AN EVALUATIVE STUDY OF A RESOURCE CENTRE WITHIN A COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTRE WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO TEMBALETU COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTRE

By

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Abstract

The objective of the study was an evaluation of the Tembaletu Resource Centre within the Tembaletu Community Education Centre.

The Resource Centre was evaluated in terms of its objectives. Each objective formed the basis for the subsequent research questions. The evaluation was from the perspectives of the three major user groups namely the teachers, the registered students and outside users. A survey was conducted whereby information was obtained from each group by means of a semi-structured questionnaire.

Major findings in terms of the objectives were: many teachers, students and the general users use the Resource Centre to read books and study, teachers read literacy books, many users have never bought literacy books for sale as many were unaware of this service, resource-based work has been given to students by teachers and this was seen to be a worthwhile exercise, more than half of the users had not borrowed educational videos, users had found information that helped them solve their personal problems although many users had never used the computer to access information. Lack of awareness of many of the services by users was indicated and was regarded as the stumbling block to the full use of the Resource Centre.

Recommendations based on the findings of the evaluation were made and this was followed by suggestions for further research.

Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is entirely my own original work, unless it is specified to the contrary in the text.

This thesis has not been submitted for a degree at any other university.

SIPHO LOMBO

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List of acronyms

ABE . . . . Adult Basic Education.

ABET . . . . Adult Basic Education and Training

AFRA. . . . . Association for Rural Advancement.

AIDS . . . . Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome.

AMPLE . . . . A Model For Public Library Effectiveness.

CELEP . . . . .Citizen's Elementary Legal Education Project.

FAMSA . . . . Family Association of South Africa.

HIV . . . . Human Immuno Virus

NQF . . . . National Qualification Framework

NICRO. . National Institute for Crime Prevention and Rehabilitation of offenders.

NGO . . . . Non Governmental Organisation.

PROTECH . . . . Promotion of Technological Careers.

READ . . . . Read Educate and Develop.

RUDIS . . . . Rural Development Information Systems.

SABINET . . . . .South African Bibliographic Information Network.

TREE . . . . Training Resources in Early Education.

NESCO. . . . . . . United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation

USAID . . . . United States of Agency for International Development.

Chapter 1

Introduction

In this introductory chapter the background to the study is given. This is followed by, amongst other things, the problem statement and the aims and the objectives of the study

1.1 Background to the study

This study came about as a result of the researcher's interest in the relevance of resource centres within community learning centres. A number of terms such as "democratic governance", "skills development", "community ownership"(Parker 1994:246; Community Learning Centre Interest Group 1995:2) and other associated terms have been used about both the concepts of "resource centre" and "community learning centre", indicating a certain similarity between them (Karelse 1991:2).

Different types of resource centres serve different clientele. In the opinion of the researcher, in developing countries rural resource centres may be concerned with developmental needs of their communities, while in developed countries they may be purely for information purposes.

The idea of a resource centre within an organisation is to support the objectives of that organisation. In this research, the organisation supported by the resource centre is a community learning centre which is " a multipurpose centre where skill development takes place" (Mbeki 1995). These are skills in locating, evaluating and using information, skills in creative thinking, entrepreneurship, social and cultural awareness; and specialist and general skills.

This researcher is of the opinion that any skill acquired needs to be reinforced so that it will not dissipate with time and the resource centre should contain the material for such reinforcement. The community learning centre concept is a new concept which has not yet been implemented widely in South Africa. It is envisaged that community learning centres will be linked to, and will serve as, satellite centres of community colleges. In South Africa community colleges are still being researched (National Investigation into Community Education 1995:17).

Community learning centres are regarded by the present government as a means of achieving the goals of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (National Investigation into Community Education 1995:26). These are:

(a)   building the economy.

(b)   redressing the past imbalances.

(c)   developing human resources.

(d)   democratising the state and society (African National Congress 1994:17).

Community learning centres are widely viewed as a means to help the people who have been left on the side by mainstream education (National investigation Into Community Education 1995:27). They are seen as a complementary and parallel education system required to overcome the limitations inherent in the uniform and standardised nature of formal education (Lombo 1996:8). In the 1990's the term "community learning centre" was used in various contexts to refer to sites of adult learning and education delivery, mainly in the context of provision of adult education services, distance education, library service and/or resource centre provision, and schooling support services (Community Learning Centre Interest Group 1995:3).

It is a vision of the Education Department "that [for example] it will be a network of facilities, which offers regular support and services to students of all varieties in pursuing their learning goals" (South Africa, Department of Education 1995:31).

The few community learning centres in existence have generally not been supported either by a library or a resource centre and are in fact just adult education classes without the provision of skills programmes, for instance, Umlazi Community Learning Centre (Lombo 1996:26). Two such centres, Vosloorus in Gauteng and Tembaletu in Pietermaritzburg in KwaZulu-Natal are supported by resource centres. The focus of the present study is on the latter.

In many areas of South Africa, community education programmes have been started and central facilities established to house and develop programmes which give people the information they need to understand and adapt to changing circumstances, and the education that they need to acquire skills and prosper (Lategan 1995:2). One of these is the Valley Trust Community Education Project outside Durban, as well as the Mboza Project in Northern KwaZulu-Natal. Lategan (1995) uses the term "Community Education Centres".

Community learning centres are the proactive focus of programmes aimed at assisting the whole community to be conscious of community needs and to be active in providing for or facilitating action towards meeting expressed community needs. They aim to link training, education and developmental programmes to the provision of resources relevant to the learning being done (READ 1996:1). One of the pressing community needs in the whole of South Africa is the issue of "adult illiteracy". UNESCO (Harley et al 1996:17) defines adults as, "people who are not in the regular school and university system, who are 15 years or older and who can participate in adult education".

In terms of the Joint Education Trust (Harley et al 1996:28,29) report there are in South Africa "seven and a half million adults (aged 15 and over) who are illiterate or severely undereducated. Of this nearly three million are totally unschooled and more than four and a half million have so little primary education (itself of poor quality) that they are barely literate".

This does not mean that these people do not have skills; it means that they are not "able to access high quality, rigorous programmes that prepare them for success in life through redress" (Lombo 1996:5). The labour market worldwide is undergoing transformation. Many traditional jobs are disappearing and modern technology has taken over tasks previously performed by humans.

The implications of this are that manual jobs are getting limited and prospective job seekers must possess more than a minimum education qualification. They must possess market- related skills such as computer literacy and technical skills.

With a lack of skills it becomes difficult for many people to access formal employment. In the case of Pietermaritzburg in KwaZulu-Natal, only 40% of the potentially employable population had formal sector jobs in 1991 (Stobie 1991:1).

As a result of the general recession that has plagued this country in recent years it could be argued that there are more unemployed people now than ever before.

Both the community learning and resource centres have a vital role to play in combatting illiteracy and developing skills particularly among Black people. Through the resource centre, the community learning centre can provide a development information service to the people. According to Stilwell (1991:255), "Black people are generally information poor" and are therefore not knowledgeable as to where they might get help generally in order to meet their needs. Hence resource centres, within a community learning centre such as Tembaletu, will sustain the skills gained as well as assist in making the people information rich.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The importance of resource centres as alternative community information agencies is not in question, but in the face of shrinking financial support, it is important that they continually evaluate their activities to help them "examine their effectiveness and efficiency and position themselves to meet the challenges they face" (Wyley 1996:11).

All organisations need to do ongoing systematic evaluation, but it is possibly more important for non-governmental organisations (NGOs), to do so. Evaluation is more important for NGOs because, as self supporting organisations, they depend on aid mainly from overseas donors. At the dawn of a new era for a democratic South Africa, donors have directed their financial contributions to the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). Accessing this funding has become more and more difficult for all NGOs (Marks and Associates 1996:24).

For their survival NGOs need to adopt business management techniques and to justify their spending in the form of cost benefit analyses. They need to look at performance, standards, success, budgets and resources, users and uses, and "many and varying combinations of these factors" (Wyley 1996:13). The recent literature (AHRTAG 1996:6) on resource centres states that they should ask themselves the following important questions:

(a)   Why was the resource centre set up?

(b)   What is the relationship of the resource centre to the organization as a whole?

(c)   Who is the resource centre for; who is expected to use it?

(d)   How will the resource centre be used?

(e)   What role will the resource centre play?

(f)   Is the resource centre still meeting the needs of its organisation, if not why not? (AHRTAG 1996:6).

It is therefore important to continually evaluate whether the resource centre still supports the skills and sustains the developmental information offered by the organisation within which the resource centre finds itself.

1.3   Aim of the study

The aim of the study was to evaluate the Resource Centre within Tembaletu community Education Centre as a community learning centre.

The Resource Centre was established to support and facilitate the activities of the centre. Prior to setting up the Resource Centre and in order to assist the education coordinator with the initial planning of the courses and resources at Tembaletu, the coordinator of the Resource Centre conducted a community needs' assessment (Kaniki 1994:2). Various priorities were set and these were translated into the following specific objectives of the Resource Centre:

(a)   Support of the non-formal educational activities, that is literacy and the high school matric classes.

(b)   Support of Tembaletu's extension programmes.

(c)   To provide materials and information for life skills.

(d)   To provide a venue for meetings.

(e)   To provide information resources for the Tembaletu community in general.

(f)   To initiate and support information provision projects that will empower the wider community of the Pietermaritzburg area (Kaniki 1994:2).

1.4.   Objectives of the study

The Resource Centre objectives were based on the mission statement of the Tembaletu Community Education Centre (see 2.1). One of the ways to evaluate the Resource Centre was to evaluate whether it was fulfilling its objectives and this is the objective of the present study.

In order to establish whether the Resource Centre was meeting its objectives or not the researcher conducted a survey on the users of the Resource Centre. These were

(a)   teachers of Tembaletu,

(b)   students registered at Tembaletu and

(c)   general users, that is, those who are not registered students). It was anticipated that by conducting this survey at Tembaletu one would be able to ascertain whether the Resource Centre was indeed meeting its stated objectives or not.

1.5   Research questions

The research questions were derived from the objectives of the Resource Centre. Listed below are the various objectives (as listed on the previous page) as well as the various research questions they generated.

1.5.1   Research objective

Support of the non-formal educational activities i.e. literacy and the high school matric classes.

Research question

(a)   Does the Resource Centre support non-formal educational activities?

1.5.2   Research objective

Support of Tembaletu's extension programmes.

Research question

(a)   Does the Resource Centre support the extension programmes?

1.5.3   Research objective

To provide materials and information for life skills.

Research questions

(a)   What information material is provided for life skills?

(b)   Are students using it?

(c)   Are they finding it helpful for solving their own problems?

1.5.4   Research objective

To provide a venue for meetings.

Research questions

(a)   Is the Resource Centre used for meetings?

(b)   What meetings is the Resource Centre used for?

1.5.5   Research objective

To provide information resources for the Tembaletu community in general.

Research questions

(a)   What information is provided for the Tembaletu community in general?

(b)   Is the Tembaletu community using those information resources?

1.5.6   Research objective

To initiate and support information provision projects that will empower the wider community of the Pietermaritzburg area.

Research questions

(a)   What information provision projects have been initiated to empower the wider community in Pietermaritzburg?

(b)   Is the wider community of Pietermaritzburg using those projects?

1.6   Significance of the study

This study is significant in that it undertook an evaluative study of a resource centre within a community learning centre. This is of importance to the Resource Centre in that it would indicate whether the Resource Centre was meeting its objectives in terms of the views of the user groups, namely the teachers, students and outside users.

Given the funding crisis and depending on the results, the study might help to indicate to future sponsors the part played by the Resource Centre to support the programmes offered at Tembaletu, and thus the need for continued financial support for the Resource Centre.

It will be helpful for planners and sponsors to know the strengths and the weaknesses of the Resource Centre so that improvements can be made, if necessary.

1.7   Limitations of the study

The researcher was not able to survey the organisations such as the Department of Land Affairs whose information material is kept together with that of Tembaletu in the Resource Centre and who also make use of the Resource Centre. This was due to their unavailability at the time the research was conducted.

Their inclusion would have given a "total picture" and assist in showing whether the objective of "providing materials and information for life skills" was being fulfilled as those organisations' focus is on the latter.

Due to the fact that not all general users were registered members of the Resource Centre and hence not traceable, it was not possible to survey as many as wanted (see chapter 4 in this regard) and as a result the sample of general users was small and the results relating to this group of users should be treated with caution. The questionnaire used as data collection technique was not ideal because a number of respondents were struggling with writing skills.

1.8   Definition of terms

1.8.1   Resource centres

There are various definitions of resource centres, both of South African and international origin.

The Commonwealth Secretariat identified a resource centre as "an important rural education agency for communities in developing countries" (Karlsson 1994:13). It then commissioned the writing of a manual to guide these communities in the establishment of a rural resource centre. The manual describes a resource centre as a place where members of a community can:

(a)   Find information about subjects of interest to them.

(b)   Take part in learning activities.

(c)   Discuss and share knowledge, information and concerns with extension and other community workers, planners and administrators.

(d)   Find materials to help them retain their literacy and numeracy skills.

(e)   Meet to organise and work together on community projects.

(f)   Use equipment to produce their own information materials.

(g)   Enjoy culture and leisure activities (Karlsson 1994:13).

The above definition embraces all forms of resource centres. But the resource centres in developed and underdeveloped countries will vary according to the information development stage each community has undergone. For instance, in India the resource centre is seen as "a vital link in the chain of feeding important traditional information which is rapidly being lost, from the villages to policy makers at district, regional and national levels" (Karlsson 1994:17).

In developed countries like Australia, Canada, Japan and Switzerland, resource centres were in the 1970's "linked to learning, and were located in schools" (Karlsson 1994:13). According to Karlsson (1994:13) these resource centres are now located within the communities.

