Discussion of Results**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study. The study aimed to investigate the role of the school libraries in teaching and learning using the Dinuphozo Primary School library in UMhlali Circuit, ILembe District, KZN as a case study. The nine participants were drawn from the School Library Committee and data were collected using telephonic interviews, observation and document analysis.

### **4.2 Results and discussion**

The results are presented and discussed under the following headings drawn from the interview schedules:

- Response rate for the telephonic interviews
- Demographic data
- Dinuphozo Primary School library
- Importance of a school library
- Challenges facing the school library
- Library improvements
- Other comments.

The content under these headings will cover the research questions and objectives of the study and, where appropriate, sub-headings are used. For ethical reasons, that is, for reasons of confidentiality, the nine respondents are labelled and referred to as follows:

- School Management Team (Acting Principal, Deputy Principal, HODs) - SMT1 to SMT5
- Teachers - T1 to T3
- Teacher-librarian - TL1

To begin with, the response rate for the telephonic interviews is discussed.

#### **4.2.1 Response rate for the telephonic interviews**

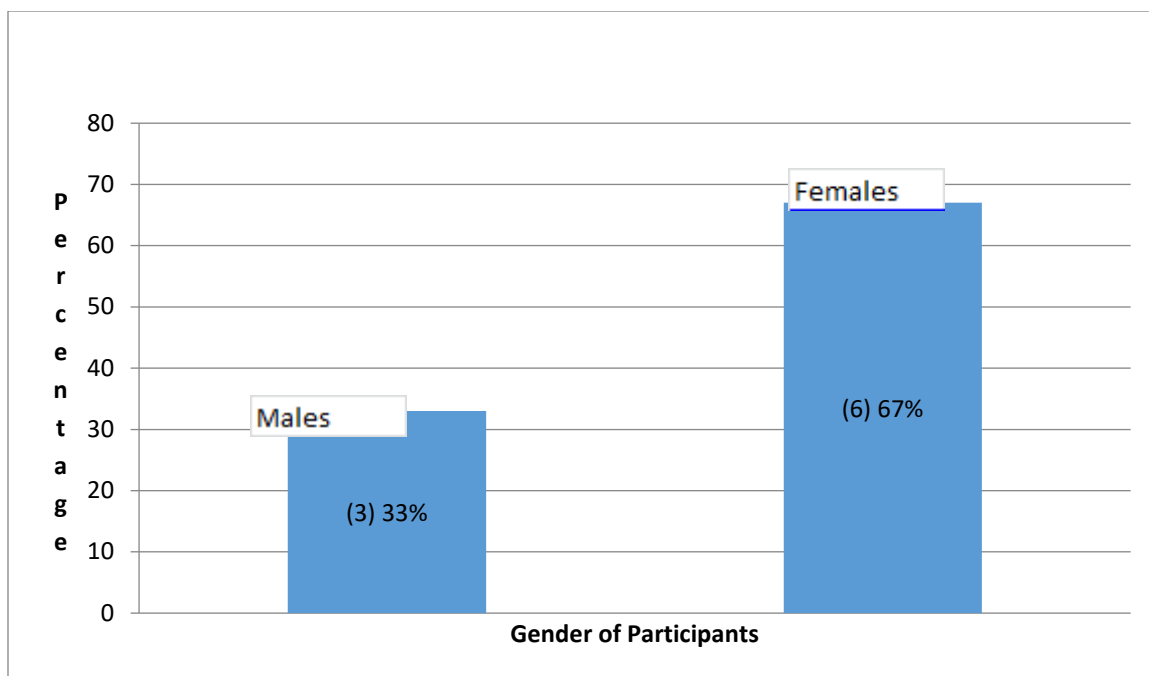
The researcher managed to interview all the participants. According to Bryman (2012), an appropriate response rate to questions should be at least 60%, whereas the appropriate level of response, according to Rubin and Bellamy (2012), is 50%. In this study, the response rate was 100%, making the response rate more than acceptable for analysis.

#### **4.2.2 Demographic data**

Kilemba (2016) argues that in an ideal world, a researcher would only be concerned with responses that address the study questions; however, it is also important to provide background data about the participants involved in the study. Questions relating to the background information of the participants concerned their gender, age and highest level of education. This information enabled the researcher to better understand the participants.

##### ***4.2.2.1 Gender***

As reflected in Figure 5, of the nine participants, three (33%) were male, and six (67%) were female suggesting that female teachers are more involved in the school library than males. These findings are similar to those of Kheswa (2021) who also reported that female teacher-librarians were the majority in his study. It does need to be pointed out that Dinuphozo Primary School has more female teachers than male teachers.



**Figure 5: Gender of participants**

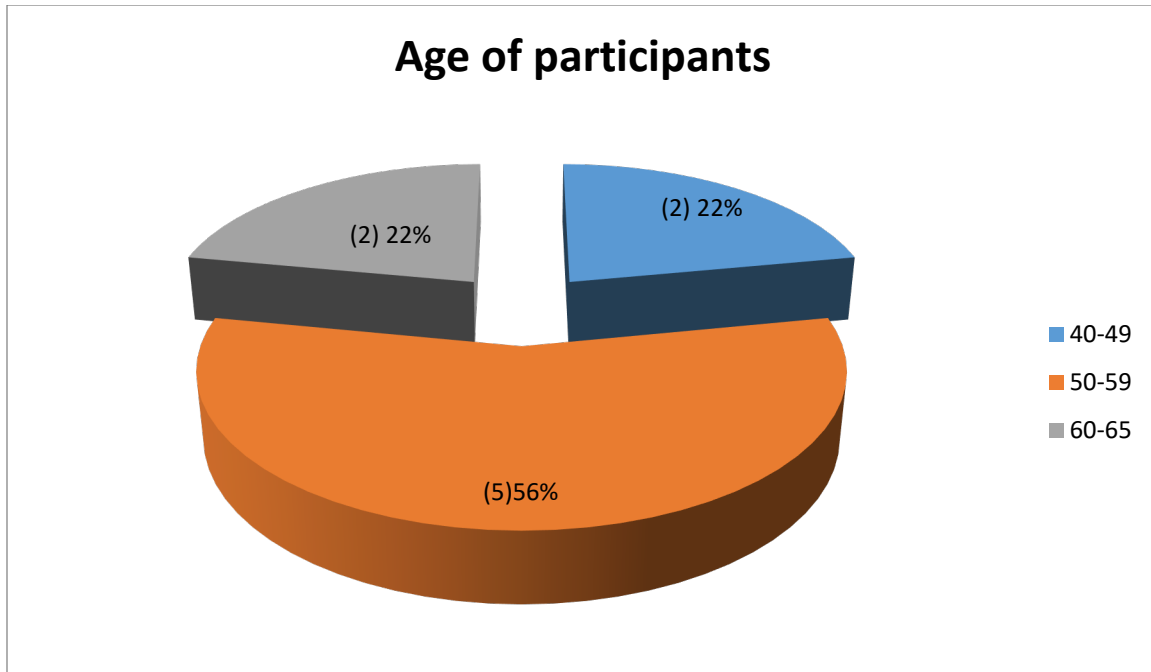
(N= 9)

Source: Field data

#### ***4.2.2.2 Age of participants***

Figure 6 shows the age range of the participants. Two participants (22%) were in the 40-49 year category, a further two (22%) were in the 60-69 year category, while a majority, five participants (56%), were in the 50-59 year category. There were no participants under the age of 40 years who served on the Library Committee. The apparent lack of interest on the part of younger staff in serving on the Committee is of concern as the younger generation also needs to be included so that library duties and interest in the library will continue after the senior staff have retired. According to the IFLA (2015), the human resources available inside and outside a school library play a major role in determining the depth and calibre of a library programme.





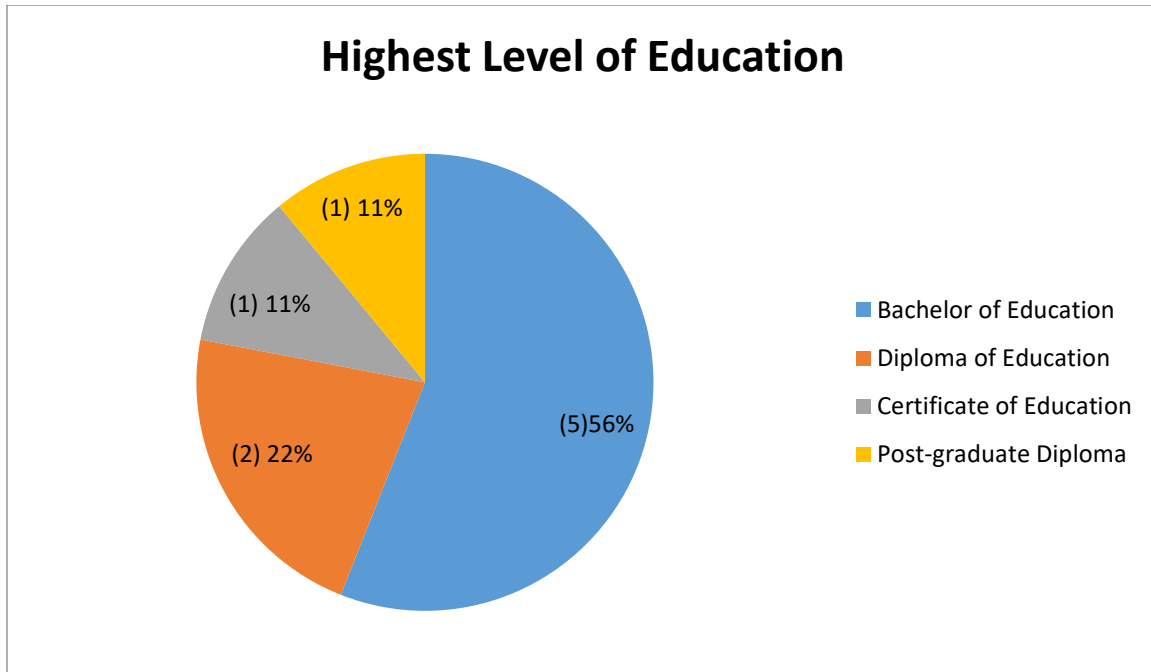
**Figure 6: Age of participants**

(N= 9)

Source: Field data

#### ***4.2.2.3 Highest level of education***

In terms of the highest level of education of the participants, Figure 7 shows that five (56%) participants have a Bachelor of Education degree, followed by two (22%) with a Diploma in Education. One participant (11%) holds a Certificate in Education and one (11%) holds a Post-graduate Diploma in Education. These results (together with the findings concerning age above) show that the participants (and the Library Committee) were experienced and well-educated educators. However, only one participant, the teacher-librarian, had a qualification related to library science. The participant has a Diploma in Education and a Certificate in Children and Youth Librarianship (this qualification is elaborated on in the discussion of the findings below). The IFLA (2015) clearly states that it is crucial for the school library to have sufficient, well-trained and highly motivated staff members to meet the teaching and learning demands of a school community. The IFLA (2015) argues that a school library programme needs to be overseen by professionals with the same degree of training and education as classroom teachers since it (the programme) enhances teaching and learning.