The South African literature contributes the following conclusions to an understanding of the resource centre:

(a)   There are two primary functions: education and information.

(b)   The notion of a resource extends beyond print media, and includes human resources.

(c)   Community ownership and participation are also paramount.

(d)   Resource centres are linked to social and political development (Karlsson 1994:18).

The notion of a resource is differentiated from information because it extends beyond information, to include the hardware and software for information technology and media production (Karlsson 1994:18).

Given the above it is apparent that the term "resource centre" is used to mean different things. It is thus difficult to define the resource centre concept in precise terms as each resource centre differs in type and operates under unique sets of circumstances. However, it is possible to consider their role in general terms as certain common factors, such as "community ownership", "empowerment" and "information" (which are mentioned above) are apparent.

The Natal Resource Centre Forum's definition of a resource centre is the one preferred by the researcher and the one adopted for this study.
The definition is:

> a space or building in which human and other [information] resources in a variety of media such as books, journals, newspapers, films, video and audio cassettes, three-dimensional objects etc, and ..... equipment such as, records cameras, computers, photocopiers, facsimile machines, etc. are arranged and made accessible in an appropriate manner for empowering people through information dissemination, product skills, and resource sharing...[it] incorporates community involvement and participation at all levels. Learning and interaction occur directly with the resources (Karlsson 1994:3).

Tembaletu Resource Centre fits the above definition in that all the information material, for example, journals, videos, newspapers and books listed in this definition are available in the Resource Centre. Furthermore the extension courses offered by the Resource Centre (see Chapter 2) are "a manner of empowering people" (Karlsson 1994:3).

1.8.2 Community learning centres

The community learning centre is a relatively recent response to

(a)   a low skills base,

(b)   a high rate of illiteracy and numeracy and

(c)   out of school youth, who may have one or all of the above problems (National Investigation into Community Education 1995:13).

To absorb all these people and to teach them skills for the benefit of the economy, the situation demands that all available buildings, be they churches, schools and community buildings, be utilised.

The community learning centre is an all-inclusive centre where different skills are taught.

The definition of a community learning centre adopted for the present study is that given by the National Investigation into Community Education (1995:13) which states that it is:

> a venue or site where education and training programmes relevant to the expressed needs of adults, workers or post-school youth are being offered by a community college, non-governmental organisation or any other institution or organisation.

Community learning centres may be located in any public building, workplace, school or church that is easily accessible to learners.

They should therefore operate as an identity of the community and the education and training provided within it should contribute towards the growth of a socially, culturally and economically viable community (National Investigation into Community Education 1995:20).

With various work-and-life-skills education being offered at Tembaletu Community Education Centre to both the youth and adults, Tembaletu fits the definition of community learning centres well.

1.8.3   Community Libraries

The definition of "community libraries" is given so as to differentiate between the Resource Centre as a focus and community libraries.

With the failure of public libraries to live up to the general public expectations without discriminating, alternative information services were resorted to. This new information service known as community libraries aimed at the mass clientele whose social and hence reading needs had not been catered for by the public library system (Mostert 1996:102). Community libraries did not replace the public library but worked alongside it. The difference was in the focus of needs and choice of its main clients.

This new perspective was in line with how libraries are seen in Africa as "tools for mass education for a population thirsting for knowledge" (Mostert 1996: XVI). According to Mostert (1996:105) the aims of the community library are:

(a)   To meet the information needs of the community within which it operates.

(b)   To render a more varied and more pro-active service than commonly offered by public libraries.

The definition of community library preferred by the researcher in this study is:

> an organisation run by the people for the people, containing information resources chosen with the purpose of meeting the expressed needs of the people (Mostert 1996:4).

The aim of the community library is " the upliftment and empowerment of the communities they serve" (Mostert 1996:4). There is, therefore, an overlap of "information" and "empowerment" between the resource centres, community learning centres and community libraries. Yet there are still differences among these institutions. Whilst the community library is concerned with information, it forms only a part of the overall information network and the materials in the community library can include the full range of sources traditionally found in a puic library (Mostert 1996:105).

The community learning centre is more concerned with education delivery, imparting skills, formal and non-formal education to the unskilled and uneducated while the resource centre seeks to empower communities (and make them self reliant) through the provision of resources and facilities otherwise unavailable to them (Stilwell 1992:213).

1.9   Structure of the study

The remainder of the study is structured as follows.

Chapter 2

The aim of this chapter is to give a historical overview of Tembaletu Community Education Centre.

Chapter 3

This chapter will explain the history and background of resource centres and other concepts such as community libraries and community learning centres.

Chapter 4

This chapter explains what evaluation is about.

Chapter 5

Besides explaining other methods, the aim of this chapter is to record the methodology in collecting and analysing the data for this study.

Chapter 6

In this chapter the results of the survey (in the form of tables) are laid out and described.

Chapter 7

In this chapter the results are discussed.

Chapter 8

In this concluding chapter the major findings, recommendations and suggestions for further research are given.

1.10   Summary

In this introductory chapter the background to and broad overview of the problem was given. Relevant terms were defined, the significance and limitations of the study were pointed to and the structure of the study was outlined.

Chapter 2

Tembaletu Community Education Centre

In this chapter Tembaletu Community Education Centre is described covering both its origin and present status. This is followed by an examination of the Resource Centre itself.

2.1 Tembaletu Community Education Centre:- Pre-1994

Tembaletu, which is derived from a Zulu word "Thembalethu" meaning "our hope", is a community education centre which has its origins in the "Pietermaritzburg 2000" project. This project recognised that the people and communities in greater Pietermaritzburg have a vast and almost untapped reservoir of potential (Stobie 1991:1).In order to deal with this situation Professor Denys Schreiner, the former principal of the University of Natal, came up with the concept in 1988 of an "educational park" which implied a venue or place where local people could be afforded diverse educational opportunities. He proposed that the old Girls' Collegiate building in Burger Street be used. This building, which is an example of a fine Edwardian piece of archicture, had been purchased by the Province in the early 1960's but was left to become derelict during nearly three decades of South Africa's economic prosperity (Stobie 1991:1).

A "people's seminar" was organised and followed by open workshops where communities at a grassroots level were able to make contributions. The progress of a democratic planning process led to the formation of a Trust and the successful negotiation of a long lease on the buildings (Stobie 1991:1).

The restoration of the buildings was undertaken in partnership with Murray and Roberts and involved a training scheme where unemployed people were taught building and restoration skills. Over 1000 people attended such courses during the restoration period.

The merit of the scheme was that the community itself was providing a facility that would respond directly to future non-formal education needs.

This dream became a reality when Tembaletu's first director, Gordon Stobie, was appointed in 1991.

The potential for new skills, gaining deeper understanding and achieving more humane modes of organisation in South Africa, and Pietermaritzburg in particular, had been frustrated by past policies which served to compartmentalise people, to define and limit horizons, and constrain and stifle their potential (Stobie 1991:1). Tembaletu Community Education Centre found itself in such a situation where the evils associated with the mentioned past policies were made worse by violence that plagued places in and around Pietermaritzburg. This scattered and further impoverished people.

Tembaletu is located centrally in Pietermaritzburg "650m from the City Hall. It started with 360 admissions in 1991 with only four staff members, but in 1994 had 600 students and a staff complement of 17" (National Investigation into Community Education 1995 : 11).

Tembaletu's mission statement has constantly changed in line with the current needs of the target users. At the inception, in 1991, its mission was:

> To provide a centre where non-formal and informal education and training
> that meets the needs of the community can take place (Marks and
> Associates 1996:1).

The 1997 mission statement of the Tembaletu Community Education Centre reflects the concern which the Tembaletu management and staff had with the increasing number of "youth" who are taking up courses at Tembaletu (Cunnama and Perry 1997). It also reflects a new thinking along the lines of the National Qualification Framework which brings education together with training so that an integrated personal development can be achieved.

The latest mission statement reads:

> To operate an effective, dedicated, comprehensive and learner oriented Adult and (out of school) Youth Education and Training Organisation working towards the qualitative advancement of the lives of the communities in which Tembaletu works (Tembaletu Community Education 1996:1).

Tembaletu has adopted the following principles:

(a)   Diversity of activities-both educational and community activities take place at the centre.

(b)   Community development reflecting the needs and the wishes of the community.

(c)   Open to all and not aligned to any political party.

(d)   Support for extension programmes- providing support and back-up services for people who have completed courses at Tembaletu.

(e)   Tembaletu as a development process- the process of managing Tembaletu, establishing satellite centres and training community representatives, demonstrates their commitment to the development of people and organisations.

(f)   Non-profit making, self sufficiency- although Tembaletu is a non-profit-making organisation, it strives to become reasonably self-sufficient (Marks and Associates 1996:1).

Tembaletu has three important functions, namely a learning facility, a resource facility and a host facility.

2.1.1   A learning facility

This includes

(a)   literacy and numeracy classes

(b)   job skills training

(c)   formal education support and

(d)   life skills.

Courses that are offered are

(a)   garment making

(b)   typing,

(c)   computer and computer-assisted instruction,

(d)   adult basic education (level one to 5), "Power Matric" (this is an intensive course for Matric repeaters)

(e)   conversational Zulu 2nd language and

(f)   literacy teachers' training courses (Stobie 1991:1).

2.1.2   A resource facility

The learning facility is supported by a very wide collection of support material, particularly for literacy training as well as material provided by associate organisations housed in the Resource Centre.

The associate organisations are not part of the Tembaletu Community Education Centre but only rent the space and offer courses that are complementary and supportive of informal and formal education, for example Read, Educate and Develop (READ) organisation.

From its inception, this Resource Centre aimed to respond "to the needs of the majority of the population who had been denied access to facilities such as public libraries" (Stobie 1991:34). A large area was also set aside for group tutorials and private study.

2.1.3   A host facility

Tembaletu has acted as a host facilitator by offering renting space to a wide range of organisations offering a service to the community. Some of these organisations are, TREE (Training Resources in Early Education), PROTECH (Promotion of Technological Careers), READ, Rape Crisis Office, Hope Study Project (Second chance Standard 10) as CELEP (Citizen's Elementary Legal Education Project), the Careers Resource Centre and the Women's National Coalition (Tembaletu Community Education 1996:1).

2.2   Satellite centres

Tembaletu has established eleven satellite centres in the rural hinterland of KwaZulu-Natal Midlands as part of its outreach programme. These are centres which, because of the demand for services offered by Tembaletu in areas far from Pietermaritzburg, have been started by Tembaletu for people in their own areas. They offer the literacy and numeracy courses and are supplied with box libraries from the Resource Centre. Satellites exist in the following areas: Qanda, Trust-Feed, Muden 2, Tugela Ferry, Tugela Ferry Hospital, Harburg, Dalton, Raisethorpe, Mooi River and Table Mountain.

Some satellite centres are already experimenting with linking literacy to arts and crafts as well as some other creative activities. This is to make education meaningful and to add to community development and empowerment (Tembaletu Community Education 1996:1).

2.3   Tembaletu Community Education Centre after 1994

Tembaletu currently has 17 staff members and 600 students (Cunnama and Perry). Although there has been no enrolment increase since 1994, the numbers of students using Tembaletu continues to place a financial strain on the centre itself. This is because only minimal fees for courses are charged as many of the students are unskilled and unemployed and thus they lack the necessary financial resources. According to Zuma (1994:10) Tembaletu has had to reorientate itself to the demands of the RDP which, as mentioned in the previous chapter, has four pillars. These are:

(a)   Building the economy.

(b)   Redressing past imbalances.

(c)   Developing our human resources.

(d)   Democratising the state and society (African National Congress 1994:72).

Tembaletu Community Education Programme is seen by a past independent evaluator (Zuma 1994:10) as a "structure well placed for the implementation of the Reconstruction and Development Programme", that is capable to meet the aims of the RDP.

It is "a multipurpose provider for education which would provide integrated services delivered through cooperative efforts" (African National Congress 1994:9).

However, the ascension of a new government into power has, as mentioned in the previous chapter, resulted in foreign donor agencies changing their priorities and rechannelling their funds into the Reconstruction and Development Programme. This has led to a reduced level of foreign government funding for NGO activities (Institute for Community Management Services 1996:9). This has for Tembaletu, as well for other NGOs, posed a threat to the continued existence of the sector as a whole.

In spite of a government announcement and creation of expectations around the Reconstruction and Development funds, these funds continue to be inaccessible to NGOs especially in KwaZulu Natal. (Institute for Community Management Services 1996:10). The unfortunate part is that the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funding programme that has been a major funder of Tembaletu will drastically reduce its financial support. Hence it appears that Tembaletu will have to cut down on staff and courses offered, and only crucial courses will be maintained (Cunnama 1997). Given the scale of the developmental problem in South Africa, all RDP should maximise the use of scarce resources, "be judged on their efficacy and cost effectiveness, follow national trends and be well documented for ease of replication" (Marks and Associates 1996:24). This also applies to Tembaletu whose programmes are in line with the RDP and which aim to "create an education system that ensures that people are able to realise their full potential in our society as a basis and prerequisite for the achievement of all other goals in the Reconstruction and Development Programme" (Zuma 1994:4,5).

Hence evaluation of all the programmes and institutions within Tembaletu is significant so that the administrators and management can strengthen their position for, amongst other things, future funding. This bleak financial situation for NGOs has come at a time when democracy has allowed and propelled people to recognise that in order to take charge of their young democracy and their own lives they need to be skilled.

The formal education sector requires outcome based approaches which would mean that Tembaletu develops accredited programmes, especially in relation to the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). These accredited programmes would be recognised by all institutions of learning as well as by the industry. The number of disillusioned youth who have fallen between the cracks in society increases pressure on centres such as Tembaletu to service these youth but with dwindling resources (Marks and Associates 1996:25).

The situation is compounded by the rural-urban migration due to unemployment, poverty and violence, which has increased a need for skills and work. This burgeoning of urban settlements has its consequent social problems. One of these is the growing number of people with HIV and AIDS in the Midlands. Learning and reading material with more information to deal with HIV and AIDS will have to provided (Marks and Associates 1996:25).

The eleven satellite centres also place a lot of strain on Tembaletu as these are not self-sufficient as unemployment continues to dominate the communities that Tembaletu operates in. This limits the extent to which Tembaletu can pursue income generation activities or charge fully for services directly to its client group. Dwindling resources will surely have an effect on the expenditure as well as purchasing and selection criteria that the Resource Centre has been enjoying up to now. It has been agreed by the management that Resource Centre staff needs to be reduced from five to three as from 1998 (Cunnama 1997).

Extension programmes, to be discussed later may also suffer which will have implications for skills development.

In this scenario the Resource Centre will also be affected as it will only be able to afford to buy essential material. Services like the recording of the Africa Growth Network Matric videos might suffer. The situation might, of course, change particularly if the Community College initiative is finally funded by the government and becomes operational.

It is in the researcher's opinion that Tembaletu could serve as a possible model for the community learning centre concept.

2.4   Tembaletu Resource Centre

The Resource Centre was "established to support and facilitate activities of the centre" (Kaniki 1994:1). Such a view is supported by Lategan (1995:4) when she says, "the role of Resource Centres based in the Community Centres must be seen in the context of the community within which they are situated". Establishing the Resource Centre was done after needs assessment research had been done and where the objectives as mentioned (in 13) were set. Since its opening the Resource Centre has undertaken a number of extension programmes which have opened more opportunities for students to develop themselves.

2.4.1   Location

The Resource Centre is located centrally, but semi-detached, with its own entrance in Tembaletu Community Education Centre.

2.4.2   Staff

The staff comprises two full time members, Margaret Cunnama who is a coordinator and has been in the employment 1992 and the librarian Gill Perry who has been employed in the Resource Centre since its inception. There are three non-permanent members who are library assistants.

Two of them, Siboniso Shabalala and Thembalihle Mthethwa, have Standard 10, while the third one, James Kimoto, is a research student at the Department of Information Studies at the University of Natal. Each of the non-permanent staff works for about four hours a week and occasionally on Saturday mornings.

The most important duties of the staff are to:

(a)   help users return or issue books.

(b)   help users with research queries.

(c)   help with photocopying and laminating, should users need the service (Cunnama and Perry 1997).

The staff have also done desktop publishing and have written stories for students (Cunnama and Perry 1997). Resource Centre orientation talks are given by the Resource Centre staff to "Power Matric, Literacy and PROTECH (technical students from different schools who are given practice on technical subjects) students at the beginning of each year" (Cunnama and Perry 1997). This is done to make students aware of the location of information and services in the Resource Centre.

2.4.3   Resource Centre services

2.4.3.1 Materials development

When the Resource Centre started, it had no numeracy material in the collection. In order to stock the Resource Centre with literacy and numeracy material for teachers and students the Resource Centre staff partnered with "Ithutheng Project" which included other literacy projects and developed material in the area of numeracy. Twenty different manuals for all levels from one to four were produced. The Resource Centre collects and makes available materials for literacy programmes run at all levels at Tembaletu.

Besides supporting the provision of educational materials the Resource Centre also keeps literacy and numeracy materials which are for sale to students.

This is because there is a lack, particularly in vernacular languages, of "an adequate variety of such materials on the market" (Kaniki 1994:6) which can help students, both newly literate and advanced, to sustain their skills. Students are told of this service at the orientation session reflected above (Cunnama and Perry 1997).

During the 1994 elections the Resource Centre produced literature on voting. This was in both English and Zulu and provided not only education about voting but also reinforced reading and writing skills.

2.4.3.2 Computer courses

As they had adequate funding because of an identified need, the Resource Centre staff decided to start computer courses which are offered in the Resource Centre itself. There are ten computer stations that can be used at any one time. The programmes that are taught to students are (i) Windows '95 and (ii) Word Perfect 5. Students who have completed the course are awarded certificates of merit.

The computer course is coupled with "office practice" which involves "filing, reception manners, and taking down messages" (Cunnama 1997). Students pay full fees for the course. A student who wants to enrol in the computer course must undergo an English test as well as enrol in basic typing class where s/he must be able to do "30 words per minute and have 90% accuracy" (Cunnama 1997). A merit certificate for typing is proof that the course has been completed.

2.4.3.3 Educational video cassettes

By subscribing to Africa Growth Network, which broadcasts matric educational lessons six days a week via satellite, the Resource Centre staff have a right to record those lessons for students. All other learning channels are also recorded. These video cassettes are displayed in the Resource Centre for students to use in the Resource Centre or to borrow.

They are also available for outside users, for instance teachers who want to bring their students to view cassettes in the Resource Centre or to borrow them.

2.4.3.4 Membership

Both teachers and students can become members of the Resource Centre by filling
in an application form without paying any extra fee. However, members of the
public have to pay R2.00 as an annual fee. The Resource Centre staff do not keep
statistics for outside members as they feel "there has been no need nor time to do
so" (Cunnama and Perry 1997).

There are also institutional members such as the Family Association of South
Africa (FAMSA) and the National Institute for Crime Prevention and
Rehabilitation of Offenders (NICRO) who keep their own information materials in
the Resource Centre. When the Pietermaritzburg Resource Centre closed down in
1991, its stock was incorporated into that of Tembaletu Resource Centre (Mostert
1996:25). Although associate organisations do not pay for their books to be kept
there, they can request the purchase of information material which they need or
feel is important for their clients. This has been paid for by, and kept in, Tembaletu
Resource Centre.

2.4.3.5 Service to satellite centres

The satellite centres have been noted above. One of the activities undertaken by
the Resource Centre staff is the training of facilitators for satellite centres in the
Midlands in the use of library boxes. These portable and lockable library boxes are
supplied by the Resource Centre and are exchanged between the satellite centres
after every three months.

The aim of the boxes is to support the courses offered by satellite centres. Users
from the satellite centres are allowed to borrow from the boxes. "Materials are
heavily used and users learn life skills, such as how to complete forms, handling of
materials, instilling a sense of resource sharing and many others" (Kaniki 1994:5).
There is no follow-up procedure to determine the impact of this facility as
Resource Centre officials are very occupied with all the activities of running the
Resource Centre itself.

2.4.3.6 Study space

The Resource Centre has study space for 39 students situated inside the Resource Centre. This is utilised by outside users and also Tembaletu students during examination times. When the study space is full small, tables are made available to accommodate more students.

Discussion groups and meetings for smaller groups can also be held there although there is more space for such in the main hall outside the Resource Centre. Students are shown this study space during the orientation at the beginning of each year.

2.4.4 Resource Centre stock

The Resource Centre consists of approximately 12 000 books with about 30-35 % of these comprising literacy material (Cunnama 1997). These books are arranged in a broad subject categorization, for example, "History", and incorporate the first three letters of the author's surname on the spine, plus the year of accession and a serial number. There is no public catalogue system. Instead users either know where to get information or ask a Resource Centre assistant for help.

2.4.4.1 Literacy and numeracy stock

The Resource Centre includes a literacy corner with level 1-5 numeracy and literacy material. The literacy corner has Zulu and English fiction books. This collection comprises a selection of easy reading books donated by the READ organisation. According to Resource Centre staff the literacy material is chosen for its life skills based approach. Such material tend to focus on the development of individuals. These are materials that, while they will reinforce numeracy and literacy skills, also inform students about such issues as, "how to use the bank, give and follow directions, how to post a letter, relationships, child abuse, bank interest, AIDS and understanding democracy" (Cunnama and Perry 1997).

2.4.4.2 Leaflets

There is a large leaflet rack which carries current concerns with titles like,
"Commission on restitution of land", "Environment" and "Democracy".

2.4.4.3 School textbooks and other bookstock

There is a large collection of textbooks and workbooks with about five copies of
each textbook, mainly for school children. Educational charts are stored in the
charts cabinet. There is a section for video cassettes on current affairs as well as for
entertainment. Developmental, political, democratic and educational books under
each subject area are found in the non- fiction section. This section is divided into
(a) "Adult Easy Readers" section, which is a beginners section, and (b) general non
fiction that could be used by any user. The Adult Easy Reader section contains
books and magazines such as Molo Fish and Soul City which are television dramas
that were recently screened on South African television.

The books in the non- fiction section are, as mentioned, arranged under broad
subject categories for easy retrieval by the users. The fiction books are marked on
the spine with an "F" for fiction plus the first three letters of the author's surname.

2.4.4.4 Associate organisations' stock

The Resource Centre has been well supported by a specific allocation from the
USAID fund given to Tembaletu Education Centre. This has allowed both the
Resource Centre coordinator and the librarian freedom to buy books for the
associate organisations as well. The associate organisations, as noted, use
Tembaletu as a host facility and some of them donate information material because
they lack space or do not have the know how of resource arrangement (Cunnama
1997). READ, which is one of the associate organisations, has donated a shelf full
of basic readers for newly literates. The Land Affairs Office has also donated to
the Resource Centre many files dealing with land restitution and resettlement.

2.4.4.5 Reference works

A large collection of reference works includes Encyclopedia Britannica, Colliers Encyclopedia, World Book and Webster's Encyclopedia. There are various easy and advanced dictionaries such as Webster's Dictionary.

2.4.4.6 Newspapers and periodicals

Five newspapers and a wide range of periodicals covering mainly current issues in politics, education, environment and economics are available.

These newspapers, namely The Natal Witness, The Daily News, City Press, Ilanga and The Mail and Guardian are displayed in the newspaper rack. Magazines like Education monitor, Maritzburg views, Bona and Drum are also displayed in the magazine rack. The staff also keep pamphlets and forms from the bank, for example, withdrawal slips and telegraphic forms, so that literacy students will know the real forms.

2.4.4.7 Non print media and equipment

The Resource Centre has the following available:

Computers 3
Video and television equipment . . . . 2 each
Overhead projectors 3
LIS Programme (Ilis 3/Microscribe) . . 1 (which is a library computer programme)
Desktop Publishing (Newsmaster) 1
Photocopier 2
Copy Duplicator 1
Bookbinding machine 2
Computer printer 1

Use of these services is open to all and students are charged for use. Users are charged 15c per photocopy (Cunnama and Perry 1997).

The one computer which is available to users has CD rom with the following software:

(a)   World Book Encyclopedia

(b)   Dorling Kindersly Science Encyclopedia

(c)   World Atlas

(d)   children's games and the

(e)   Bible.

2.4.5 Selection policy

The Resource Centre staff "don't have any set selection policy but buy what is appropriate" (Cunnama and Perry 1997).

According to Cunnama and Perry (1997) appropriate material consists of any material or resource that will support the programmes offered at Tembaletu as well as empower the students in their daily lives. In order to select appropriate material, magazines as well as fliers from different African and South African publishers are scanned. Selections and suggestions by teachers and students of Tembaletu as well as by host organisations are taken into consideration and if funds permit, purchased. 'Developmental' magazines and local newspapers are a priority.

2.5   Summary

In this chapter it was pointed out that Tembaletu Community Education Centre was started as a place where people can be afforded diverse educational opportunities.

It has three functions which were seen as important, namely providing

(a)   a learning facility

(b)   a resource facility

(c)   and

(d)   a host facility. Because of its progress it started satellite centres in the outlying areas where those students further away from Pietermaritzburg could enrol. With the coming of the Reconstruction and Development Programme foreign funding has started to dwindle for NGOs.

This will affect Tembaletu as students cannot be charged more as some of them are not employed.

The Resource Centre was then described. It was noted that a Resource Centre was established to support and facilitate the activities of the Tembaletu Community Education Centre. The Resource Centre has developed literacy support material, some of which is sold from the Resource Centre. There are also extension programmes which are offered by the Resource Centre. The stock in the Resource Centre consists of both print and non print media. There is no specific selection policy but the staff choose what is appropriate in terms of supporting the programmes of Tembaletu.

Chapter 3

Review of related literature

This chapter focuses on the related literature and broadly gives an international, African and South African perspective of resource centres.

3.1 Literature search

A literature search in the South African Bibliographic Information Network (SABINET) yielded little literature on the evaluation of resource centres or library evaluation, apart from the theoretical books like that of Lancaster (1988), Wyley's thesis on the application of a participatory evaluation method to a public library (Wyley 1996) and Van Rooyen's thesis, namely, a performance evaluation of a cluster of theological libraries (Van Rooyen 1996).

According to Lategan (1997), resource centres like many NGOs have in the past been getting funding from foreign countries without necessarily being called to account for spending, a point which could account for the lack of literature on evaluative studies of resource centres or libraries as noted above. These organisations were almost guaranteed annual grants through the Sullivan Code and the American Social Security system, both of which allowed tax concessions to American companies which helped South African NGOs.

Nevertheless, there are NGOs which have conducted evaluations or reviews of their performance but regard documents produced as not for public consumption (Lategan 1997). Hence there was a relatively limited source of related material. References were sourced as mentioned from the South African Bibliographic Information Network (SABINET). Journal indexes namely Library Literature, Library and Information Science Abstracts and Index to South African Periodicals were also consulted.

The two keywords, "evaluation" and "resource centres", were used. Resource centres produced "education programmes" which on further search turned out to be "school library and educational programmes".