**Figure 7: Highest level of education**

(N= 9)

Source: Field data

#### **4.2.3 Dinuphozo Primary School library**

The researcher asked several questions concerning the library in order to understand its background, resources and how it operates.

##### ***4.2.3.1 Brief history of the library***

Question 5 required the participants to explain how the school library started. Anecdotal evidence indicates that many disadvantaged schools in the Dinuphozo area have converted their libraries into classrooms because of the large number of learners and too few classrooms to accommodate these learners. Other schools have corner libraries in their classrooms while some make use of mobile libraries. This is perhaps not surprising given that, as mentioned in an earlier chapter, only seven percent of public (government) schools nationwide had a functioning library (LIS Transformation Charter 2014). According to the participants, the Dinuphozo Primary School library first started as a mobile library, and later, a library was incorporated with the building of the new school in 2012:

SMT1: “The library started with a mobile library and later an ordinary classroom was used which was later converted to a library before the new library was built”.

SMT4: “It started as a trolley library when we were teaching in mobile classrooms and later this school library was built”.

According to the ELITS KZN School Library Policy (2003), schools can begin their libraries with a box or classroom and work their way up to a fully complete library. Dinuphozo library was built in terms of the mission statement of the ELITS KZN School Library Policy (2003), which included the need to redress past inequalities.

The LIS Transformation Charter (2014) points out that excellent school libraries are critical to developing South Africa’s educational system, which aspires to deliver quality education to all South African learners. One of the participants mentioned that most of the books were supplied by the DoE as it wants to create a culture of learning and reading in schools by providing suitable resources:

SMT3: “We asked for donations of books from different companies and most of the books came from the Department of Education (ELITS).”

These results reveal that Dinuphozo Primary School, like many other schools in the area, did not initially have a school library. As mentioned in Chapter 1 when discussing the background to the problem statement it was pointed out that schools surrounding Dinuphozo use classrooms, corner libraries and mobile libraries all of which have insufficient resources. This was confirmed by TL1 when she mentioned that when she started work in 2012 the school did not have any room that could be used as a library and a mobile library with 1 000 books was used. This was before the new school and library were built. Indeed, teachers at the time were teaching in mobile classrooms.

#### ***4.2.3.2 Library rules and regulations***

TL1 stated that she organises library orientation sessions at the beginning of every academic year. She shows learners the different types of books available, where to find reference materials, and English and IsiZulu fiction, and points to the labels on the shelves. She also ensures that the

learners are aware of the rules and regulations concerning the library. Some of the rules and regulations are:

- Learners should not make a noise.
- Learners are not allowed to enter with their school bags.
- Learners should not eat in the library.
- Learners are to leave books that they have used on the tables.

What the teacher-librarian is doing is in line with the IFLA School Library Guidelines (2015) which state that the school librarian should be a skilled professional in developing and managing the school library. The NGSLIS also states that one of the teacher-librarian's school library committee's functions is to participate in the creation of a school library policy that specifies crucial details such as rules and regulations.

#### ***4.2.3.3 Opening and closing hours***

The researcher asked a question concerning library opening and closing hours to determine when learners get access to the library. TL1 explained that the library is open daily for the learners. She mentioned that learners come during their break time and also after tuition time. This is in line with the NGSLIS (2012) which clearly states that whether it is a classroom library, mobile library or centralised library, clarity is required concerning access times; the times should be clearly posted on the library door and all learners should be informed when the venue is open. TL1 also mentioned that before COVID-19 restrictions, learners who wanted to sit and read were allowed to visit the library between 10h30 and 11h00 and those who wanted to borrow books were allowed to come between 13h00 and 14h00. During COVID-19 restrictions learners were only allowed to come for book loans – no sitting was allowed as there was insufficient space in the library to allow for the required social distancing. Once restrictions had been lifted (June 2022) learners were again allowed to sit in the library and use its resources.

#### ***4.2.3.4 Library resources***

To determine whether the SMT members are familiar with the resources that are found in the library, they were asked the question: "What kinds of materials are in stock in the library?" The SMT members seemed to know what is in the school library even though some mentioned things

like computers and a printer which were not in the library when the researcher did her observations. It is possible that these resources were mentioned as the members know that a functional school library needs to possess computers, printers, and access to the Internet. In this regard, the IFLA School Library Guidelines (2015) clearly state that a school library functions as a technological hub that offers a variety of hardware, software, and expertise for knowledge creation, representation and information sharing. The MDET (1994) mentions that teacher-librarians can teach learners and teachers how to use these learning resources effectively. The responses from three of the SMT participants were as follows:

SMT2: “It has computers, laptop, and books.”

SMT4: “It has laptop, printer and books.”

SMT5: “The library has computers, laptop and books.”

The same question was also asked of the teacher participants to determine if they visit the library and are familiar with the materials or resources that are found in the library. Unlike the members of the SMT, these participants knew exactly what is available in the school library. They did not exaggerate and mention resources that are not available. The teachers mentioned that there are fiction and non-fiction books, reference works, as well as a laptop which the teacher-librarian uses. The response of TL1 was as follows:

“There are English fiction books, IsiZulu fiction books, Afrikaans fiction books even though there are very few, and English non-fiction.”

Subsequent observation by the researcher (see below) confirmed that these resources were indeed housed in the library. TL1 added that the library also has audio-visual resources (see below). However, these are not displayed thus limiting access to them. According to Omenyo (2016), much depends on the nature of the collection provided in the school library for it to be helpful and well-used.

As mentioned in Chapter 2 the centralised library needs to have one book trolley, one desk or table, display stands, pin boards, a catalogue cabinet if no automated system, chairs sufficient for three classes at once or per space available, tables enough for learners’ study and reading areas, magazine racks and newspaper stands, core collection (minimum of three items per learner)

reference materials, non-fiction, fiction books, collection of mother tongue resources, newspapers, magazines, some non-print resources (for example, models, games and puzzles), audio-visual resources, CD Rom reference disks and two online computers with a CD Rom drive and printer.

Listed below are the resources found in the library collection as determined by the researcher using the observation guide:

**Fiction books:**

English, IsiZulu and a few Afrikaans fiction books

**Nonfiction books:**

Biographies, handbooks for pregnancy, HIV/AIDS

References materials including:

Ten Oxford dictionaries (five English and five English/IsiZulu),

One set of Encyclopaedia Britannica (It was noticed by the researcher that the set was incomplete)

Atlas and maps

Books on the social sciences, natural science and life skills

Practise tests for maths teachers for different grades

**Audio-visual resources:**

CDs of physical education lessons and short stories

It was observed by the researcher that there were no newspapers or magazines. These resources are useful when learners are instructed to find pictures and stories or articles to share in the classroom or when it is show and tell. It was also noticed by the researcher that the library had no computers or printers. A perusal of the automated catalogue established that the library has 3000 resources.

TL1 confirmed the presence of the various resources listed.

The library was found to have books that covered all of the subjects taught in the school. The majority of the resources were in good condition. According to the LIS Transformation Charter (2014:52), every learner in school should have access to a constantly updated collection of reading, learning and information materials that is appropriate for learners of all ages, skills and backgrounds. It is evident that the Dinuphozo Primary School library, in terms of its collection, is making an effort in this regard.

#### **4.2.4 Collection development**

Question 6 asked the SMT participants how books are acquired for the library. All the members of the SMT confirmed that books were acquired from the DoE (via ELITS). However, SMT1 stated that some books are purchased by the school:

“The books are bought by the school and sometimes the school library section in the District Office distributes books to schools with libraries.”

Other participants mentioned books being received from the DoE and books being donated to the school by companies and non-governmental organisations.

SMT2: “We acquire library books from the Department of Education (ELITS) and donations.”

SMT3: “Some books were donated by Non-governmental organisations and also some came from the Department of Education (ELITS).”

SMT4: “We asked for donations from different companies and some came from the Department of Education (ELITS).”

SMT5: “We got books from the Department of Education (ELITS) and some from donations.”

The above responses suggest that not all the SMT members of the School Library Committee are familiar with how the library acquires its resources. It is not clear why one of the participants thought that some of the books had been purchased by the school when this is evidently not the case.

According to the ELITS KZN School Library Policy (2003), the goal of the ELITS Directorate

is to provide schools with a starter collection and the size of the collection is based on learner enrolment in the school. Thus, in terms of the Policy, Dinuphozo School library received a core collection (starter pack) in 2016 and another allocation of resources in 2018.

The SMT participants were asked: “Who does the selection of the library collection?” and in their responses, they referred to the teacher-librarian doing so. The fact that the DoE via ELITS provides the books (as the SMT participants indicated in response to question 6) and no selection as such is done by the teacher-librarian is further indication that they are not familiar with the school library insofar as the acquisition and selection of books are concerned. Their confusion could be due to ELITS communicating directly with the teacher-librarian about the selection of books. Whatever the reason it does suggest that there is a communication breakdown between the SMT and the teacher-librarian. Indeed, TL1 mentioned that due to financial constraints, the library had never purchased any books and had only received the above-mentioned starter pack and one subsequent allocation.

Teachers were also asked if they were involved in selecting books for the library. This question was asked to determine if there was collaboration between the teacher-librarian and the teachers. The teacher participants revealed that they are not involved in the selection of books and thus there is no collaboration between them and the teacher-librarian. The lack of collaboration is perhaps understandable as the DoE simply supplies the books and the schools have little or no choice in the selection of the material. The responses from the three teacher participants were brief and to the point:

T1: “No I am not involved.”

T2: “No.”

T3: “No I am not involved in the selection of books.”

According to the ELITS KZN School Library Policy (2003), the selection process should be an ongoing collaborative effort that considers the needs of all members of the school community, including the school governing body (SGB), management team, parents, teachers and learners. TL1 confirmed that due to financial constraints, the library books were supplied by the DoE (ELITS) (as outlined above) and hence there was no collaboration and no acquisitions



policy. The American Library Association's selection guidelines state that it is essential for all schools to have a comprehensive policy on the selection of library resources and the policy must include all forms of materials (American Library Association, 2015). Omenyo (2016) also argues that it is important for all schools to have an acquisition policy to avoid waste and to be able to manage resources and that libraries should have sufficient books linked to the school curricula.