Additional evaluation documents of Tembaletu Community Education Centre as well as of the Resource Centre were received through the cooperation of Tembaletu staff. Three such documents were entitled:

(a)   National Investigation into Community Education-Evaluation report.Tembaletu Community Education Centre (1994).

(This report contained a review of Tembaletu Community Education Centre as well as Kaniki's Tembaletu Resource Centre evaluation).

(b)   Marks and Associates's Tembaletu Community Education Centre.Strategic Review Report (1996).

(c)   Tembaletu Trust. Strategic Planning exercise draft report published by the Institute for Community Management Services (1996).

Both (a) and (c) were reviews of the Tembaletu Community Education Centre in view of USAID financial support being stopped. Wyley's thesis (Wyley 1996) was also used (to be dealt with under 3.3 below). Although Wyley's research was not entirely relevant to this study, the (participatory) evaluation research method employed in her study was of interest because it focussed on the objectives of the institution to be evaluated. It also focussed on those responsible for setting the objectives and the decision making process followed to finally establish a community library.

To a limited extent the participatory evaluation was applied in the present study as both the coordinator and the librarian were invited by the researcher to examine the objectives of the Resource Centre and decide whether these were still applicable at the time of the study.

In the following section both the studies relevant to the present study, namely, that of Kaniki (1994) and that of Wyley (1996) will be discussed.

3.2 Summary and relevance of Kaniki's evaluation

Kaniki's review was conducted in 1994.

He used the seven Resource Centre objectives (as under 1.3) as measurements to gauge the performance of the Resource Centre. The Natal Resource Centre Forum's definition (as in section 1.6.1) was applied. His report was based on:

(a)   interviews with the staff of the Resource Centre.

(b)   his own physical assessment of the centre.

(c)   The Annual Reviews of Tembaletu Community Education Centre.

He looked at the services provided by the library which were:

(a)   translations,

(b)   editing and

(c)   non print media and equipment and

(d)   work space services.

He also looked at other activities in view of the objectives as stated. These were:

(a)   operation outreach, (which was and still is a library book box service to the satellite centres of Tembaletu Community Education Centre supplied and exchanged by the Tembaletu Resource Centre).

(b)   service to the community, support materials as well as

(c)   document availability and delivery.

His observations were that the Resource Centre "continues to fulfil its objectives and to support Tembaletu's Mission statement and that it plays the role of a Resource Centre, as defined by professionals in this area of study" (Kaniki 1994:8).

3.2.1 Conclusions

Kaniki found that:

(a)   in the area of supporting non-formal education the literacy corner was heavily used by literacy instructors, and the Resource Centre was heavily used by matric students,

(b)   the training of literacy teachers at the satellite centres and university
        students who were doing part- time work in the Resource Centre was one
        of the highlights of the centre's contributions to the community at large
        Kaniki 1994:8).

3.2.2   Recommendations

Kaniki, nevertheless pointed out that lack of space, particularly the reading and
study space, was of a concern as study tables at the time were also used for
processing books. He felt "there is a need for the Resource Centre to have adequate
working space" (Kaniki 1994:90). He recommended that the staff should be
increased and that work load should be spread according to other responsibilities
borne by the staff especially as the then coordinator was involved in several
activities that took much of her time away from the Resource Centre. He also
mentioned the need to have a public access catalogue as that would help teach the
users as well as increase time for concentrating on other jobs.

3.2.3   Critique

How will the present study differ to Kaniki's ?

When Kaniki's evaluation was conducted the Resource Centre:

(a)   was housed in the small adjoining room which is now used as a
        photocopying room cum work room.

(b)   staff had not yet begun the computer courses which are part of the
        extension programme. This course was only started in 1997.

(c)   had the study room together with the processing room.

(d)   had a generous financial allocation from the sponsor, USAID.

(e)   had no video cassette collection.

Kaniki's report refers to "users" as persons consulted but did not differentiate
between registered students, general users and teachers, for example. No mention
is made of the numbers of respondents questioned.

It is in this aspect in particular that the present study differs markedly from
Kaniki's.

In this study the following user sectors were targeted because they were the recognisable users of the Resource Centre:

(a)   15 teachers (including one teacher from an associate organisation);

(b)   25 general users;

(c)   99 students including six TREE (Training Resources in Early Education) students.

3.3   Summary and relevance of Wyley's participatory evaluative study.

As noted, Wyley's application of a participatory evaluation method to the public library was also consulted (Wyley 1996). The central objective of her study was a methodological one : to test a participatory evaluation method in Tholulwazi Library, and to draw conclusions as to the advantages and disadvantages in its application from practicalities and logistics, to the more conceptual and political considerations (Wyley 1996:6). Participatory evaluation involves the "opinions, interests, assistance, effort of all staff, beneficiaries (library users for example), associated organisations, as well as management, and is facilitated by an external specialist" (Wyley 1996:6). The process involved revisiting the objectives of the library, establishing the actual situation (through data collection), the identification and measurement of coincidence or deviation between the planned and actual situation, analysis of the causes or reasons for deviation or coincidence and possible solutions, and the presentation of the evaluation findings and recommendations. The data collection involved surveying a sector of library users (students) mainly by means of a questionnaire, a register and library counter-based survey (Wyley 1996:9).

Wyley's study is only applicable to this study as far as revisiting and using the objectives of a library (a resource centre in this case) as a basis for evaluation is concerned.

In this study data was collected though a questionnaire and no other means such as counter-based survey or register was used.

3.3.1 Recommendations

In her research Wyley (1996:134) recommended that:

(a)   Periodic evaluation should be done.

(b)   Library hours should be extended by opening earlier daily and closing later on Saturdays.

(c)   Planning and provision of a study collection and to consider more copies of texts in demand and multiples of copies for loans.

3.3.2 Critique

This was a very thorough study on the use of a participatory research method and this researcher could not find faults with it. However the participatory evaluation method is not entirely relevant for the present study in that some of the important elements of the participatory research such as planning, management and public participation in decision-making which were present in Wyley's study were not used for evaluation in this study. A major similarity of the present study to that of Wyley's is the use of original objectives of the institution as a basis for evaluation. Evaluation would, therefore, reveals whether the objectives as set at the inception of the Resource Centre and still being adhered to were being fulfilled or not.

3.4   History and background of resource centres
3.4.1 The international perspective

The resource centre concept stems from a "conceptualisation of the theory of resource based learning which predates learning from books" (Karlsson 1994:13). The theory of resource based learning became popular in the 1950's and 60's and marked the developments in audio-visual media and information technology. It was a shift from "teaching with media to learning through media" (Karlsson 994:13). These developments rivalled the traditional "chalk and talk" teaching practices, providing the climate for experimentation and innovation for educators. In the 1970's resource centres were regarded as "intrinsically linked to learning, and were located in schools."(Karlsson 1994:13). By the mid 1980's countries such as Australia, Canada, Japan and Switzerland claimed that 90% or more of their schools had resource centres.

In terms of the general future of resource centres, Tucker (Karlsson 1994:14) speculated that resource centres would be located outside the physical school in community centres. Karlsson (1994:15) confirms this shift by stating that:

> in terms of the location and user group of a resource centre, the resource centre is no longer located in a formal educational institution serving the needs of those people registered at that particular institution. Instead the resource centre is now located in an unspecified place which is accessible to all members of the community and the activities concentrate on non-formal and informal education. The resource centre is no longer a service to the community, but a project of the community (Karlsson 1994:15).

3.4.2   The African perspective

In Africa, resource centres are identified as having their origin in the developments of the Western world during the 1960's (Karlsson 1994:16). Although some are found in schools, such as in Nigeria with 0,5% in primary and 5% in secondary schools in 1989, they are located in communities rather than schools.

Kantumoya (Karlsson 1994:16) does not specifically refer to a `resource centre' but refers to a "grassroot community information service" which is involved in the repackaging and disseminating of information, monitoring information developments, developing grey literature and media collections, referrals, networking and activities relating to general community life.

By the 1980's, Africa's librarians and writers criticised established librarianship in Africa as unable to serve those who live in the rural areas.

They felt, that instead, libraries and librarians were concentrating their efforts almost exclusively on an urban elite (Sturges and Neill 1990:113). A consensus was emerging that "there was a need for a new type of library, offering a radically different approach to library and information provision for rural populations" (Sturges and Neill 1990:113). Despite this shift of the focus of librarianship in Africa, the majority of Africa's librarians were unwilling to "venture into the rural areas to put the theories to the test. Fortunately there has been at least one notable exception.

This was the University of Ibadan's Rural Development Information System (RUDIS) research project under the direction of Olabimpe Aboyade (Sturges and Neill 1990:113).

Aboyade's team visited the village of Badeku near Ibadan offering an informal information service. They took with them an initial selection of information materials (pamphlets, posters, audio) and other materials. They were willing to listen to the expressed needs of the villagers. They found a pattern of need for information which largely centred on health, employment, government policies and programmes, and education.

Somewhat to the researchers'surprise, the expressed demands of the villagers also included religious and recreational materials. They were discovering the need for something much more like a "library" service of a kind rather less sophisticated than that attempted by most national library systems in Africa. (Sturges and Neill 1990:113).

According to Aboyade (Sturges and Neill 1990:113), this was a big reminder that the cultural purposes of a library are not just limited to and appreciated by the leisured and refined members of the society who do not have to spend most of their time working, like rural people, just to make ends meet. Reading (or listening) can play an important role in the beneficial use of leisure, in addition to what rural people normally do to fill their work-free hours. The experiment proved quite clearly that rural dwellers will react very favourably to a service which allows them to function as independent information seekers, defining their own needs. Aboyade went further than that and repackaged information into a format that would be more appropriate to the needs of rural dwellers (Sturges and Neill 1990:13).

Translating of material from English-language newspapers, pamphlets, and reference books, and delivering it in the form of audio tapes proved its worth, as did recording of radio programmes and material from books.

Most interesting of all was the consideration that the project team had given to the use of traditional communications media, in particular the possibility of using songs, drama, and the content of traditional festivals to reinforce basic messages and act as a familiar medium for communicating 'modern'information (Sturges and Neill 1990:113). Yet according to Rosenberg (1993:32) community resource centres have not been successful and one of the reasons put forward by her is that rural resource centres in particular cannot satisfy their clientele by merely providing information, even by an active reference and referral service. Rosenberg mentions the project undertaken by Aboyade (noted above) which came to act as a complaints bureau and would therefore not be acceptable to the government. She concludes therefore that "if information is power, then it may not be in the interests of a centralized government to allow the establishment of resource centres throughout rural areas, as these can be seen as quasi- political activity" (Rosenberg 1993:32).

A further reason mentioned by Rosenberg as to why community resource centres have not been successful is that aid agencies involved in rural development appear equally unconvinced of the need for providing information services. They are not convinced that libraries form a part of the infrastructure that will bring long-term solutions to the problems of lack of development (Rosenberg 1993:32). Rosenberg also mentions the lack of continuous assessment of community needs as well as the lack of relevant training. About training, she concludes that "a very high- powered librarian" with a wide range of skills will be required (Rosenberg 1993:33). Sturges and Neill (1990:13) confirm that this new librarian would have to be endowed with an extended range of skills and competencies far beyond those normally associated with the library and information workforce.

3.4.3   The South African picture
According to Stilwell (1991:273) the emergence of resource centres in the 1980's in South Africa came both as a result of political oppression and information deprivation of the apartheid era.

Their orientation "derives from a situation of mass oppression which includes inadequate and biased library and information services, severe state censorship and an unequal education system" (Stilwell 1991:273). During that period the Separate Amenities Act restricted membership of and access to public libraries on the basis of race. Libraries for these communities were few and far between and were "heavily biased in favour of white users and their residential areas" (Stilwell 1991: 272). Information which was deemed to be anti-government was censored and carrying it was a criminal offence.

Added to the above was the general lack of proper educational facilities. Schools were in chaos in the wake of the 1976 revolts and many young learners were imprisoned. Karelse (1991:4) points out that some resource centres supported the imprisoned young learners with reading and studying materials.

Oppression led to the new movement against apartheid, the Mass Democratic Movement. Karelse (Stilwell 1991:273) states that the predominant task of the resource centres during the apartheid years has been "to strengthen the mass-based organisations by empowering communities through the provision of resources and facilities otherwise unavailable to the oppressed". Resource centres presented an alternative agency of information gathering and dissemination. Resource centres are characterised by their non-governmental nature and their concern with building democracy both in their internal work practices and in society at large (Karelse 1991:7). Resource centres are not supported by local authorities and are dependent on outside funding because of their non-governmental nature. Some of the most exciting and illustrious work done in South Africa has been done outside of educational and library institutions, by youth clubs, community organisations,"local voluntary associations such as resource centres, trade unions and co-operatives" (Stilwell 1991:273). In the Alexandra Resource Centre, for instance, "apart from educational and training programmes, several community functions, for example, weddings, plays, fashion shows, are held" (Mostert 1996:75). In the Mboza Project, (as mentioned in Chapter 1), "it became possible, with the presence of a resource centre, for people to go through Zulu literacy to English literacy, to the intermediate and orientation course and on to matriculation without any formal schooling" (Stilwell 1991:273).

It is in the opinion of this researcher that the development of resource centres away from political to development issues, particularly in the light of the RDP, is a viable option in the light of the demand for development information.

3.4.4. Categories of resource centres

It is difficult to categorise resource centres. However, a number of writers have tried to do so.