Given that the Dinuphozo Primary School library receives its materials in the main from the DOE, it is perhaps unsurprising that an acquisitions policy is not in place. It is also evident that the library has to find other means such as fundraising to finance the purchase of books and thereby enhance its collection. The School Library Policy (2003) points out that due to inadequate library provision and low or non-existent budgets, schools are forced to turn outside of their own financial resources to enhance their limited library stock and donations are turned to. The Policy also states that when receiving donations, schools should be consulted in terms of their needs and at all times have the opportunity to review the donated material before acceptance. The financial constraints mentioned by TL1 are highlighted by Hart and Zinn (2007) who point out that before 1994, school library finances were ring-fenced and when this practice was abolished, it left schools without the funds to purchase library materials. The situation is in clear contradiction to the view held by Omenyo (2016) and the IFLA School Library Guidelines (2015) which state that the collection should be appropriate, current and timely which means that the library collection must be upgraded frequently.

#### **4.2.5 Importance of the school library**

The SMT participants were asked about the importance of having a school library. This question was asked because the IFLA (2015:24) states that to build the budget and consider reasonable solutions for providing the entire school community with high-quality resources and services, a school librarian collaborates with senior management. If the school management understands the importance of a school library, they will not have a problem working together with the school librarian and supportive of the library generally. The SMT's responses were positive in that they all affirmed the importance of the school library. Their responses were as follows:

SMT1: "Yes, it is imperative to have a library as learners are able to read, and do research on assignments given to them."

SMT2: “Yes, the library will assist the learners to study and to do their projects in time without wasting time.”

SMT3: “Yes, because it creates love for reading.”

SMT4: “Yes, it helps learners to gather more information which is necessary in the classroom. It helps learners to improve in reading and spelling.”

SMT5: “Yes it is very important because it helps learners to improve their vocabulary and reading skills.”

The teacher participants and the teacher-librarian were also asked the same question. They were all in agreement that the school library is important. T1 mentioned that the school library helps learners to discover and investigate information independently. T2 was of the opinion that the school library provides a safe haven for all learners to think, create, share and grow while T3 stated that the school library supports the education of the learners. T3 went on to mention that learners can read books for enjoyment thus increasing their ability to read well and fluently. TL1, in her response, pointed out that the main objective of the school library is to promote literacy by providing equal opportunity for all learners to access reading material. She also mentioned that when learners are encouraged to read for enjoyment, without any pressure, they will improve their reading and comprehension skills.

The responses of the participants are in line with Fakomogbon et al (2012:486), who believe that library resources assist learners in developing their literacy abilities by allowing them to peruse a variety of reading materials in the library. Their responses also illustrated that the school library is vital for the teaching and learning process and, as such, is essential for the learners’ education. Kheswa (2021) and other researchers such as Dubazana and Karlson (2006) are in support, arguing that the role of the school library in the educational process is crucial, especially in an educational system that involves resource-based teaching and learning.

#### **4.2.6 Library use by teachers and the SMT**

The SMT and teacher participants were asked how often they visited the school library. The majority of the participants revealed that they visit the library as much as they can. However,

one participant (T3) mentioned that he finds it difficult to use the library because of the shortage of relevant resources:

T3: “I never visit the school library because most resources I may need to use personally are not available for an example computers, overhead projectors and television.”

Despite the participants being of the opinion that they visit the library as much as they can, the researcher observed that few teachers appear to visit the library. It must be borne in mind that COVID-19 restrictions were in place and fear of contracting the virus may well have accounted for the lack of library use. It was observed that a few teachers would come and check for language readers (these are books for foundation phase learners (grades 1-3), that introduce learners to sounds, that is, vowels and consonants and also focus on simple sentences that they could use in their classrooms. Some would also come to check for books that they could personally read once they were done with marking and writing reports.

As part of their library use, the SMT participants were asked what library resources or sections they use the most. The results show that most of the SMT members access fiction books. On the other hand, SMT1 prefers the reference section:

“I mostly use the reference section. I like to refer to different authors.”

The responses of the SMT participants suggest that most of them read for pleasure and being able to freely borrow books from the school library promotes this. In this regard, the researcher noticed that there are grade 7 story books that appeal to teachers and that are read by them. It was also evident from looking at the circulation statistics that, with the diversity of books available in the library and being able to choose from a large collection, the school community is encouraged to read non-curriculum-related books. Omenyo (2016) also shared the same sentiments that the school library promotes voluntary reading.

Teachers were also asked “How often are you allowed to borrow books from the library?” To be able to borrow a library book, a staff member has to pay a once-off fee of R5 for a library card and once this had been done, they were “free” to borrow books from the library. One of the

participants felt that there is a need for the teacher-librarian to address the staff about the loan of books:

T3: “I think there should be a staff meeting where teachers would be addressed about borrowing of books, unfortunately, that has never happened.”

The above response suggests that the teacher-librarian needs to work together with teachers and the SMT members in the school vis a vis the borrowing of books and library use more generally. This was confirmed by SMT3 when he mentioned that the teacher-librarian needs to be more welcoming and friendly towards her colleagues.

Teachers were asked if they use the library when preparing their lessons. The responses show that the teachers do not use the library when preparing their lesson plans. They use what they have in their classrooms because some believe that the library has limited resources. However, one of the goals of the resource-based learning model (MDET 1994) is for teachers to recognise the limitations of using just one textbook to implement curricula and it is of concern that the teachers were not making more use of the library resources in this regard.

The limited use of the library for teaching purposes needs to be seen in the light of Simba’s (2014) contention that school libraries are the hub of the educational process and an essential curriculum component. He further argues that the space in the school library is available for teachers and the teacher-librarian to prepare lessons and instructions. It is evident that the school library is being underutilised in this regard by the teaching staff. The issue of curricula support by the school library is a crucial one and is further addressed later in the chapter.

#### **4.2.7 Library use by learners**

The teacher participants were asked in question 6: “How often do you take your learners to the library?” The results show that they do not send learners to the library as often as they would like. One participant mentioned the issue of time and the fact that there is no period scheduled for library visits and use and this was why sending learners to the library was difficult.

T3: “I do not take my learners to the library for learning because, in a school timetable, there is no time or period scheduled for library visitation. Instead of taking the learners to the library, I make them use the textbooks for reference purposes that are in class.”

When the teacher-librarian (TL1) was asked “How often do learners use the library?” she responded by saying that the library is open daily for learners to use (see opening hours above) but it is evident from her response and the responses of the teachers that few learners visit the library. TL1 confirmed this stating it is the same learners who visit the library. The researcher noticed that the furniture in the library was insufficient to accommodate large groups of learners and this may have been a deterrent to library use. As noted, learners came after school for book loans and only a few learners were allowed to visit the library during break time because of COVID-19 restrictions. The learners were also required to pay a fee of two rand for a library card to enable them to borrow books and given the disadvantaged backgrounds of the learners, this may well have been a deterrent to them doing so.

A perusal of the book loan register by the researcher also confirmed the limited library use (by both learners and teachers). It was found that even though the library was built in 2012, it only started to loan books to the school community in 2017. While the number of learners borrowing books increased from two in 2017 to 16 in 2019, between 2019 and 202, out of the 850 learners attending the school only 20 were frequent library users. To date, it is evident that learners generally are still uninterested in borrowing books and using the library.

These results suggest that the library is not promoted fully to the learners and staff. The limited use of the library by the teaching staff and the learners underscores the importance of Simba’s (2014) view that the school library services, facilities, and other activities must be advertised so that users are aware of what is available and be inspired to visit the library. Responsibility in this regard rests on both the school librarian and the School Library Committee. In a similar vein, the IFLA School Library Guidelines (2015) emphasise that a school library without a well-planned comprehensive offering of teaching and learning activities will not be able to have a significant impact on teaching and learning. The LIS Transformation Charter (2014:48) points to the

importance of information literacy and that for a school library to be effective, information literacy education must be incorporated into the curriculum in all learning areas.

Given the above findings and discussion, it is evident that the teacher-librarian needs to liaise with other school librarians as well as public libraries in terms of strategies she can use to encourage the use of the library and its resources by learners and the school teaching and management staff. Even though TL1 does have a school library-related qualification (a Certificate in Children and Youth Librarianship) she needs continuous support from ELITS, teacher-librarians from neighbouring schools and, importantly Dinuphozo Primary School staff members and the principal. According to the LIS Transformation Charter (2014:48), a team approach is necessary for a successful school library, and the connections between the SMT, teachers and library personnel are crucial.

#### **4.2.8 Use of information and communication technology (ICT)**

It was observed by the researcher that there were no computers for the learners to use in the library. There is only one laptop, and learners are not allowed to touch it. It is used by the teacher-librarian only and, importantly, as confirmed by TL1, is not connected to the Internet. The lack of computers in addition to not having Internet access for the one “available” computer, makes it difficult, if not impossible, for learners and teachers to search for information using the Internet and for learners to type their assignments and projects. According to the resource-based learning model (MDET 1994) it is important for a school library to structure teaching and learning experiences and provide a variety of learning resources, including computer technology.

According to Omenyo (2016), using computers to retrieve information in the school library is vital and beneficial to students and teachers. It is clear that this is not the case in the Dinuphozo Primary School library and it is evident that much needs to be done in this regard. Finance remains a significant stumbling block. Morris (2010) believes that three aspects of school libraries are crucial. These are staff, library programmes and funding. In order to support library staff, continual collection development, and technical growth and enhancements to suit learning and teaching demands, adequate financing is required (Morris 2010, Simba 2014).

#### **4.2.9 Support for curricular work**

The LIS Transformation Charter (2014) states that without a well-managed collection of learning resources, the curriculum cannot be effectively delivered. TL1 agrees with the statement when she mentioned that the library offers access to resources that provide a well-rounded education for every learner. However, as earlier discussed the library does not have adequate library resources including, for example, computers and a printer.

In question 12 the SMT participants were asked: “What materials does the library have to facilitate academic work in school?” The participants believed that the materials housed in the library were sufficient to help teachers and learners in the learning and teaching process. However, as alluded to earlier, it is apparent that the SMT members are not adequately familiar with the school library and this was evident when the researcher was conducting her observation as no SMT members visited the library during the period.

Teachers were also asked a similar question, that is, “What materials does the library have to facilitate your work?” Earlier in the chapter, it was mentioned that the teachers do not use the library when preparing their lesson plans and the response of one educator to the question underscored the reason for this. He believes that the library has nothing to help him facilitate his work since it has scarce and limited resources.