According to Karelse (1991:7) resource centres can be characterised by three broad categories spanning the urban-rural 'divide' which can be identified as (a) community resource centres which are geographically located within residential areas and service the needs of their communities and local organisations, for example, Alexandra Resource Centre; (b) aligned resource centres which perform one of the functions of a larger service organisation which has a special focus and /or audience, for example, the Resource Centre of Tembaletu Community Education Centre; and (c) autonomous centres of which there are very few and which operate along the same lines as the "aligned" centres vis-a-vis specialisation for example Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA) (Karelse 1991:7). Karlsson (1994:26) and Stilwell (1991:275) agree that it is difficult to define and categorise resource centres because of the different ways in which they can be distinguished, either by the nature of their organisational base, their user community, or their functions, service and collection. These centres "should differ from one another because they attempt to respond to their particular community's or organisation needs" (Stilwell 1991:275).

The Resource Centre under investigation in this research is situated within a community learning centre and falls within the category noted as "aligned resource centre which performs one of the functions of a larger service organisation" as noted above.

3.5   The resource centre and the community library

A distinguishing characteristic between a resource centre and a community library
is that the one is municipally supported, the other not. However according to
Mostert (1996:103) it is not all community libraries that are supported by local
governments but some "obtain their funds from sources other than the government.
Fees can be charged for membership, or the community can obtain funds through
fund-raising events". Mostert (1996:103) quotes Raseroka who in her evaluation of
a community library project in Alexandra points out that:

> as South Africa follows the road of democratisation donors will be more
> and more difficult to come by, and that the financial support of community
> libraries should more and more become the responsibility of the
> government and the local authority.

However, there are other differences which will be mentioned below.

A further difference between the resource centre and the community library is that
the latter came about as a result of a general lack of public libraries in black areas.
Community libraries acted as branch libraries carrying the same material as that
carried by the public libraries. But after the democratisation of South Africa
community libraries are becoming more and more similar to the resource centres.
It is in the opinion of the researcher that since the effective repeal of the Separate
Amenities Act in 1991, many public libraries have termed themselves "community
libraries" without the changes in attitudes, management principles and approaches
in information dissemination which characterize the resource centre. These
"community libraries" are physically in the same "white areas" with mainly the
same management. They have no advocated policy of Africanising the library and
information services by bringing in both African management experience and
programmes geared for the majority of people.

Mostert (1996:95) identifies the following characteristics of the (ideal) community
libraries:

(a)   The subject matter of the material found in these libraries is often directly
        concerned with the lives of the individuals in each community. The materials
        are mainly of a transitory nature, for example, leaflets, posters, pamphlets
        and newspaper cuttings. Within mainly illiterate communities resources
        should also include audio-visual material.

A main resource is that of repackaged material.

(b)   An active involvement between the librarian and the user is imperative. This active interaction leads to a better understanding of the nature of the user's problem.

Mostert (1996:95) believes that close co-operation with other organisations and programmes operating in the community is essential. The community library forms only a part of the overall information network. It needs to rely on the cooperation of other agencies to assist the library in information gathering processes. It also needs to rely on those agencies it refers its clients to, when mere provision of information is not enough to solve a problem. Community libraries cannot operate in isolation.

These services can be of a highly political nature in the sense that everybody should have the right to equal access of information and society's resources. This is also a characteristic that distinguishes the community library from other information services (Mostert 1996:95). One important distinguishing difference between resource centres and community libraries is in the qualifications of staff. According to Roth (1993:520) "libraries are run by qualified librarians in certain tried and tested ways while resource centres are run by enthusiastic devotees of ABE with little or no knowledge of librarianship".

Magwentshu (1995:151) confirms this view when she says "resource centres may be staffed by a qualified librarian, but generally they are staffed by many non-professionals and volunteers". Magwentshu (1995: 151) points out that many reasons account for lack of professional staff in the resource centres, including salary structures and employment conditions which fail to attract professionals. She goes on to state that there is an inadequate training of professional librarians in terms of meeting the needs of the grassroots communities, and the view of community resource centres parent bodies is that political sensitivity and acknowledgement of the needs of user communities are a higher priority than professional skills.

Resource centres are not part of the formal library and information infrastructure, and are funded by NGOs, communities and donors both local and foreign (Magwentshu 1995:151). Lategan (1995) says that in the South African context a community resource centre may be seen as a response to the continuing dissatisfaction with the formal structure and an attempt to create local community controlled alternatives for addressing the problems that face communities. Resource centres have seen their role as that of proactive information providers. They have thus attempted to provide services which cater for the development of relevant resource collections; repackaged information to make it accessible and relevant and provide referral services; provide user training to ensure the full use of all resources available. Community resource centres are vehicles for community development in that they have provided facilities that are needed by communities such as the hall, pre-school centre, conference and workshop facilities, advice and referral centre and study centre (Magwentshu 1995:152).

There are also distinctive qualities with regard to the material/resource collection between community libraries and resource centres (Karlsson 1994:18):

(a)   the collection of a resource centre may comprise the smaller collection of several organisations.

(b)   the collection is often specialised in content.

(c)   use of the collection is unrestricted.

(d)   the resource is reliant on donations.

(e)   distribution of resources is as important as collection and documentation.

(f)   there is a commitment to democracy in services and management style.

(g)   there is a rapid responsiveness to new needs.

(h)   the collection comprises diverse media forms. Magwentshu (1995:152) explains that "many resource centres have repackaged their information to make it more accessible and relevant to their user communities".

Yet because of the advent of democracy in this country the lines between the resource centres and community libraries are getting blurred.

The material that used to be found in the community libraries which used to be similar to that of the public library is changing to the one of a transitory nature (as noted above). Issues such as for example addressing community needs (like illiteracy) and striving to adopt democratic governance concerns both institutions. Community libraries have begun to show a willingness to transform themselves into a more appropriate service and unbanned political and community organizations can now collect and disseminate their own information and they do not have to rely on resource centres (Magwentshu 1995:154).

Some writers, for example, Roth (1993:528), have called for the integration of services between the community libraries and resource centres saying "a resource centre cannot function in isolation". The perception is that without the dynamic link to educational programmes the resource centres are not able to survive and therefore their role is uncertain (Magwentshu 1995:153).

3.6   Roles of resource centres

Ahrtag (1996), who documented an international survey of resource centres, confirmed that resource centres can undertake a variety of roles. These are:

(a)   Promotional, often acting as catalysts and sometimes initiating action.

(b)   Supportive, providing a forum for people from different backgrounds and levels of awareness to discuss socio-economic and political issues.

(c)   Selecting appropriate resource materials for use in education and training programmes.

(d)   Organising the information for ease of use.

(e)   Advising or assisting people to locate the right information and possible ways of using it in their work (particularly when the users may be inexperienced with using documentation or electronic information services).

(f)   Translation, adaption, and/or production of resource materials.

(g)   Disseminating and sharing information through publications, exhibitions and demonstrations, workshops, newsletters and other outreach strategies.

(h)   Documenting practical lessons learnt.

(i)   Organising campaigns, in response to identified needs.

(j)   Networking, for example, between health and other community workers, between different development sectors, government and non-government agencies, and national and international organisations and centres (Ahrtag 1996).

This researcher believes that as long as the illiteracy rate and many forms of community development information needs are high, resource centres will be needed and that resource centres and community libraries need to network and share resources.

3.7   The future of resource centres

Resource centres need to identify an "appropriate role in a changing South Africa" (Karelse 1991:1). They should press for change and must heed the "call for more proactive need to participate in transforming South African society" (Karelse 1991:1). They need to participate in transforming existing, and developing more viable, infrastructures and policies which will serve the majority of South Africans rather than a select few. They need to participate in the process of building institutions and infrastructures to eradicate the effects of apartheid within a free, democratic society. For instance they need to contribute to the creation of an information policy and infrastructure which will advance the free flow of information services to all, and encourage the production and distribution of appropriate information and resources (Karelse 1991:5).

They need to adopt business management plans, for example, cost benefit analysis systems, which will assure their accountability to the organisation or community they service and also to whom they owe their financial survival. With such analysis they would be able to evaluate and where necessary restructure existing services to ensure that these are appropriate to the needs of the communities they service (Karelse 1991:6).

Magwentshu (1995:153) emphasizes the point of cost benefit analysis by saying that:

> the period of transformation has shifted motivation for donors from the goal of oppositional politics to an interest in projects which support development and reconstruction; for example, donors who have funded resource centres in the 1980's because of their commitment to anti-apartheid activities now demand more detailed and an ongoing evaluation of the programmes they were funding.

Magwentshu (1995:153) continues to state that the evaluation criteria for a successful programme include goals which are oriented towards reconstruction and development with the emphasis on hard skills training, rather than information through education but it could be argued that both are important. Resource centres need to structure a basic training for their workers that will prepare them for an alternative information and development system. There is usually a lack of trained personnel (Stilwell 1991; Rosenberg 1993) and financing a centre which must rely on aid and donations demands skills in financial management. Where rural community centres have been evaluated, the quality of personnel is usually cited as one of the key problems (Rosenberg 1993:33). More and constant financial support needs to be available as community needs are vast and changing fast. There is always a need to replace outdated material, conduct community research and purchasing material to support the learning needs of a particular community (Lategan 1997).

As the government shifts its attention from the formulation of policy to the solution of practical problems, opportunities for educational innovation have never been greater. "While the government focuses on infrastructural development and school rehabilitation, it is crucial that the community and NGOs continue to play a role in partnership with the state to establish programmes which will provide the best quality of education to the largest possible number of learners" (READ 1996). South Africa needs an educated and developed population capable of making informed decisions about the full range of social, economic, cultural and political challenges that lie ahead.

Education provides the surest means available to South Africans for establishing a truly democratic society operating within a stable and functional environment (READ 1996). Collaboration and cooperation of NGOs with similar programmes may be an option in the light of the financial constraints that resource centres find themselves in. While the government focuses on infrastructural development and school rehabilitation, it is crucial that the community and NGOs continue to play a role in partnership with the state to establish programmes which will provide the best quality of education to the largest possible number of learners (READ 1996).

3.8   The need for a community learning centre.

Community learning centres are an integral part of the information sector, although with more focus on skills training and education delivery. The model of a community learning centre hinges upon two aspects, namely the

(a)   provision of a range of services and

(b)   governance of the facility (National Investigation into Community College Education 1994:21).

The community learning centre will be "a multipurpose centre which would use information technology for networking, information provision, communication, administration and training" (Mbeki 1995).

Potential services that could be offered by a community learning centre are:

(a)   adult basic education.

(b)   lifeskills training (business/micro-enterprise skill, organisation building and organisational development, conflict resolution, communication skills).

(c)   vocational/ workskills training (for instance construction skills, textile production, agricultural project production).

(d)   arts and cultural skills training.

(e)   study space and equipment in support of formal and non-formal education.

(f)   community information service.

(g)   distance education support.

(h)   legal and paralegal services.

(i)   health services/clinic.

(j)   youth centre (Community Learning Centre Interest Group 1995:3).

An important conceptual point regarding the above list concerns the inter-relatedness of services: many could share staff and space in their delivery. In addition to this, aspects of training could be integrated: for example, vocational skills training and adult basic education (Community Learning Centre Interest Group 1995:2).

The entire facility would, however, be designed and put together in relation to a particular community; to service and support that community's learning activities according to assessed needs, existing resources, skills and expertise (Community Learning Centre Interest Group 1995:2).

3.9   The role of a resource centre within a community learning centre

A resource centre within a community learning centre will develop its objectives in terms of the objectives of its large service organisation. It will generate, store and provide information to support its "mother" organisation. In the vision statement of the Arts and Culture Task Group   (South Africa 1995:4) a form of Community Learning Centre is supported :

> Each community resource centre will serve as a community learning centre focusing particularly on the promotion of literacy and information awareness and on support of adult basic education and distance learning.

The above statement confirms that library and information services have a particularly close relationship with education.

They must be seen as integral to lifelong learning and should be mobilised to combat illiteracy and support adult basic education. In order for communities to develop and sustain the skills learnt in education and training for example literacy and training skills like building and computer skills, it "is important that [resource centres within] community learning centres generate information by conducting research and storing information relevant to their users" (Arts and Culture Task Group 1995:5).

One way of generating this information is by repackaging or consolidating information to suit the users (Sturges and Chimseu 1996:87). Sturges and Chimseu (1996:87) define repackaged or consolidated information as "a text or message purposefully structured from existing public knowledge to affect the private knowledge and decisions of individuals who otherwise may not able to effectively and efficiently access or use this public knowledge from the original amounts or in the original form".

The repackaging process begins with the study of potential users, selection of primary information sources and the evaluation of their information content. The diffusion of the packages should be accompanied by feedback from the users to enable evaluation and adjustment of the process to take place as noted in Aboyade's RUDIS project. The resource centre would be pulsating with information such as packaged information for newly literate readers, "art and cultural exhibitions and festivals, viewing of recorded oral literature and tradition, meetings and workshops organised by the various interest groups" (Sturges and Chimseu 1996:87).

By collecting diverse community information, specialising in specific community needs assessment, networking between all the community development agencies, repackaging information relevant for new literates as well as information for development, the resource centre could facilitate and support the training offered by the community learning centre. Sturges and Chimseu (1996:86) say that print-related services tend to be even less effective in helping the semi-literate and non-literate majority population living in the rural and urban marginal areas.

When this information has been repackaged it needs to be marketed so that users will know about it. Kantumoya (1992:35) emphasizes this view that it is "absolutely essential that information meant for people in the lower social groups should not only be prepared and repackaged in forms suitable for them, but it should also be delivered at the right time".

In this case the resource centre can provide information in grey literature, repackaged information (other than print), referral and advice services, particularly on career choice. Since community learning centres are going to provide work and lifeskills the resource centre would emphasize the preventive and educational role of information.

It is in the opinion of the researcher that an important role of resource centres within a community learning centre is that of publication of materials, particularly scarce materials for example literacy materials, some of which could be sold to cover publication costs.