T3: “For me, there is nothing available in the library that can facilitate my work since it has a very scarce and limited material.”

Thus while there is the view (by both the SMT participants and the teacher-librarian) that resources are available for curriculum support, it does appear that in reality these resources are either limited or, if available, little used by the teachers for such support. The library definition by the DBE (2012) refers to a well-stocked school library with learning tools and reference books for all the school’s subjects, as well as a diverse selection of fiction and non-fiction reading material for learners at various reading levels. Simba (2014) believes that a school library is more than just a place where enough books are stored for learners and teachers to read; it is a tool for learning and teaching in which librarians help learners and teachers by offering information skills which is the ability for an individual to discover, process, model, analyse, evaluate, communicate

and manage knowledge. This is in line with one of the requirements of the resource-based learning model, namely, that the school librarian needs to help teachers incorporate the usage of school library resources into their lesson plans (MDET 1994). In the case of the Dinuphozo Primary School library, with its limited resources, doing so effectively would be difficult to accomplish.

#### **4.2.10 Role of the school library**

The SMT participants were asked whether the school library played a role in teaching and learning at this school. Their responses, as with their responses regarding the importance of the school library presented and discussed earlier, showed that they understand the important role of the school library in the teaching and learning process. They believe that the library plays a pivotal role because it improves essential learning skills like reading, listening, viewing, and researching. They also shared that through the use of the library, each learner develops a love for leisure reading as well as for attaining knowledge. These skills mentioned by the SMT are attained by those learners who use the library frequently. Given these responses, it is evident that while the SMT participants are, in theory, fully aware of the important role played by the school library, it is patently evident from the findings that, in practice, the library at their school is not fulfilling this role. According to the NGSLIS (2012:23), “a school library has no value unless it is fully utilised.” The Guidelines further mention that the principal, as the curriculum and instructional leader of the school, has a responsibility to ensure that a reading promotion programme, the information literacy programme, and library integration into the curriculum are embedded in the school timetable. Again, this is not the case in the school under study.

The teacher participants were also asked a question on the role of the school library. They, like their SMT counterparts, understood the role of the school library in the teaching and learning process. It was mentioned that the school library is a reference and knowledge centre and an activity centre where photocopying and emailing are done. They understood that the school library supports reading and writing activities. They believed that it helps learners discover and investigate information independently and provides a safe haven for learners to think, create, share and grow their knowledge. T2 mentioned that the library's curriculum material helps the



learners understand the content taught in class even better and that it “supports reading and writing activities.:

The views of the teacher participants, as with those of the SMT, are at odds with the actual situation at the Dinuphozo Primary School library. There is no photocopier, printer, or computer with Internet access to enable email. And, as earlier pointed out, the teachers do not send learners to use the library. T3, apart from pointing to how curriculum material can assist with learner understanding, also pointed to the benefits that could accrue should the library provide free WiFi:

“Curriculum material that is found in the library helps the learner to understand the content taught in class even better. If the school library can have free Wi-Fi, parents as well as community members also can use the library for voluntary reading and accessing the Internet and this can strengthen the bond between the school and the community.”

The teacher participants were also asked to explain the actual roles played by the library in the teaching and learning at their school. They revealed that during the first few years following the library’s establishment, the teacher-librarian would organise reading activities such as read-aloud, spelling bee, reading competitions, and read and grow programmes. It is apparent that such activities are currently few and far between. However, the researcher did observe that during the first term this year (2023) when a new teacher assistant joined the library staff, spelling bee competitions were organised for grades 3 to 7. This development underscores the difficulty of the teacher-librarian coping with both the demands of teaching and library work and that once assistance is provided more library activities can be organised. TL1 also confirmed that when the library began to formally operate in 2016 and 2017 she organised a few reading activities once or twice a year. She was aware that if she had assistance on an ongoing basis, she could organise more library-related activities.

According to Donaldson (2004), school libraries help learners learn by bringing learning to life and encouraging the development of critical research and study skills that they may take with them to higher education and the workplace. Kheswa (2021) advised that a positive library experience might inspire a desire to learn for the rest of one’s life. Omenyo (2016) stated that

school libraries are critical to the educational process because they supply the materials required to support the school's curriculum and are there to be used by both teachers and learners in the process of teaching and learning. Kheswa (2021), and Hoskins (2006: 239) citing the International Association of School Librarianship (2003) argue that the school library plays an important role in the educational process, not as a stand-alone institution apart from the rest of the school programme but as an integral part of the teaching and learning process. They further mention that the following functions of the school library could be used to express its objectives, that is, informational, educational, cultural and recreational. Simba (2014) also states that the information explosion of the twenty-first century has demonstrated the shortcomings of the recall paradigm of teaching and learning.

#### **4.2.11 Academic improvement**

Question 13 required the SMT participants to explain how learners improve their learning using the school library. The participants all agreed that there is a huge improvement in those learners who visit the library before classes commence in the morning, at break time (10h30-11h00) and before school ends (13h30-14h00). They were of the view that learners who visit the library frequently can now work independently, and their reading and language skills have improved. SMT2 also pointed out that the library allows the learners to have access to books and read regularly, and as a result, their vocabulary improves. When teachers were asked the same question, they also responded positively. They pointed out that those learners who visit the library develop an interest in reading and their reading skills improve. Unfortunately, these academic improvements are only shown by the few learners who frequently use the school library. While the SMT and teacher participants were not asked how they were able to associate the academic improvement of learners with the use of the library, it can be assumed that learners who borrow books from the library use the books while in class. In this regard, the researcher has observed when teaching in class that the fast learners, once they have finished their class work, take out their library books and read while waiting for those learners who are still writing. At times they even ask the researcher the meanings of the words they do not understand.

According to the LIS Transformation Charter (2014), school libraries promote reading literacy, which is essential for academic success and democratic engagement. It further argues that

teachers may teach learners how to read but daily access to appealing books in their native languages encourages children to read and it has been found that they read more and improve their reading skills if they enjoy reading. As TL1 affirmed, one of the main objectives of the library is to promote literacy by providing equal opportunity to the learners to access reading material. She also mentioned that an objective is to encourage learners to read for enjoyment which will improve their reading and comprehension skills and further inspire them to be lifelong learners. The IFLA (2015) agrees, pointing out that learners who are allowed to select their own reading show improved test scores over time and that self-selection of reading material enhances the learners' growth of vocabulary, performance on grammar tests, and writing and oral language skills.

All study participants were thus in agreement that the school library is beneficial to the process of learning and teaching, that is, to academic improvement. As Omenyo (2016) argues, the purpose of a school library is to enhance teaching and learning by allowing learners to be self-sufficient in their studies. As already mentioned above, the results from the document analysis showed that there are only a few learners and teachers who have an interest in utilising the library. The book loan register also showed that learners are only interested in borrowing fiction books. However, according to the MDET (1994), resource-based learning engages learners, teachers and school librarians in the beneficial use of various resources, including fiction books (as occurs at the Dinuphozo Primary School). Even those learners with learning barriers need to be encouraged to visit the library. As the IFLA (2015) states, when struggling readers are given access to alternative reading materials like audiobooks, their reading abilities and attitudes improve. It also states that alternative reading materials and, in certain situations, specialised reading equipment are needed for learners with reading problems. A teacher-librarian must be able to work with specialists in the classroom to support the learning needs of these learners.

#### **4.2.12 Challenges facing the school library**

The following challenges emerged from the interviews with the participants:

#### **4.2.12.1 Budget**

Only three participants answered the question regarding the budget for the school library. The other participants were either not comfortable with answering the question or did not know the answer. Even though the researcher did not want to dwell on this question it can be assumed that participants were not clear on the issue and this may be due to the principal not discussing financial matters with them. The two SMT participants gave the following responses:

SMT1: “The school library budget is 5% of the school subsidy”.

SMT2: “The budget for the school library is R5 000”.

The NGSLIS (2012:25) clearly states that “a percentage of the LTSM budget of each school should be allocated for the acquisition of library and information resources.” In light of this, it is possible that the two participants were simply guessing.

The ELITS KZN School Library Policy (2003) states that school libraries should get sufficient and consistent funding for development and resources. It further states that this funding might come from a variety of sources, including school revenue (donations, and school fees), the norms and standards allocation, and fundraising initiatives. The NGSLIS (2012) also states that the teacher-librarian must manage the budget as determined by the School Library Policy and the teacher-librarian should provide detailed monthly expenditure reports. It continues to argue that the teacher-librarian must be clear about the importance of an adequate budget for the school library and should convey it to the SMT as the library serves the entire school community. According to the Guidelines (2012), the annual budget for the school library should include the following:

- New resources (for example, books, magazines, DVD’s etc.)
- Promotional material (for example, posters) and events
- Stationery, book processing, toner etc.
- Furniture (for example, desks, chairs, shelving, issue desk, book trolley etc.)
- Equipment (for example, overhead projectors, audio-visual equipment, etc.)
- ICT equipment and software and licensing costs
- Expenditure pertaining to the school library automation programme
- Staff costs may be included in the library budget.

In light of the information above, it was shocking when TL1 (the third participant who responded to the question concerning finances), stated that the library is not catered for in the school budget. These findings show that the teacher-librarian does not get financial support from the SMT to manage the school library. It is evident from the responses (and non-responses) that the funding from formal sources (that is the school revenue and the norms and standards) for the library is non-existent and the library resorts to depending on donations for its collection. According to Mojapelo (2014), funding is a fundamental roadblock that prevents all attempts in South Africa to build, develop and maintain a viable school library. Ash and Wilmot (2015:135) emphasise the point that school libraries require adequate financing for qualified staff and resources (including technology) in order for learners to develop as thinkers and successful users of knowledge in all formats and media. Similarly, the resource-based learning model (MDET 1994) states that schools must set aside money for current and relevant learning resources and technology. It does appear that this is not being done at Dinuphozo Primary School and this is reflected in the lack of sufficient resources and non-use of the library by the vast majority of the learners and teachers.

#### ***4.2.12.2 State of the library***

The SMT participants were asked how they felt about the state of the school library. Surprisingly all SMT members felt that the state of the library is reasonable even though some issues needed to be addressed and these included the lack of seating space (tables and chairs), the lack of books at the foundation phase, and the lack of a photocopying machine, a printer, book trolley, display stands, magazine racks, newspaper stands, and a television. According to the NGSL (2012: 17), the school library's "aesthetic appearance contributes to the feeling of being welcome, as well as to the desire by the school community to spend time in the library." During her observations, the researcher noted that the library's furniture was insufficient. There is only one long table which is mounted to the wall, and which can only accommodate 10 learners. There are no movable tables for group discussions as recommended by the NGSLIS (2012): "Instructional area spaces are furthermore required with seats catering for small and large groups as well as for whole class formal instruction." The researcher also observed that the lights in the library were not working. According to the IFLA School Library Guidelines (2015), the school library should

have adequate and suitable lighting, including both natural and artificial light. The researcher observed that there was no heating system even though it is recommended by the NGSL (2012) to ensure optimal working conditions all year around and the preservation of the collection and equipment.

The researcher also noted that there was no cooling system in the library; thus, when it is hot, learners are unable to concentrate because of the heat. The IFLA School Library Guidelines (2015) point out that the school library's architecture significantly impacts how successfully it serves the school. One needs the situation suggested by Schullz-Jones and Oberg (2015) where the facilities, equipment and collections of a school library evolve in response to changes in the teaching and learning needs of the learners and teachers but this is not the case at the Dinuphozo Primary School library. Finally, SMT4 noted the lack of a security system in the library and the need for one to be installed.

#### ***4.2.12.3 Library staffing***

The NGSLIS (2012) states that it is vital for a school library to be under the supervision of an appropriately qualified teacher-librarian. Ideally, dual-qualified teacher-librarians should have both library science and teaching qualifications, as well as experience in both teaching and library science. Table 3 below shows library staffing recommended by the NGSLIS (2012: 19) and is based on the enrolment figures of the school. Dinuphozo Primary School library with an enrolment of 850 learners should have one full-time teacher-librarian and one full-time library assistant. As has been mentioned, this is not the case at the school.

**Table 3: Staffing of school libraries as per learner enrolment**

Source: NGSLIS 2012

Type of School Enrolment Figures	Teacher-Librarian	Library Assistant	Learners & School Community Members
Multi-grade 30-100 learners	Part-time x1	Optional	Assisting
Small 100-250 learners	Part-time x1	Optional	Assisting
Medium 250-750 learners	Full- time x1	Optional	Assisting
Large 750- 1200 learners	Full-time x1	Full-time x1	Assisting
Very large 1200 + learners	Full-time x1	Full-time x2	Assisting

As has been emphasised, the teacher-librarian of the Dinuphozo Primary School library manages the library in addition to her teaching duties. She completed a 12-month Children and Youth Librarianship Programme for which she received a certificate. She has been running this library for nine years (as of 2021) having started in 2012 when the school was still using a mobile library of 1,000 donated books. With no practical experience in running a library, the teacher-librarian learnt on the job. According to the IFLA School Library Guidelines (2015), the school library's function is to aid teaching and learning, hence its services and activities should be directed by professional staff with the same degree of education as the teacher teaching in the classroom. In support of this notion, Simba (2014) points out that most African schools are transitioning from teacher-centred to learner-centred learning, which necessitates adequate availability of diverse formats of teaching and learning resources and trained teacher-librarians to support the learning process. Similarly, Morris (2010) states that the foundation for a dynamic and productive library and the backbone of a library programme is the school library staff. The teacher-librarian's primary responsibility is to ensure that the library is an essential component of the school's curriculum and to serve as a teacher, instructional partner, information specialist and library programme administrator (Simba 2014, Morris 2010, Woolls 2005). Since the teacher-librarian

had no experience in managing the school library required by the NGSLIS (2012) as it has been mentioned above, it was imperative for her to rely on peers for guidance in order to offer a quality library service. This is in line with what Moorefield-Lang (2015) revealed that in-service librarians rely on peers in the field and online resources for their training since it is very difficult for them to obtain practical training. As a result, the current study found that the teachers and the teacher-librarian also lack knowledge and information on how to promote library resources, facilities and services because they do not have sufficient training and lack adequate knowledge of library services in general. According to the NGSLIS (2012), it is the duty of the school principal who allocates library duties to a teacher, to ensure that this person receives the appropriate training.

When TL1 was asked what her functions as a teacher-librarian were, she mentioned several. These comprised keeping records of the books she had in stock, advertising the library, conducting mini lessons on how to use the school library, cultivating a love of reading, teaching learners how to handle and care for books (for example, no writing in books and no tearing and folding of pages), monitoring the movement of the learners in and out of the library, helping learners choose books of interest to read according to their reading levels and interests, and keeping control of the circulation of the library materials. Further responsibilities are reading to the grade Rs and grade 1s who cannot read independently and assisting learners in identifying relevant resources and content for their studies. These tasks are in line with the IFLA School Library Guidelines (2015) which state that librarians must assist learners and teachers in developing information literacy skills to effectively use resources while also conducting reading programmes and other educational activities.

As one of the responsibilities of the teacher-librarian is to keep records, the researcher requested to see documents from 2017 to 2022, such as school library policy, library attendance register, minutes of meetings (for the School Library Committee meetings), the book loan register and library reports. The intention was to peruse these records to ascertain how they reflected the school library's functions and significance in the school and to evaluate whether they supported the school library's practices. It was evident from the perusal that the content of the documents reflected the library's practices. For example, the Dinuphozo School Library Policy consists of a



mission statement (“to always strive to help learners to become motivated readers, better and independent thinkers and creative writers”), vision ( “the library aims to develop learners that are seekers of information and nurture the interest of reading for enjoyment”), stock management guidelines and library rules. However, the book loan register showed that it has been the same learners since 2017 who are borrowing books and, as mentioned, there were 20 of them. The few who borrow books suggest that the teacher-librarian is not doing enough in promoting the borrowing of books and more needs to be done by her in this regard. The accession register confirmed that resources such as newspapers and magazines were not available in the library. The attendance register also revealed that it is the same group of learners who visit the library. Thus, while the documentation reflected the practices of the library it is evident that work needs to be done to improve the situation in Dinuphozo School library. It must be noted that the minutes of meetings, and library reports were not available (and this is a limitation of document analysis). TL1 was unable to find these documents and explained to the researcher that the secretary of the School Library Committee had moved to another school and it was not known where she had filed these documents. Attempts to contact the secretary in this regard had been unsuccessful.

These findings underscore the need for the library to have a full-time librarian, not someone who also has class duties as a full-time teacher. Having both teaching and library duties makes it challenging to effectively perform the latter duties. It was apparent to the researcher that while TL1 is willing to do all her library duties the problem is that her workload as a full-time teacher prevents her from being fully committed to the library. It could also be argued that her lack of practical experience in managing a school library also affects her performance and the services that the library does and should provide. Simba (2014) does point though that a teacher-librarian is usually a teacher by profession with little or no library training.

#### ***4.2.12.4 Collaboration***

The researcher also wanted to know if there is collaboration between teachers and the teacher-librarian in the teaching and learning process. The response of TL1 was:

“I plead with teachers to motivate the learners to visit the library. At the end of the day, one will never know whether they motivate the learners or not, but learners from

different grades visit the library. The sad truth is that it is the same learners every year. Sometimes it makes me feel and think that visiting the library is seen as a waste of time. Teachers rather cover the curriculum than accompany the learners to the library. I say this because the teachers themselves do not bother finding out what information the library has.”

However, TL1 did point out that:

“Some teachers do send learners to find information on different subjects, to complete given tasks. Sometimes teachers come on their own to check what the library can offer their learners.”

This response shows that there is not much collaboration between the librarian and teachers in Dinuphozo Primary School which is a necessity for the integration of school library activities and classroom activities. This is also confirmed by one of the teachers (T3) whose response was:

“I do not take learners to the library for learning at all, because in a school timetable, there is no time or period allocated for visiting the library.”

The IFLA School Library Guidelines (2015) state that in order to maximise the potential of the school library services, collaboration between teachers and the school librarian is vital. According to Omenyo (2016: 46), a low level of collaboration between the teacher-librarian and teachers can hinder learners’ “grasp of information, which can have negative implications on learners’ curriculum and literacy competence.” The resource-based learning model (MDET 1994) supports this notion by stating that collaboration between teachers and teacher-librarians results in the most effective resource-based learning. It further states that the teacher offers to this collaboration their understanding of the unique learning styles of each and every learner, their competence in specific subject areas, their abilities and interests, and their overall understanding of autonomous learning techniques. According to this model, the teacher-librarian offers specialised knowledge in the form of autonomous learning abilities, cross-curricular and disciplinary competence, resource selection and acquisition, and resource utilisation. It is evident that at the Dinuphozo Primary School, the teacher-librarian and teachers need to work together in order to combine their different expertise to help learners become life-long learners.

Importantly, the teacher-librarian also needs to be supported by the School Library Committee, the SMT, the principal, and ELITS.

#### ***4.2.12.5 Library improvements***

In question 16 the SMT participants were asked: “What improvements (if any) would you like to be made to the library?” In their responses, they stated that improvements in the library were needed. Several needs were raised including the need for workshops on modern techniques for acquiring more resources, better security, a full-time librarian who is stationed in the library, the acquisition of more books for the foundation phase, fundraising for the library so that newspapers and magazines can be bought as well as computers and Internet access. One SMT participant mentioned that there are companies near the school who will gladly donate computers, a photocopying machine and a printer to the library. She added that the teacher-librarian must not wait for the SMT and the DoE but rather take action on her own initiative. The suggestion of this participant is important because, as the LIS Transformation Charter (2014), points out, improvements through the DoE are difficult given that the provincial education department’s school LIS are overburdened and their finances are insufficient to cover the demands of all the schools in KZN.

The researcher also asked teacher participants the same question concerning improvements needed. T1 wished for more resources to be added to the library such as toys, games and a collection of picture books for grade R learners as well as e-books. In this regard, the NGSLIS (2012:28) points out that primary school libraries should include an early childhood development (ECD), that is grade R) collection that is classified and stored according to the skills they develop and the concepts they reinforce in children. Interestingly, in contrast to one of the SMT participants above, T2 felt that the teacher-librarian needs to involve the School Library Committee and stop making decisions on her own. The NGSLIS (2012) is of a similar view noting that the teacher-librarian needs to be supported by the School Library Committee, teachers, library monitors and school community members. T3 suggested that a library period be included in the school timetable so that it will be easy for all learners to access the library. This suggestion is also supported by the NGSLIS (2012: 23) which states that school LIS must be offered to all

learners and this can be achieved by allocating at least one period per week or cycle to each grade for using the library.

Finally, when asked the same question, TL1 spoke about the need to be included when the SMT conducts financial meetings. The NGSLIS (2012) is of the same view when it states that the teacher-librarian must understand the school budgeting process. TL1 further commented about the fact that only a very small percentage of the school staff actually use the library but that she gets no assistance from them in terms of maintaining the library and that she would be happy if she could get volunteers to help her in the library.