This material could be in small booklet form, newsletters, newspapers or compiled and reproduced literacy stories, for example from papers like <u>Learn with Echo</u> (a supplement to the <u>Natal Witness</u>). This is vital as publishing of this material is not yet widespread.

The researcher is of the opinion that it is important that resource centres network with various organisations, specialist NGOs and industries which offer similar courses to those of the community learning centre. Many organisations produce and provide free literature. Networking and collaborating will help various organisations within a certain radius to pool their resources thereby avoiding unnecessary duplication of services.

Outreach programmes and active marketing of the resources available can become a very important means of researching needs and reaching out to the communities. Some of the activities that can be done in the resource centre or as resource initiatives were outlined by Bethel (1996) who stated that "democracy can only succeed if it is supported by the distribution of relevant and rich information".

Bethel (1996) went on to suggest various activities that this researcher feels could be part of the resource centre:

> audio cassettes could be circulated for rural poor societies. Oral histories and people wearing traditional attire can be invited and cooking demonstrations can be done. Local authors and musicians can be organised. Visual impacts, arts and artifacts with a bibliography can be prepared. Commemorative programmes to honour South African heroes can be presented.

These activities are over and above those supporting the formal programmes offered by the community learning centre. Many would depend on the needs of the students and the communities served by the resource centre.

3.10 Summary

In this chapter the history of resource centres was discussed. It was mentioned that an interest of resource centres began in the 1950's in Europe. Initially the resource centres were based in schools. Gradually their location moved from schools to communities. The African perspective was then discussed. In Africa, resource centres appeared as alternatives to the public library and were soon owned by the community as community organisations. Attention was then given to the South African situation of resource centres. In South Africa resource centres came about as a result of political oppression but are now regarded as part of community development. Although it is difficult to categorise resource centres attempts have been made to do so-one category being the aligned resource centre. The differences and similarities of resource centres with community libraries were also briefly discussed. It was noted that there is a need for resource centres to be part of community learning centres so that they will supply and support community development.

Chapter 4

Evaluation

In this chapter the concept "evaluation" is discussed using the interrogatives what, why, where, where, when, how and who. It is unavoidable that some overlaps will occur in the discussion.

4.1   The history of evaluation

The literature on the subject of "evaluation" is indeed voluminous and the term "evaluation" is complex and multifaceted. It is as wide as knowledge as "man's need to know is closely coupled with his wish to judge and evaluation of utility is interwoven with the development of knowledge" (Bawden 1990:12).

Bawden (1990:20) quotes Worthen and Sanders who say that enthusiastic practitioners of evaluation research can "trace their profession back to the ancient world of Greece and China". Patton (Bawden 1990:20) suggests that "the Biblical story of Daniel is the first recorded example of evaluation". Evaluation of social programmes, in its more modern sense, has been practised on a limited scale since the end of the last century, particularly in respect of public health improvements.

Evaluation research proper was first proposed in the United States during the 1930's, as a response to President Roosevelt's New Deal programmes.

It was, however, in the 1950's that the beginning of major social programmes of urban development and housing, education and training, public health and others gave rise to a requirement for objective assessments of results far beyond that which had been envisaged previously (Bawden 1990:20).

As a result of its increased use in the 1960's "commentators described evaluation as a growth industry" and the "liveliest frontier of American social science". At first evaluation relied upon "the input of experts, judging effort and achievement against set standards of excellence, seeking objectivity and the application of scientific reductionist thinking" (Wyley 1996:11).

But later as the differing circumstances of people's lives, opinions and habits came to be understood and discussed more contextually and relatively, the evaluation paradigm shifted, and continues to shift, to take account of multiple realities and the special circumstances of each evaluated endeavour (Wyley 1996:11).

The interest towards programme evaluation grew so much that Canada "set a requirement for departments and agencies to undertake the periodic evaluation of all programmes on a regular basis" (Ruthman 1984:1). Practically every major department established formal evaluation units, and studies were undertaken to guide the decision-making of the cabinet committees.

South Africa has not been left behind on evaluation as foreign donors are now demanding accountability of the funds supporting many organisations (Lategan 1997).

These donor countries and organisations have put down strict rules and procedures to be followed each time funds have to be accessed and evaluation reports have to follow before more funds are made available (Cunnama 1997). As a result of these rules organisations like Tembaletu conducted a strategic planning exercises as well as an evaluation that covered all the important role players in Tembaletu, including the Resource Centre. This is not to suggest that evaluations were not conducted before, either by any organisation or by Tembaletu, but that there were not necessarily any strict measures which, if not followed to the rule, would mean that ongoing projects would be left without financial support.

4.2   What is evaluation?

Various definitions of evaluation have been given by different authors. The definition of evaluation adopted for the present study is provided by Van Rooyen (1996:55) and reads:

> evaluation is the process of identifying and collecting data about specific services or activities, establishing criteria by which their success can be assessed, and determining both the quality of the service or activity and the degree to which the service or activity accomplishes stated goals and objectives.

Evaluation attempts to determine whether there is any change in performance; if so, if it is in the desired direction; and if so, to what extent (Van Rooyen 1996:54). At its most simple level, evaluation is about assessing what is (the actual, current situation) in relation to what was intended (the plans, targets, objectives) (Wyley 1996:10).

Emphasis in evaluation has changed over many years depending on the values of the time. After the Second World War the values were about increasing productivity to feed the nations of the world (Wyley 1996:25). The phases in the development of evaluation are outlined by Guba and Lincoln (1989:203-208) who argue for a "fourth generation evaluation". In this evaluation the evaluator has become a mediator, a negotiator and a change agent and the evaluation process is not viewed as a judgement against but in favour of the commissioners of evaluation so as to assist them make more informed decision-making (Guba and Lincoln 1989:205).

The evaluation process is distinct from the ongoing monitoring of activities resources and outputs of a project, programme, enterprise or institution. Monitoring constitutes hands-on information gathering for day-to-day management. Evaluation offers in depth reflection at a point considered significant in the life of the project, programme, enterprise or institution; this could be at the end a work phase, whenever special circumstances suggest it (for example a crisis), or at the end of a project itself (Wyley 1996:11). The primary purpose of evaluation research is "to provide objective, systematic, and comprehensive evidence on the degree to which it produces other unanticipated consequences, which when recognised would also be regarded as relevant to the agency" (Wright 1968:197).

Evaluation research thus differs in its emphasis from such other major types of social research as exploratory studies, which seek to formulate new problems and hypotheses, or explanatory research, which places emphasis on the testing of theoretically significant hypotheses, or descriptive social research, which documents the existence of certain social conditions at a given moment or over time (Wright 1968:198).

4.2.1 Attributes of evaluation

Evaluation has several attributes which surface every time people talk about evaluation. One of these is "whether evaluation should primarily be quantitative or qualitative" (Bawden 1990:13).

4.2.1.1 Quantitative and qualitative evaluation

Bawden (1990:15) makes the distinction between quantitative and qualitative types by saying that quantitative can be associated with 'experiment' which implies a high degree of control over the factors being studied while qualitative is associated with 'investigation' which is simply gathering data and suggesting ideas or hypothesis for testing. An example of a quantitative evaluation is a "laboratory evaluation" (Bawden 1990:24). The basic tenet of this approach is that certain aspects of a problem, or phenomenon, under investigation can be studied in isolation. The emphasis is on the control of variables, that is everything which could influence the results, with most being constant or eliminated, and a few, or preferably only one, being varied under the control of the experimenters.

Experiments of this kind are, in principle, carried out only in order to test some hypothesis or theory, which the experiment will prove or disprove. One consequence of the intrinsic nature of laboratory investigation is that it can be applied to only a very restricted aspect of system use.

Ruthman (1984:54) mentions that the advantage of the quantitative approach is that it is possible to measure the reaction of many subjects to a limited set of questions, thus facilitating comparison and statistical aggregation of the data.

Quantitative data permit the complexities of the world to be broken into parts and assigned numerical values. To obtain quantitative data, it is necessary to be able to categorise the object of interest in ways that permit counting. Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:100) warn of the tendency to regard quantitative measurement as "more reliable and easier to utilize, in particular by statistical techniques as science. However it is inconceivable without non-numerical data which may assist in interpreting numerical data and disregard of which would lead to an incomplete description of the social reality".

Moreover, in specific areas of social reality, purely qualitative research is often the most adequate method of investigation, involving sophisticated techniques (Bless and Higson-Smith 1995:100).

Qualitative evaluation is really an umbrella term, covering a variety of techniques, all of which have in common a desire to study the behaviour of individuals in all the complexity of their real-life situations (Bawden 1990:13).

Qualitative data consist of detailed descriptions of citations, events, people, interactions, and observed behaviours; direct quotations from people about their experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and thoughts and excerpts or entire passages from documents, correspondence, records, and case histories (Ruthman 1984:54). Qualitative data can provide depth and detail of understanding, particularly from direct quotation and careful description. Moreover, qualitative research emphasizes a holistic approach, treating, so far as is possible, the totality of the system under study and its context. A major benefit of this method is that it can allow the viewpoint of the user to emerge, and become a real factor in a realistic evaluation (Bawden 1990:28). Hounsel and Winn (Bawden 1990:31) make the point that a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques, each compensating for the weakness of the other, is a particularly powerful one.

4.2.1.2   Macro and micro evaluation

Another distinction is that between macro evaluation and micro evaluation. Macro evaluation aims to state how well, or otherwise, a system is performing. No attempt is made to say why the system is working well, or failing, or to look in detail at its components. The evaluation is restricted to simple measurable outputs, number of references retrieved number of items found and other calculable data. Micro evaluation, on the other hand is diagnostic, examining in detail a system's performance, and especially its failures (Bawden 1996:15). Micro evaluation can enable recommendations to be made for improvements to a system, whereas macro evaluation cannot do more than indicate that improvements are required.

4.2.1.3   Objective and subjective evaluation

Evaluation may also be objective or subjective. "Subjective evaluation is by definition macro evaluation; objective evaluation may be either macro or micro. Objective evaluations are essentially probabilistic. There can be no certain answer to the question as to whether a user will be able to find an answer to any given query in a library's reference collection, only a probability, depending in turn on component probabilities; that the library owns a relevant book, that the user can find the information in it" (Bawden 1996:16).

Subjective evaluations are based purely on the opinions of the users of the system as to its merits and value (or otherwise). Although most library and information managers have to take a close interest in the expressed (and often highly subjective) views of their more vociferous users, purely subjective evaluations are very limited, although they may serve to give an indication of a need for examination of a particular area of concern (Bawden 1990:17).

4.2.1.4   External and internal evaluation

Evaluation may also be external or internal. External evaluation is usually instigated at a crucial period in the life of a project or programme.

For example, when there are difficulties, or if a fresh look from the outside is deemed necessary for a long running programme, or if the level of technicality becomes complex enough to necessitate outside evaluation expertise (Wyley 1996:31).

In many cases the evaluation is instigated, arranged and funded by the donor agency. Lohmeier (Wyley 1996:31) defines internal evaluation as" internal assessment of information (which is collected through monitoring) regarding the extent to which actual progress in implementation conforms to (deviates from) the objectives set in the project plan".

In terms of the above discussion this evaluative study is difficult to type for the following reasons:

(a)   Although there were questions of a quantitative nature for example those regarding age and those that required a "yes" or "no" response many were followed by questions such as "why?" which necessitated more detailed and thus qualitative responses regarding the use of the Resource Centre.

(b)   Many questions of a macro nature such "do you use the computer to look for information?" indicated whether generally respondents were using the computer. However when a micro type question was put to the users for example, "what   do you think needs to be done to improve the resource centre?," specific recommendations concerning the resource centres were made.

(c)   This study can be regarded as external and was conducted at a very crucial stage in terms of funding both to Tembaletu Resource Centre and to Tembaletu Community Education Centre. As mentioned earlier this evaluation research followed the one conducted by Kaniki (1994).

(d)   This study is a subjective study as it depended on the opinions of the users and these opinions were largely used to determine whether the objectives of the Resource Centre have been achieved.

4.3   Why evaluation?

Evaluation must have a purpose -it is not an end in itself. Its purpose arises out of a need to set a value on a system (or component or difference) (Bawden 1990:13). The more expensive and advanced technical information services demand a great input of financial capital. But is every stakeholder involved in those services, for instance users, planners, funders and managers, getting a fair deal?. This question demands that there be some performance evaluation and measurement of impact. It is checking input against output (Bawden 1990:13).

According to Wyley (1996:13) libraries are faced with demands to provide more and higher quality services. The costs of library services and materials have increased while resources for library services and materials have remained static or have declined.

Growing competition for funds and the need to justify the importance of library services to those responsible for funding illustrate the need for measurement. Political and financial pressure on publicly-funded services and social programmes provides one of the contexts for library evaluation. Politically, "accountability to tax payers and the need to justify the spending of public funds brought rigour into library evaluation, in the form of cost benefit analyses "(Wyley 1996:13).

Another reason to embark upon evaluation of a library service is changes in the environment of the service (Wyley 1996:14). The advent of technology in the library has made librarians go headlong to purchasing computers and such-like equipment with a hope that this will improve service (and make life easier). When all services are operational, the pursuit of excellence in services motivates in favour of evaluation in libraries, and the desire to establish a benchmark to indicate the level of performance at which the service is operating.

Organisations, institutions and enterprises seek evaluation of their projects and programmes in order to assess whether they are doing things right (in terms of their intentions or plans for example), and whether they are doing the right thing (in terms of their impact, and in terms of policy or current thinking for example).

This is undertaken with a view towards changing activities and the allocation of resources, re-planning, shifting focus, expanding or downsizing operations, or even terminating them altogether (Wyley 1996:12).