#### **4.2.13 Other comments**

The study participants were asked if they had any other comments regarding the school library that they would like to share. Various comments were made some of which reinforce, extend and overlap with points made in the discussion above. The teachers revealed that the library needs to have free WiFi so that the teacher-librarian, using the laptop provided to the library, could download information that can be used by learners in their studies. They pointed to the library needing to be advanced in technology to help learners and the community at large. They also saw a need for more books, manuals and audio-visual materials. One of the participants mentioned that he would like all school stakeholders to be involved in the school library's functioning, especially teachers because they are the ones who are entrusted with the children's education. It was also pointed out that the SGB also needs to be involved since the library needs a budget from the school norms and standards funds to function properly. The School Library Committee also needs to be more involved when there are decisions that need to be taken concerning the library as this will make the Committee feel more part of the functioning of the school library. It was pointed out that a staff meeting is needed where teachers would be trained about the school library practices and this will encourage teachers to volunteer in the library. TL1 wished that language teachers could realise the value of reading and take it upon themselves to encourage the learners to read more. She also commented about the fact that there is no library period in the timetable. TL1 also commented about the teachers sending their learners to the library without first consulting with her to check beforehand if the information needed by the learners is actually available. She also mentioned the need for movable furniture such as chairs and tables to be

purchased for the library. This would accommodate those learners who want to do their homework and those who want to engage in group discussions. She complained about the fact that the SMT do not grant her requests for the library. She pointed to losing much library-related information stored on a laptop. The laptop was not solely for library use, and its overuse by other teachers resulted in it crashing with the subsequent loss of information.

These comments show that there is much room for improvement regarding various aspects of the school library including its management. The comments confirm what has been discussed and that it is important for the School Library Committee, SMT, teachers and teacher-librarian, with active support from the school principal, to work together in order to have a functional school library that will benefit not only the learners but the teachers as well.

### **4.3 Summary**

This chapter presented and discussed the findings of the study. The participants' voices have been presented under several themes that emerged from the data and which responded to the research objectives and questions underpinning the study.

Chapter 5, the concluding chapter, follows.

## **Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This study set out to determine the role of the Dinuphozo Primary School library in the teaching and learning process. The study emphasised the value of school libraries for teaching and learning and the importance of the teacher-librarian in this regard. Underpinned by the resource-based learning model based on the theory of constructivism and using a qualitative research approach, the study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What resources does the Dinuphozo Primary School library have for teaching and learning?
2. How do teachers and learners use the library resources?
3. How does the library make a difference in the academic performance of learners?
4. What measures should be taken to address the challenges faced by the school library?

The main findings and the conclusions stemming from those findings are presented in this chapter, and recommendations are given. The chapter ends with suggestions for further research. To begin with, a brief summary of the study is provided.

### **5.2 Summary of the study**

**Chapter 1** introduced the study. It consisted of the background and outline of the research problem, the problem statement, the purpose of the study, the objectives and research questions, the definition of terms and concepts, its delimitations, and the outline of the dissertation.

**Chapter 2** presented the literature review in line with the objectives of the study. The theoretical framework, namely, the resource-based learning model based on the theory of constructivism was also presented.

**Chapter 3** discussed the research methodology used in the study. It outlined and explored the research paradigm and research design. A qualitative research approach in the form of a case study was adopted. The approach allowed the researcher to understand the complex issue and gain insight into the phenomenon under investigation. The sampling method was discussed as were the data collection techniques, data analysis, trustworthiness and credibility of the data, and finally, the ethical considerations concerning the study.

**Chapter 4** presented and discussed the findings of the study. These findings were derived from the telephonic interview, observation, and the analysis of documents.

**Chapter 5**, the current chapter, concludes the study.

### **5.3 Main findings and conclusions**

The study's main findings and conclusions are presented in terms of each of the research questions as outlined above and presented in Chapter 1.

#### **5.3.1 What resources does Dinuphozo Primary School library have for teaching and learning?**

The study found that resources in the library were acquired from the DoE (ELITS) in 2016 and also in 2018. The ELITS KZN School Library Policy (2003) clearly states that the ELITS Directorate's goal is to provide schools with a starter collection. A description of the library resources is provided in Chapter 4 (4.1.3.4 ) and not repeated here. Suffice it to say, the library, despite being a centralised school library, did not meet some of the minimum requirements stipulated by the ELITS School Library Policy in terms of learner enrolment in the school. These included having a full-time qualified teacher-librarian, a full-time library assistant, timetabled learner access to the library, volunteers, teaching of information skills done by both educators and the teacher-librarian, sufficient seating (tables and chairs), two computers with CD Rom drives and access to the Internet, and a printer. While the collection appeared to be a "balanced" one in terms of fiction and non-fiction materials there were no newspapers, magazines or ECD (grade R) resources in the form of toys, games and puzzles. As noted, there was no collection development as such nor the selection of materials by either the teacher-librarian or the educators and the library was almost entirely dependent on ELITS for its resources (some resources were acquired via donations). Crucially, there was no funding made available by the school for purchasing library resources.

#### **5.3.2 How do teachers and learners use the library resources?**

The main finding of this research question is that there is limited use of the Dinuphozo Primary School library by both the teachers and the learners. This is due to several reasons discovered by the researcher. Firstly, one participant mentioned that he finds it difficult to use the library

because of the shortage of relevant resources. This response shows that teachers are not motivated to visit and use the library. This study also found that teachers do not use the library and its resources when planning their lessons. They use books from their classrooms because, like the participant above, they believe that the library has limited resources. Secondly, there is no library period in the school timetable and thus no time formally scheduled for library visitations during the school day. This made it difficult to send learners to the library. Learners can only use the library in the morning before classes commence at 08h00, during break time from 10h30-11h00, and in the afternoon from 13h30 -14h00. This, perhaps understandably, does not motivate teachers and learners to use the school library. This was confirmed by the observation of the researcher that few teachers and learners visited the library. It must be noted, however, that the study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-2021, and the restrictions put in place and the fear of contracting the virus may account, to some extent, for the limited use of the library that was observed. Few teachers came to look for books they could use in their classrooms while some came to borrow books they could read for pleasure after they were done with marking and writing reports. Findings, other than those emerging from observation, do indicate that use of the library by both teachers and learners is generally limited and not due to the pandemic. Thirdly, the researcher found that the school library is not promoted by the teacher-librarian. In this regard, one of the study participants even suggested that a staff meeting needs to be called where the teacher-librarian will “sell” the school library to the teachers and SMT. The lack of school library promotion contributes to the limited use of the library by teachers as well as learners as they are not aware of the resources available for them to use in the library. The fourth reason for the limited use of the library in the form of borrowing books is that the learners are required to pay a fee of R2 for a library card to enable them to borrow books. Given the disadvantaged backgrounds of the learners, this may well have been a deterrent to them doing so. Lastly, as pointed to under the first research question above, the researcher noticed that the furniture, particularly tables and chairs, in the library was insufficient to accommodate large groups of learners or provide adequate study space, and this may also be a deterrent to learners using the library in that the environment is not welcoming or conducive to library use. A perusal of the book loan register confirmed the limited use of the library by the teachers and learners. It can thus be concluded that the school library use by both teachers and users is limited for various reasons outlined above. However, it can be argued that despite the



library's inadequacies in terms of resources, it could be better promoted and utilised. In doing so, it will serve in resource-based learning where a teacher is a facilitator and the learners become actively involved in their learning through the manipulation of materials and social interaction provided by the library.

### **5.3.3 How does the library make a difference in the academic performance of learners?**

The finding of the study is that few learners are impacted by the Dinuphozo School library in terms of their academic performance. It is evident that only a small group of learners are regular users of the library and the study participants saw an improvement in the academic performance of those learners. This is confirmed by the researcher's own experience as a teacher in the school. It must be noted that this linking of frequent use of the library and its resources by learners with an improvement in their academic performance was not based on any empirical findings, but rather on the perceptions of the study participants. In order for the school library to have an impact on the learners' academic performance there are important pillars that need to be in place and these are put forward below.

The first is the support from the principal and the SMT. They need to ensure that every year the reading promotion and information literacy programmes are in place. They also need to ensure that there is a library period in the school timetable to guarantee that all grades are given an equal opportunity to access the school library. The researcher found that this is not the case in Dinuphozo Primary School. The SMT do not support the school library even though its members are automatically part of the School Library Committee. The SMT participants' responses revealed that they were not well informed about the school library. However, they were aware that the small group of learners who were frequent users of the school library were able to work independently, develop an interest in reading, and their reading and language skills (including vocabulary) were improved. As pointed out, the researcher can confirm these findings, in that the fast learners in her class read their library books while waiting for the other learners to complete their tasks and also asked questions not related to what was being taught in the classroom. In terms of this first pillar, it can be concluded that support from the principal of the school and its SMT for the school library and its potential role in the school, was inadequate.

Secondly, in order to successfully integrate library activities with the school curriculum (and thus improve academic performance), there must be collaboration between the teacher-librarian and the teaching staff; this is not the case at Dinuphozo Primary School. Learners need to be taught information skills by both their teachers and the teacher-librarian. They need to learn how to analyse, synthesise, create, evaluate and present information (NGSLIS: 2012). The study found that there was no collaboration between teachers and the teacher-librarian. The latter mentioned that teachers do not motivate learners to visit the library and those few who do send learners to find information do not bother to come and check if the information is available. Teachers were also not involved in the selection of library material but it is acknowledged that simply being allocated resources (via ELITS) did not make their involvement feasible. Several reasons for the lack of collaboration were identified, the most important of which was the lack of library promotion and effort on the part of the teacher-librarian to bring teachers into the library and make use of its resources (albeit limited) in their teaching and the learners' learning. It is evident that there are teachers who are not readers themselves and who do not understand the importance of resource-based learning; they are thus not inclined to use the library or involve the teacher-librarian in their teaching activities. There is also the issue, as raised by one of the SMT participants, that the teacher-librarian is not welcoming. However, the above criticisms need to be seen in the light of the teacher-librarian also being a full-time teacher which severely impacts the amount of time and attention that she can provide to the library (this is elaborated on below).

Thirdly, the library has to provide a quality, current, relevant, appropriate and interesting range of fiction, non-fiction and reference material (NGSLIS 2012). It was found that the Dinuphozo School Library has upgraded its collection since 2018 even though Omenyo (2016) and the IFLA School Library Guidelines (2015) agree with NGSLIS (2012) when they state that resources should be appropriate, current, and timely. The findings also showed that while some of the resources that are expected to be in a centralised library are available, there were resources which were not available. As noted under research question 1 above, in terms of the former, the library was found to have books that covered all subjects, and while it did have some audio-visual resources these were not displayed, thus limiting access to them as well as their use. The resources which were not available included newspapers and magazines, games and puzzles,

and computers. It can be concluded that the limited resources in the library coupled with their limited use would negatively impact the library's role in promoting improved academic performance for learners generally.

The last pillar is a qualified teacher-librarian with experience in both teaching and library science. It has been found that the teacher-librarian in Dinuphozo has relevant qualifications but lacks experience in library management and practice. This lack of experience on the part of the teacher-librarian disadvantages the school library because she lacks strategies to use to promote the school library to teachers and learners and help ensure its integration into the teaching and learning taking place in the school. A significant issue alluded to above, however, is that the teacher-librarian "post" was not a full-time one and is in addition to her duties as a full-time teacher. It was found that her workload was such that she was unable to fully commit to the library, and as a consequence, she stopped organising and designing library activities. It is evident that the teacher-librarian "post" needs to be a full-time one and ideally, a library assistant is also needed to help reduce her workload. This will help ensure that the teacher-librarian is better able to make certain that the library plays its important role in teaching and learning and the academic improvement of the learners.

It can be concluded that much still needs to be done in terms of ensuring the four pillars identified above are in place so that the Dinuphozo School library can have a positive impact on the academic performance of the learners in the school.

#### **5.3.4 What measures should be taken to address the challenges faced by the school library?**

The final research question concerned the measures that needed to be taken to address the challenges faced by the school library. Numerous challenges were identified in the study and some of these have been highlighted above as have some of the responses to these challenges as outlined under the four pillars. The significant challenges are listed below and the measures to address these challenges are presented under "Recommendations" of the study which follows. It can be concluded that the following library-related challenges exist in the Dinuphozo Primary School:

- The school library does not have any financing for library development and resources. This was confirmed by one of the participants who mentioned that the library is not catered for in the school budget. Mojapelo (2014) mentioned that funding is a fundamental roadblock that prevents all attempts in South Africa to build, develop and maintain a viable school library. It is evident that this applies to the Dinphuzo Primary School library.

- The library is not fully utilised by the teachers and the learners. In fact, the use of the library is poor. One of the main problems in this regard is that the teacher-librarian lacks knowledge and information on how to promote library resources, facilities and services. There is also the problem of her having sufficient time to do so.

- The resources of the school library are inadequate. While the collection does represent the subjects taught in the school it was found that it was last upgraded (in the form of a book allocation) in 2018 and it is arguable that the collection is up-to-date. Resources in the form of equipment (computers and a printer, for example) and furniture (tables and chairs) are lacking as are items such as a book trolley and display shelves.

- The teacher-librarian is overloaded with work. According to NGSLIS (2012), a centralised library in a school the size of Dinuphozo Primary should have one full-time teacher-librarian, one full-time librarian assistant and volunteers. As has been repeatedly stressed, the teacher-librarian in addition to her role as the school librarian is also a full-time teacher with all the responsibilities associated with that post and, as a result, is unable to devote the necessary time and attention to the library.

- Collaboration between teachers and the teacher-librarian does not exist at the Dinuphozo Primary School. Teachers are not involved in selecting or identifying relevant resources for the subjects they teach. Crucially, there is no collaboration in terms of integrating library activities with the school curriculum – a fundamental element in resource-based teaching.

- The final issue highlighted here concerns the training of the teacher-librarian. While she has both a teaching qualification and a library science qualification (a Certificate in Children and Youth Librarianship) she lacked experience in managing a school library.

As noted, these and other challenges need to be addressed and the measures to do so are listed under the heading “Recommendations” which follows below.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

According to the study's main findings and conclusions above, the following recommendations are made:

### **5.4.1 Budget**

Without a budget, the library cannot operate effectively. It is highly recommended that the school create a fundraising committee devoted specifically to raising funds for the school library. This committee would be responsible for asking for donations from companies and institutions around the area to support the school library. Letters could be written to these organisations requesting money to cover the costs of new library books, a computer/s, printer, photocopying machine and the like or, alternatively, requesting donations to this effect.

According to the IFLA (2015), a school librarian collaborates with the SMT to create a library budget. Omenyo (2016) advises that a portion of the norms and standards funds be set aside for the library budget in order to preserve the collection and keep the library, its furnishings, facilities, and resources in good working order. With that in mind, a crucial recommendation is that the principal, SMT, and SGB include the school library in the school's budget and that money from the norms and standards be allocated to the budget. It is further recommended that the teacher-librarian, in conjunction with the School Library Committee, draws up a budget at the beginning of each financial year and presents it to the SMT. In doing so the teacher-librarian needs to adequately motivate why it is important that the library is budgeted for and this will entail underscoring the importance of the library in the teaching and learning process. Simba (2014) believed that libraries become less relevant and attractive to learners and teachers because libraries are underfunded and, therefore, frequently underused. Proactive seeking of funding/donations and the inclusion of the library in the budget of the school will help ensure that the library remains relevant and used.

### **5.4.2 Library resources**

It is recommended that the teacher-librarian and the School Library Committee draft an acquisitions policy for the school library. The policy will highlight the selection criteria for the acquisition of resources and what resources are needed. In terms of the latter, needed resources

include, for example, the purchase of a book trolley, magazines and newspapers, display shelves, and ECD resources such as educational games, puzzles and picture books. In terms of resources, it is urgent, given the importance of access to digital information, that computers as well as a printer are obtained for the library. The existing situation of one laptop simply cannot cater for the needs of both learners and the teacher-librarian. Internet access will also be an important consideration. As emphasised by the IFLA (2015), digital information resources that reflect the curriculum as well as the users' interests and culture must be made available by the school library. The Manitoba Resources-based Learning Model (1994) also states that the benefits of resource-based learning for learners include a complete range of technology for information access and the facilitation of media and technology literacy.

#### **5.4.3 Teacher-librarian and subject-teacher collaboration**

It is recommended that the teacher-librarian, Library Committee and subject teachers work together in the acquisition of library resources. The Committee, together with subject teachers, can propose relevant resources for the school. Subject teachers, for example, can suggest books or resources that are relevant to their subjects. It is recommended that the teacher-librarian and subject teachers collaborate to achieve the following:

- Develop lesson plans and learning modules
- Develop, direct and evaluate learners' learning across the curriculum
- Develop, evaluate and assess learners' information skills and information knowledge
- Prepare and execute reading programmes
- Integrate information technology and e-learning into the curriculum
- Make the importance of the school LIS clear to parents (NGSLIS 2012).

It is acknowledged that the above achievements are far removed from what is currently happening at the Dinuphozo Primary School and what the teacher-librarian and library are currently providing. However, they do provide a set of goals which all the roleplayers can aspire to. The need for collaboration is further pointed to below.

#### **5.4.4 Use of the school library**

One of the main concerns is that the Dinuphozo Primary School library is under-utilised by both the teachers and the learners. Several recommendations to improve library use and integrate it into the teaching and learning taking place at the school emerge from this concern and these recommendations are described below.

It is strongly recommended that the teacher-librarian as well as the School Library Committee promote the school library to the principal, the teachers and the learners during which they emphasise the important role of the library in the teaching and learning process. For the library to effectively perform this role, a library period is needed in the school timetable and the school curriculum. It is thus recommended that the SMT, the teachers and the teacher-librarian plan for the creation of a library period for each class every week. Creating a library period will encourage teachers and learners to use the library fully and facilitate such use. The Resources-based Learning Model (1994) states that learning will be considerably enhanced if the methods used in different classrooms are coordinated through the cooperation of teachers and the school librarian to provide a continuous learning route. The school librarian can also collaborate with teachers to integrate library resources into lesson plans and this will encourage teachers to bring learners to the library for research and reading activities thus increasing library use. Integrating library resources into lesson plans will also encourage teachers to borrow resources from the library. It is also recommended that the teacher-librarian hosts events and activities such as book clubs, author visits and reading challenges to engage learners and create a sense of community around the library. This can also be done by organising different activities such as a library week where the teacher-librarian and the teachers can tell their learners about the importance and benefits of using a library. Learners can also be encouraged to read a story from a book; they can narrate the story to their peers or perform a play about that story. The teacher-librarian can also organise reading and spelling competitions. According to Omenyo (2016) to draw teachers and learners to the library (and thus increase its use), new books should be displayed at the entrance, and this will raise awareness of the different types of library materials. The teacher-librarian can also read a chapter from an interesting book for learners and encourage learners to continue reading and finish the story. It is important for the teacher-librarian to offer training sessions for learners on how to use library resources effectively. The IFLA (2015) points out

that target groups must be actively made aware of the programmes, services, and resources offered by the school library for it to fulfil its function as a learning partner.

The limited seating capacity of the library has been pointed to and it is important to address this issue in the form of more tables and chairs. Incorporating more seating space may require that the existing shelving be rearranged. It is thus recommended that any empty shelves be removed in order to create a comfortable space with comfortable seating for the library users. It is also recommended that the issue of good lighting for the library be addressed as this, together with adequate and comfortable seating, is important in encouraging library use.

It is recommended that learners be encouraged to borrow books at the end of the week and be permitted to do so during the school holidays in order to read and improve their reading abilities which will undoubtedly improve their academic achievement. Barriers to borrowing books such as the R2.00 required for a library card to borrow a book should be removed. The amount asked for is too little to make much difference to the financial position of the library but also, arguably, too much for learners from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. To further encourage library use the teacher-librarian needs to recognise and reward learners who make use of the library with certificates and small prizes.

Increased library use and the increased use of library resources in the teaching and learning of the school need to take place within the context of an efficiently and effectively managed library insofar as the users of the library are concerned. It is thus recommended that learners should be frequently reminded of the library rules and regulations so that they know what to do and what not to do. They should know how to behave when they are in the library, and how to handle library books. To stop learners from not returning borrowed books, stealing and carelessly handling library books, precautions must be taken. This will help guarantee that these materials last for a long time.

Finally, and in light of the need for a well-managed school library and the need to promote its use, it is recommended that the teacher-librarian is made aware of the importance of keeping the



library organised and easy to use by regularly shelving and re-shelving resources and ensuring that everything is labelled and easy to find.