4.4   When is/ should evaluation (be) done?

Evaluation may be conducted for information for decision making because an organisation is concerned with effectiveness and efficiency or as a ritualistic exercise (Ruthman 1984:162). Agencies may find evaluation useful for a variety of reasons extraneous to its purported purpose.

In ritualistic evaluation the agency ordering evaluation has no interest in using the results from the outset. The evaluation could be supported for reasons with nothing or little to do with its informational contribution. It could be done to delay an action on a difficult issue.

Managers fend off demands for action with the excuse that a study is being done (Ruthman 1984:163).

Occasionally an agency supports an evaluation to gain recognition for what the managers are sure is a "successful" programme. Managers expect the evaluation to document the success, and they plan to use the results for public relations and fund-raising. Should the study show anything else, they have little interest in paying attention. Evaluation can also be used as ammunition in bureaucratic contests. They expect that the results will come their way and then they can brandish them as backup for the position they espouse (Ruthman 1984:163).

An evaluation with good informational intent is good for decision making. In fact Ruthman (1984:161) says that managers who are not committed to periodic evaluation in and for their organisations "may well ply their trade elsewhere". A problem might have been picked up and as part of improving the situation an evaluation is conducted.

In this case formative and summative evaluation inform the success of the programme or for future planning.

4.5 How to evaluate ?

Many varied evaluation researches may be carried out on six levels which are:

(a)   cost.

(b)   effectiveness.

(c)   benefit.

(d)   cost- effectiveness.

(e)   cost-benefit.

(f)   cost-performance- benefit. (Bawden 1990:19)

Effectiveness implies the extent to which (expressed) needs of the users are satisfied by the system. Wyley (1996:20) cites Evans and Hannabus who indicate that there is no agreement on the definition of the concept of effectiveness nor techniques for measurement. They see effectiveness in terms of a range of assessment points, inputs through outputs and service outcomes to impact.

Wyley (1996:20) quotes AMPLE (A Model for Public Library Effectiveness) which has eight broad ranked dimensions to measure effectiveness: traditional counts, internal processes community fit, access to materials, physical facilities, boundary spanning, service offerings and service to groups. In this model effectiveness is defined as "goodness", achieving success and quality of performance, and focussing on impact on the consumer.

Benefit, which implies an estimation of the true value of information supplied, is notoriously difficult to measure, and is usually treated subjectively. Cost-effectiveness, cost-benefit and cost-performance-benefit attempt to interrelate costs of a system with measures of its results.

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:48-53) mention the fact that how the evaluation is done depends on the nature of the research i.e whether it diagnostic, formative evaluation or summative evaluation.

Although the study under discussion was (in terms of Bless and Higson-Smith) a summative evaluation, both diagnostic and formative evaluation will be briefly discussed.

Diagnostic evaluation is a technique for gathering data which is crucial in the planning of a new project. As such it is important that such research is carried out before a project is designed. Very often an organization or community is aware that something is going wrong, but is unable to identify exactly what the problem is (Bless and Higson-Smith 1995:49).

Formative evaluation relates to the development and implementation of a programme. Its aim is to shape the programme so that it will have the greatest beneficial impact upon the target community and many large programmes use formative evaluations at regular intervals during the life of the programmes to ensure that the intervention adapts to changes in social reality and thus continues to have the greatest possible impact (Bless and Higson-Smith 1995:49).

Of special interest to this researcher is summative evaluation which describes the present study. Summative evaluations set out to determine the extent to which programmes meet their specified objectives (Bless and Higson-Smith 1995:51). This information is used to gain credibility with various groups of people, particularly funders. Kaniki (1994), for example, was asked as an external evaluator to conduct a summative evaluation of Tembaletu Resource Centre. This evaluation was to be used for both decision makers (USAID funders as well as Tembaletu management and Tembaletu Resource Centre staff).

The process of summative evaluation research generally occurs according to the following steps:

4.5.1 The identification of the programme's aims and objectives

The identification of a programme's aims and objectives requires close co-operation between the programme developers and the social scientist carrying out the evaluation (Bless and Higson-Smith 1995:51).

In terms of the present study this researcher conducted a number of preliminary meetings with the Tembaletu Resource Centre staff to determine whether there were any additional objectives that the Resource Centre staff deemed fit to add to the existing objectives as well as to discuss the suitability of the existing objectives at the time of the research.

4.5.2 The formulation of the aims and objectives in to measurable terms

The researcher has to translate the aims and objectives into observable changes which can be measured in the target community. Almost all programmes aim to induce observable changes of behaviour which can be most accurately measured and studied (Bless and Higson-Smith 199:51).

In terms of this study questions based on, and that were to cover all objectives, were discussed and formulated with the help of the Tembaletu Resource Centre staff.

4.5.3 The construction of the instrument of measurement

An instrument must be found or designed which is capable of accurately measuring the dependent variable chosen in the previous step (Bless and Higson 1995:52). In the case of this study a number of instruments were deemed by the Tembaletu Resource Centre staff and the researcher to be impractical. For instance, mail questionnaires could not be guaranteed to reach the addresses given by students or could be delayed as some students from rural areas fetch their post from the nearest shops and hence a poor response would have ensued. Instead self-administered questionnaires were preferred although it was recognised that they would pose problems with regard to some students who may have been struggling with their writing skills.

4.5.4 Designing the evaluation study and data collection

According to Bless and Higson (1995:53) this involves deciding on the research design (which is discussed in the next chapter).

4.5.5 <u>Reporting back</u>

Once the evaluation has been completed, the researcher should present the findings to those responsible for the intervention, the participants and any other interested groups and this must be presented in simple language (Bless and Higson-Smith 1995:53). Although this study was not commissioned by the Tembaletu staff, the researcher hoped that they would find it useful.

4.6   The importance of objectives

The issue of evaluation cannot be thought of without objectives. Since performance evaluation essentially aims at assessing how well the system meets its objectives, these must be specific, clear and well-defined (Bawden 1990:51). A general tendency towards a lack of clearly-defined objectives in libraries is a great problem for the evaluation of library achievement. Lancaster (1977:4) points out that some libraries, especially public libraries, have statements of objectives which "are somewhat nebulous and even platitudinous".

Measurement of performance presupposes the formulation of clear objectives and attainable goals. Achievement is never possible except against specific, clearly defined targets. For objectives to be useful, evaluation is necessary, and the evaluative process needs objectives as its criteria. A written statement of goals and objectives sets priorities for what the library is intending to accomplish (Van Rooyen 1996:64). A statement of goals and objectives may include: a mission statement of the philosophy and purpose of the library; assumptions under which the library operates; a brief history or chronology of major events related to the library; goals(long range directions for organizational activities which are short range, time limited, accomplishable and measurable.

In this study and, as mentioned, the researcher's intervention required that he applied summative evaluation. Summative evaluations also as mentioned, try to determine the extent to which programmes meet their specified aims and objectives (Bless and Higson-Smith 1995:51).

4.7   What is evaluated ?

The two well researched evaluation trends are: evaluation of projects or programmes and evaluation of information systems. Project or programme evaluation includes evaluation in the development and public and non-profit sector whereas information systems evaluation includes performance measurements, user studies and evaluation of libraries (Wyley 1996:28).

4.7.1 Performance measurement

In performance, measurement is brought to bear on inputs as they relate to outputs, usually focussing on the many activities performed by library staff and the resources used (possibly the most measurable elements) (Wyley 1996:14). Bawden (1990:7) states that

"in essence, the question is simple, we want to decide how well the information system (service, resource...) is operating, compared with some theoretical maximum". The focus of this discussion is on performance measurement.

Swisher and McClure (1984:37) define performance measures as the means of determining the degree to which organizational goals and objectives are being accomplished, the effectiveness with which services are provided and resources made available, and the relationships among various library activities toward accomplishment of goals and allocation of resources. Performance measurement would generate statistics of:

(a)   materials issued (by material type, by subject, by borrower type.

(b)   borrowers/ members (active, inactive, registration as a percentage of population, borrowing habits, annual visits per capita).

(c)   in-library materials use (by subject, by borrower type, per capita, turnover rate per item).

(d)   collection additions and deletions (by subject).

(e)   fines (paid, outstanding), (vi) materials access (query fill rates, document delivery speeds).

(f)   reference transactions (per capita, completion rate) (Swisher and McClure 1984:37).

Cronin (1991:75) identified two types of performance measures: input and output. Lancaster (1988:2) identified a third performance measure namely, outcomes but mentions that outcomes "cannot be studied directly, but the criteria used to evaluate the outputs should be good predictors of the extent to which the desired outcomes are achieved".

Input measures investigate the system from the viewpoint of its operators, and look at the resources invested, and how they are deployed: money spent, in total and in detail; number of purchases, enquiries, loans. Output measures, by contrast, try to look at user satisfaction, and the extent to which the service is succeeding in its objectives (Bawden 1990:50).

Outcomes go beyond outputs in dealing with the overall benefit, or impact, of a service. Lancaster (1988:2) argues that the long term objective of a library is to produce certain outcomes in the community to be served. The library can be viewed as an interface between the available information resources and the users to be served. Therefore, any evaluation applied to the library should be concerned with determining to what extent it successfully fulfils this interface role (Bawden 1996:6).

In terms of this study all the questions asked aimed to measure the performance output. It was not looking at inputs as the study was not interested in, for example, resources invested and money spent in buying the resources.

Instead the study was concerned with determining to what extent (the predictors) the Resource Centre was achieving its objectives.

4.7.2 User-oriented evaluation

The user oriented evaluation is grounded in the specifics of the real problems and parameters of the operation of actual information systems and services (Bawden 1990:91). User oriented evaluation is not synonymous with the evaluation of operational systems, since such systems can be subjected to evaluations which give little information as to their ability to respond to the needs of real users.

User-oriented evaluation involves an appraisal of some operational information system or service. It represents a holistic, flexible and adaptive approach to evaluation. It takes into account the value of the information provided to the users, and includes in the analysis all relevant factors. Bawden (1990:7) points out that it is the only approach to evaluation which can deal adequately with the true situation of information use.

User-oriented evaluation will usually be micro rather than macroevaluation, although there will sometimes be occasions when a macro-approach is appropriate (Bawden 1990:93).

A macro approach is often useful at the commencement of an evaluation, when initial information is being gathered so as to identify interesting areas for more detailed investigation on the micro-level. A useful approach is to carry out an initial macro-level subjective study of user attitude to a specific information service, isolating certain factors for a laboratory style study, then following up with a holistic user-oriented evaluation, taking cognisance of the results gained previously (Bawden 1990:93).

The regular collection of statistics and performance indicators for systems and services, on a micro-level, can also serve as a source of ideas for detailed evaluation, providing that the type of information collected bears some relevance to user needs, which is not always the case (Bawden 1990:94). Comparison and consolidation of information gained by different techniques, carefully applied, is likely to prove more informative than reliance on a single method, particularly if that is quantitative in nature (Bawden 1990: 96).

Given the above discussion this study can be termed a "user-orientated evaluation" as it dealt with, and appraised, the specifics in Resource Centre usage for example computer use, photocopying, lamination amongst others from the point of view of the users of the Resource Centre.

4.8 **Who evaluates?**

As mentioned evaluation can be undertaken by either internal evaluators/ staff or external evaluators. Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:55) mention the fact "the question of who should evaluate interventions is often a difficult one while internal evaluators/ insiders (people who have helped to plan and implement) an intervention are the most knowledgeable about the area, but also the most subjective.

External evaluation implies calling outside experts who may not understand the aims and objectives of the project as well as insiders, but are likely to be more objective.

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:55) suggest that the question of who should evaluate interventions must be decided by those responsible for the intervention and depends upon a number of questions such as: Are there insiders available who have the skills to conduct an evaluation? Are the funds available to employ outside evaluators who are often more expensive and how important is objectivity to the evaluation?

Some evaluators consider it their task to carry out a cost benefit exercise comparing the input and output of an intervention which may require the additional skills of an accountant but this can be done by a social researcher particularly in the diagnostic stage.

In this study the researcher was an external evaluator as he was not part of the staff of Tembaletu Community Education Centre and was not commissioned by its management. Participation of the Tembaletu staff became very vital in the diagnostic stage to familiarize the external evaluator (this researcher) not only with the objectives but with the way things have been done both in the Resource Centre as well as in the entire organisation of Tembaletu.

4.9   **Summary**

In this chapter evaluation research was discussed. It was mentioned that evaluation research was first proposed in the United States during the 1930's, as a response to President Roosevelt's New Deal programmes. The definition of evaluation preferred and used by the researcher in this study was mentioned.

Attributes of evaluation were described and briefly discussed. These were quantitative, qualitative, external or internal, macro and micro nature of evaluation. It was noted that evaluation can be used in document delivery systems, user-oriented evaluation and in many other information systems. It was pointed out that this study could be seen as a combination of macro evalaution and micro evaluation which contains summative, quantitative and qualitative elements.

Chapter 5

Research methodology

In this chapter the research procedure and the choice of instrument are discussed.

5.1 Survey research

As already noted the objective of the research was to evaluate the Tembaletu Resource Centre in terms of the objectives of the Centre.

Interviews with Resource Centre staff were conducted on three occasions. The objectives of the first interviews were amongst other things:

(a)   to get clarity on the meaning of the objectives of the Resource Centre.

(b)   to find out whether these were still regarded by the staff as still relevant to be used as a basis for an evaluative study and,

(c)   to determine whether there were other additional objectives the staff felt had to be added.

The survey method was used to obtain past and current data regarding the fulfilment of those objectives from the three user groups, namely teachers, students and general users.