#### **5.4.5 Staffing**

As has been alluded to throughout the study, staffing the library is a significant challenge. It is recommended that a permanent full-time teacher-librarian and a full-time librarian assistant post be created. The current teacher-librarian at the Dinuphozo Primary School is overworked because of having both library and teaching duties and it is extremely difficult if not impossible for her to successfully juggle both of these duties. Importantly, as a teacher, she understands the school curriculum and the subjects offered in the school and, as a librarian, she is aware of the role that the library can play in the teaching and learning taking place in the school. As Omenyo (2016) points out, a school librarian should understand the school curriculum to be able to support the teaching and learning of the school and be able to collaborate with subject teachers. This should not be a problem for the teacher-librarian at the school. The problem, as has been emphasised, is that she is overwhelmed by the responsibilities of being both a teacher-librarian and a teacher. However, the significant stumbling block in this regard is that the DoE does not have a budget to hire school librarians, and most school librarians are hired by the SGBs (LIS Transformation Charter 2014). This is highly unlikely if not impossible in a disadvantaged school such as Dinuphozo Primary. In light of this and on the understanding that the status quo will continue (that is, the teacher-librarian having both library and teaching duties) it is strongly recommended that creative “solutions” are considered. These could, for example, incorporate the use of grades 6 and 7 learners (the seniors in the school) as library assistants (or monitors), to undertake basic duties in the library such as the issuing and shelving of books. It will be the responsibility of the teacher-librarian to train and support them in carrying out basic duties and to make their positions as library assistants or monitors sufficiently attractive so that learners will want to be involved in the management of the library and its resources. In other words, there will be a status attached to these roles. Furthermore, parents can also be approached to volunteer in the school library on a regular basis. They will also receive support and training from the teacher-librarian.

To achieve the above, the teacher-librarian will need to adopt a proactive approach and promoting the importance of the library will also be an important factor.

### **5.5 Suggestions for further research**

Several areas for further research are suggested:

It is recommended that a similar study be conducted from the learners' perspectives. It is acknowledged that getting consent from the parents and guardians to interview their children will be time-consuming but doing such a study will be worthwhile.

A similar study can be conducted in schools similar to Dinuphozo Primary School (that is, schools with a centralised library) to see what challenges they are experiencing vis a vis the library in the teaching and learning process of the school and how these challenges are being addressed, if at all.

Model C schools have functional libraries with full-time teacher-librarians and it could be useful to target such schools to learn best practices and how these could be applied to schools such as Dinuphozo Primary.

The important issue of the library contributing to the academic success of learners was touched on in the current study. This could be further investigated using empirical measures. The findings in this regard will either play or not play a crucial role in underpinning the importance of the school library in rural disadvantaged areas and ensuring that it is adequately funded and staffed.

Finally, funding and staffing of the library emerged as major concerns. Further studies could focus on these aspects only, investigating creative ways in which the issues can be responded to and resolved.

### **5.6 Summary**

This chapter provided a summary of the findings of the study which investigated the role of the Dinuphozo Primary School library in the teaching and learning taking place in the school. The main findings, conclusions and recommendations were presented. Finally, some suggestions for further research were made.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Informed Consent Document

### Informed Consent Document

Dear Participant,

My name is Phumelele Mnyandu (9308449). I am a Masters candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College / Pietermaritzburg Campus. The title of my research is: The role of the Dinuphozo Primary School library in teaching and learning, ILembe District, KwaZulu-Natal. The aim of the study is to understand the role of the school library in helping teachers to teach effectively. I am interested in interviewing you so as to share your experiences and observations on the subject matter.

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 interview will be presented anonymously. Neither your name nor identity will be disclosed in any form in the study.
- The interview will take about one month.
- The record as well as other items associated with the interview 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 of 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: phume.mnyandu1@gmail.com

My supervisor is Zawedde Nsibirwa who is located at the School of Social Sciences, Pietermaritzburg Campus / Howard College Campus, Durban of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Contact details: email Nsibirwaz@ukzn.ac.za

Phone number: 033 260 5685

My co-supervisor is ..... who is located at the School of Social Sciences, Howard College Campus/ Howard College Campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Contact details: email ..... Phone number: .....

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

Thank you for your contribution to this research  
declaration

I..... 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

Phumelele Mnyandu

3 September 2022

.....

## **Appendix 2: Interview Schedules**

### **Interview Schedule For School Management Team**

**Interviewer : Phumelele Mnyandu**

**Date of interview:01 June 2021**

Demographic information

1. Gender: Male {...} Female {.....}
2. How old are you?
3. What is your highest level of education?
4. Do you think it is important to have a library in this school? Please elaborate.
5. How did the school library start?
6. How are books acquired for the library?
7. What is the budget for the school library?
8. Who does the selection of the library collection?
9. How often do you visit the library?
10. If you use the library, what resources or sections do you use the most?
11. What kinds of materials are in stock in the library?
12. What materials does the library have to facilitate academic work in the school?
13. How do learners improve their learning through the use of the school library?
14. How does the school library play a role in teaching and learning of this school?
15. How do you feel about the state of the library?
16. What improvements (if any) would you like to be made to the library?
17. Any other comments?

## **Interview Schedule For Teachers**

**Interviewer : Phumelele Mnyandu**

**Date of interview:07 June 2021**

Demographic information

Gender: Male {.....} Female {.....}

1. How old you are?
2. What is your highest level of education?
3. What subjects do you teach?
4. What is the role of the school library?
5. How often do you visit the library?
6. What kinds of materials are in stock in the library?
7. How or when do you refer students to use materials in the library for further reading in your subject area? If so, please elaborate.
8. What materials does the library have to facilitate work?
9. Are you involved in the selection of books in the library? Please elaborate.
10. How often are you allowed to borrow books from the library?
11. How often do you use the school library when preparing your lessons?
12. What improvements if any, do you see in learners as they use the school library resources?
13. How is the school library playing a role in teaching and learning of this school?
14. Any other comments?

## **Interview Schedule For The School-Librarian**

**Interviewer : Phumelele Mnyandu**

**Date of interview:14 June 2021**

Gender: Male [   ]     Female [   ]

Qualification:

1. How many years have you been in charge of the school library?
2. What previous experience do you have in running a school library?
3. How many years of previous experience do you have?
4. What are your functions as a school librarian?
5. How do you help learners when they visit the library?
6. How many learners can the library accommodate at a time?
7. What types of books are stocked in the library?
8. Apart from books, what other learning materials can be found in the library?
9. How are library resources acquired?
10. What acquisition policy do you have?
11. If the library has an acquisitions policy, how are the library materials acquired according to the acquisition policy?
12. Do you have an accession register? Please elaborate.
13. How often do you purchase books for the library?
14. What are the other means by which the library is stocked?
15. How many computers are in the library? Are they connected to the internet?
16. What classification scheme do you use to arrange the library materials?
17. What are the opening and closing hours of the library?
18. How often do the learners use the library?
19. What do learners mostly do when they visit the library?
20. What educational needs of the learners is the library meeting?
21. How do you work with class teachers to motivate learners to use the school library?
22. What programmes do you plan for learners?

23. Do teachers use the library? If not why not?
24. For what purpose do teachers use the library?
25. How is the school library playing a role in teaching and learning of this school?
26. What challenges do you face if any as a librarian in the school?
27. Any comments?



### Appendix 3: Observation Guide

<b>OBSERVATION GUIDE</b>		
<b>Observer: Phumelele Mnyandu</b>		
<b>Date of the observation:</b>		
Items	Satisfied	Not Satisfied
Location of the library.		
Library set up, furniture, shelves.		
Condition and adequacy of furniture		
Arrangement of books and types of books		
Are the books appropriate for learner's age?		
Do the books cover all subjects taught in the school?		
Reference resources.		
Computers		
Other resources kept besides books such as audio and visual materials.		

## Appendix 4: Gatekeeper's Permission



### **DINUPHOZO PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Postal Address: PO Box 4921  
STANGER  
4450

Physical Address: Lot 699 Sifuba Road  
Nkobongo Area  
Shakaskraal 4430

Ilembe District/Umhlati Ward

DINUPHOZO PRIMARY SCHOOL  
UMHLALI WARD, BOX 4921,  
STANGER, 4450  
DATE: DECEMBER 2019

DR Zawedde Nsibirwa  
Supervisor and Lecturer  
Information Studies Programme  
University of KwaZulu Natal  
Private Bag x01  
Scottville  
3209

DEAR SIR/MADAM

**RE: Ms Phumelele Mnyandu-MIS student at the University of KwaZulu Natal**

This serves as the permission for Ms Phumelele Mnyandu who has to carry out her research on "The status and role of Dinuphozo Primary School library in teaching and learning Ilembe District, KwaZulu Natal."

We as a school promise to give her all the support we can.

Thanking you for your anticipation.

YOURS IN EDUCATION

MNGADI S.R. (DEPUTY PRINCIPAL)  
0848072916  
sbongamngadi002@gmail.com

## Appendix 5: Ethical Clearance



11 August 2021

Mrs Phumelele Mnyandu (9308449)  
School Of Social Sciences  
Pietermaritzburg campus

Dear Mrs Mnyandu,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00002867/2021

Project title: The role of the school libraries in teaching and learning in the UMhlali Circuit, ILembe District, KwaZulu-Natal: a case study of Dinuphozo Primary School library.

Degree: Masters

### Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 06 May 2021 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

This approval is valid until 11 August 2022.

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

All research conducted during the COVID-19 period must adhere to the national and UKZN guidelines.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,



Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

### Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa

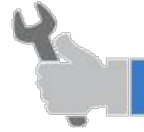
Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 8350/4557/3587 Email: [hssrec@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:hssrec@ukzn.ac.za) Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics>

Founding Campuses:  Edgewood  Howard College  Medical School  Pietermaritzburg  Westville

**INSPIRING GREATNESS**

## Appendix 6: Proof of Editing Letter

### Athol Leach (Proofreading and Editing)



31 Park Rd  
Fisherhaven  
Hermanus 7200  
Email: atholleach@gmail.com Cell: 0846667799

20 September 2023

To Whom It May Concern

This letter serves to confirm that I have edited the following Master of Information Studies (MIS) dissertation by Phumelele Mnyandu:


**“The role of school libraries in teaching and learning in the UMhlali Circuit, ILembe District, KwaZulu-Natal: a case study of Dinuphozo Primary School library”**

The dissertation was edited in terms of grammar, spelling, punctuation and overall style. In doing so use was made of MS Word’s “Track changes” facility thus providing the student with the opportunity to reject or accept the changes made on a chapter-by-chapter basis.

Please note that while I have, as far as possible, checked the in-text references and those appearing in the list of references for consistency in terms of format and bibliographic detail, I have not checked the veracity of the sources themselves.

Both the tracked and final documents are on file.

Sincerely



Athol Leach  
(MIS, Natal)