The word "survey" literally means "to look at" or "to see over or beyond", in other words "to observe". Surveys provide information, satisfy curiosity, and are useful for planning and evaluation purposes (Van Rooyen 1996:86). Mostert (1996:7) quotes Line who indicates that library surveys can be seen as a systematic collection of data concerning libraries, their activities, operations, staff, use and users, at a given time, or during a given period. Powell (1985:60) defines three types of survey studies which are:

5.1.1 <u>Exploratory surveys</u>

Exploratory surveys can increase the researcher's familiarity with the phenomenon in question, help clarify concepts, be used to establish priorities for research, identify new problems, and last, but not least, exploratory surveys can be used to gather information with practical applications, although such results cannot always be anticipated (Powell 1985:60).

There are specific kinds of exploratory surveys which are (a) literature, (b) experience surveys and (c) analysis of "insight- stimulating" examples (Powell 1985:60).

5.1.2 <u>Analytical and descriptive surveys</u>

Powell (1985:61) quotes Leedy who describes the analytical survey as appropriate for data that are quantitative in nature and that need statistical assistance to extract their meaning. Both the terms analytical and descriptive surveys are used interchangeably such that "most researchers seem to consider an analytical survey as essentially a kind of descriptive survey" (Powell 1985:61). Some scholars have applied the generic term "descriptive research" to many of these methods which use "direct observation" and subsequent "description" of whatever was observed (Busha and Harter 1980:145).

The basic assumption of survey research is that, by carefully following certain scientific procedures, one can make inferences about a large group of elements by studying a relatively small number selected from the larger group (Powell 1985:59).

The samples are questioned and examined by means of interviews, questionnaires, attitude tests, participant observation, or a combination of these techniques to obtain information which can answer research questions or be used to test hypotheses (Van Rooyen 1996:84). The survey does not emphasize the diverse aspects of a single case but rather the frequency or number of answers to the same question by different people. The different cases lose their individuality and become anonymous. Each case or questionnaire answered by a respondent is split up and reordered according to the different questions (Powell 1985:59).

5.1.3 <u>Purposes of descriptive surveys</u>

A research survey is commonly used in library and information studies (Swisher and McClure 1984:87) as a means to assist libraries in trying to define their objectives. Objectives are "the formally stated ends to whose achievement the programme's or library's resources are directed" (Ruthman 1984:12).

A written statement of library goals and objectives is essential because it sets priorities for what the library intends to accomplish. It informs both the library staff and the library's clientele of the activities that are to be emphasized during the coming year.

Third and most importantly for the research, is that the statement provides a basis for evaluation (Swisher and McClure 1984:30).

In this study a descriptive survey was used. Questionnaires, instead of interviews as will be shown below, were deemed more appropriate and were, therefore, used to obtain information.

5.1.4 <u>Survey research techniques</u>

Beside "focus" and "observation" techniques the principal survey methods use interviews and/or questionnaires. Interviews and questionnaires are used to investigate the same questions and are often alternatives. Interviews and questionnaires can be used together to elicit information from humans which could otherwise be difficult or impossible to obtain (Van Rooyen 1996:85).

5.1.4.1 Questionnaires

A questionnaire method is the most structured way of getting information directly from respondents (Bless and Higson-Smith 1995:107). A questionnaire may be either structured or unstructured, mail or self administered. Structured questionnaires have a fixed wording and sequence of presentation, as well as more or less precise indications of how to answer each question (Bless and Higson-Smith 1995:107).

The unstructured response questions, or open-ended questions, are particularly useful in pilot investigations, or at times when the researcher

(a) has little knowledge of the number or variety of responses that might be expected,

(b) already knows that a very large number of different responses will be received, or

(c) needs to collect data that fully reflect the feelings or perceptions of respondents (Bless and Higson-Smith 1995:107).

5.1.4.1.1 Advantages and disadvantages of the questionnaire

There are a number of advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires, some of which are going to be mentioned below.

(i) Advantages of the questionnaire

(a) The questionnaire allows a wider range and distribution of the sample than the survey interview method.

(b) It provides an opportunity for respondents to give frank, anonymous answers.

(c) It allows greater economy of effort (that is, a single instrument, duplicated and distributed to numerous respondents, can produce a large amount of data).

(d) It can be constructed so that quantitative data are relatively easy to collect and analyse.

(e) It facilitates the collection of large amounts of data in a short period of time (Busha and Harter 1980:62).

(ii)   Disadvantages of the questionnaire

(a)   It precludes personal contact with respondents, perhaps causing the investigator to gain insufficient knowledge about participants in a study.

(b)   It does not allow respondents to qualify ambiguous questions.

(c)   If the prepared instrument does not arouse respondent emotions, that is, when the questionnaire is too impersonal, valid responses might not be elicited.

(d)   Poorly worded or direct questions might arouse antagonism or inhibitions on the part of respondents.

(e)   Most questionnaires cannot be designed to uncover causes or reasons for respondents' attitudes, beliefs, or actions.

(f)   It has a difficulty in obtaining responses from a representative cross-section of the target population (many other advantages and disadvantages are mentioned in Busha and Harter (1980:62,63)).

In this survey some respondents were still involved in various literacy courses and were therefore still at various stages of learning to read and write. This was reflected in a number of follow-up questions not being answered according to the instructions of the previous questions and emphasizes the shortcomings of the questionnaire technique being used with respondents with varying levels of literacy.

5.1.4.2   Interviews

An interview is the best way of getting an in-depth understanding of a situation from the viewpoint of the participant (Van Rooyen 1996:103). An interview involves direct personal contact with the participant who is asked to answer questions (Bless and Higson-Smith 1995:106). Interviews, however, have the disadvantage that in the case of many respondents being interviewed the researcher would need to train research assistants to conduct the interviews.

Given the low literacy skills of some of the respondents noted above the interview technique would possibly have been the most appropriate. However in this study the questionnaire, instead of the interview, was used as there were many respondents namely 14 teachers, 99 students and 25 general users to be questioned.

Also it would have been time consuming and expensive to train research assistants and the researcher had neither the time nor the necessary financial resources to train assistants or conduct the interviews himself. Furthermore, the respondents would not have had time as many came from outside town as soon as classes were over the students would hurry to catch buses home. General users would also have been difficult to reach given that there was no contact information available.

5.1.5 Questionnaire format

Proper construction of the questionnaire is essential to its success. While the length of the questionnaire is important, the recipient's perception of its length is more important (Swisher and McClure 1984:87). A questionnaire must be presented to each respondent in exactly the same way to minimize the role and influence of the interviewer and to enable a more objective comparison of the results (Bless and Higson-Smith 1995:170). The completed instrument must suggest brevity, organization, and simplicity.

In this study each questionnaire comprised 16 questions. The questionnaire was available in both English and Zulu and respondents had a choice between the two. Questions were phrased as objectively and as simply as possible. Factual questions for example. those which ask for objective information about the respondents, such as their social background (Bless and Higson-Smith 1996:119) were asked. A question regarding age was asked because age had been considered when the objectives of the Resource Centre were formulated. Although such age or qualification questions are easy to answer because they are straightforward and do not influence the respondents (Bless and Higson-Smith 1996:119), it was anticipated that other respondents would not favour responses pertaining to their personal matters.

The questionnaire comprised both structured (closed) and unstructured (open) questions and thus could be considered a semi-structured one.

5.1.5.1   Structured (closed) questions

Closed questions are easy to code and limit unnecessary answers. They help the respondents in focussing his/her answers to the question asked.

Other advantages of closed questions include the standardization of questions and the ability to pre-code (Van Rooyen 1996:100) as well as assisting in avoiding ambiguity and misrepresentation. They also tend to be easier to answer and therefore not demanding much of the student's time.

In this study where respondents had a response other than those provided, an "other" category was provided for that response.

5.1.5.2 Unstructured (open) questions

These forms of questions are difficult because the researcher does not have the opportunity for clarification and explanation of interesting (or even unclear) responses (Bawden 1990:37). They, do, however, leave the participants completely free to express their answers as they wish.

Unstructured questions are "well adapted to exploratory studies, or studies based on qualitative analysis of data" (Bless and Higson-Smith 1995:122). Answers may be quite complex and not easily comparable to those of other respondents. Their recordings and scoring gives rise to some difficulties. Furthermore, they tend to produce replies that are more difficult to analyze than those of their structured counterparts (Busha and Harter 1980:70). They also tend to be more difficult to answer which places more demand on the time of the students and the ability to answer involved questions.

As mentioned the questionnaire used in the present study included both structured and unstructured questions in languages that were familiar to the respondents.

As noted in Chapter 1 the research questions used in the study were derived from the objectives of the Resource Centre.

5.2 Population

The population under investigation were the users of Tembaletu Resource Centre. They were made up of the (a) teachers, (b) registered students and (c) the general users.

Although all teachers and students are guaranteed membership of the Resource Centre after filling in application forms, general users of the Resource Centre have to pay two rand per year to join as members. According to the Resource Centre staff general users come from diverse backgrounds, from those at different school levels to employed members (Cunnama and Perry 1997).

5.3 Sample and Sampling process

In terms of the present study simple random sampling was applied to the selection of the student sample while different approaches were adopted for the teachers and general users (see below). The total size of the sample was decided not to be too big or too small. As noted 14 teachers of the Tembaletu programme, 99 students and 25 general users comprised the total sample.

The sampling frame in this study consisted of 600 registered students and 14 teachers of Tembaletu Community Education Centre and an unspecified number of general users of the Tembaletu Resource Centre. General users were defined as "any person who is neither registered as a student or a teacher at Tembaletu". As mentioned organizations which had placed their information material at the disposal of the Resource Centre were not sampled as they were not available at the time of the survey.

5.3.1 Teachers

Since the number of teachers was deemed to be sufficiently small (14) it was decided not to sample them but to hand all of them the questionnaire.

The questionnaires to teachers were handed out on different days as classes were not held everyday, with some being held twice a week and others thrice a week. Because teachers normally came just before they started teaching, they were handed the questionnaires either to fill them in at that time or to bring them on the next day after having completed them at home. All 14 of the teachers completed and returned the questionnaire.

5.3.2   Students

To obtain as representative a sample of this group as possible and to keep a manageable size it was decided that in each of all nine classes taught, 10 students would be chosen at random and be given a questionnaire to complete. These students comprised:

(a)   literacy and numeracy students for all levels one to four who are classed and taught according to their levels

(b)   matric students, who are given an intensive examination preparation as they already are repeating Matric

(c)   computer students, typing students, garment making students, Career Resource Centre Attendance and Training in Resources in Early Education students.

It should be noted that although there are 600 students registered at Tembaletu rarely do they all attend classes. At the beginning of the year there is possibly a 100% attendance but as the year progresses, the pressure of work, lack of bus fares for those who are unemployed, and general laziness amongst other reasons take their toll. This results in reduced attendance by the end of the each year (Nawa 1997).

Classes started at 4.30 in the afternoon. Questionnaires were handed to the first ten students who came into each class. If the researcher found the students already seated and they numbered more than ten in each class he handed the questionnaire to the first and then to alternative students up to the number of ten.

At the beginning of each questionnaire was a paragraph which introduced the researcher, giving his name, explaining the purpose of the interview and requesting cooperation. It also asked the respondent to hand the questionnaire over to his/her teacher once it had been completed. The researcher could not simultaneously administer the questionnaire to all classes. Consequently he was assisted by teachers who also had to apply random sampling along the way explained above.

Teachers also gave of their teaching time for students to fill in the questionnaire in their presence. This was done to guarantee the return of the questionnaires as it was examination time and it was possible that students would not subsequently attend classes and therefore not return the questionnaires. However, students who felt they needed more time to answer the questionnaire were allowed the liberty to do so provided they gave the questionnaires back.

As mentioned 99 students completed the questionnaire. A sample of ten students had been taken from each of nine classrooms. The next six were TREE students. An additional three had been taken from the classrooms where only 11 students were present during the survey.

5.3.3   General users

General users were a difficult group to reach for the administration of the questionnaire because the Resource Centre staff does not keep information such as addresses on them. The general users also do not necessarily regularly use the Resource Centre. In order to determine the "sample" it was decided that any user who came to the Resource Centre over a period of 10 days, and was not a registered student, would be requested to complete the questionnaire.

The Resource Centre staff were largely responsible for identifying such users. 25 general users completed the questionnaire during this period. The Resource Centre staff handed out the questionnaire to the general users over a period of seven days. These users could come at any time after the opening of the Resource Centre which opened at 8 am everyday from Monday to Friday and 8 am to 1 pm on Saturdays.

For a further three days the researcher himself came in the morning to hand out the questionnaires to general users.

5.4   Pilot study

The pilot study (pretest exercise) in the present study was conducted two days before the survey was conducted. The aim was to test the validity and applicability of the instrument. The pilot group comprised one teacher, two students and one general user who were asked to fill in the questionnaire.

When finished they were asked if there were any problems for example with language or understanding of any terms or any thing they would like changed in the questionnaire.

All four respondents had no objection to the instrument as it was. The pilot group was excluded from further participation in the survey.

5.5   Data analysis

Data was analysed manually. It was analysed separately according to (a) teachers, (b) students and (c) general users. Responses to open question were checked for their similarity. Those that were similar were categorised and tabulated. When the same questions were asked of all three user groups the responses of each group were reflected in one table. The same responses from all three user groups were reflected.

5.6   Evaluation of the methodology

There should be procedures built into the research design to ensure the collection of reliable data prior to actual data collection (Van Rooyen 1996:8). Utility, reliability and validity are the three criteria which are standards of quality that the researcher must address during the planning process to ensure that findings will accurately describe the research problem and to assist the researcher in making sure decisions will be based on information that accurately reflects a true picture of library services and operations (Swisher and McClure 1984:73).

5.6.1 Utility

If the study has utility, the findings can be used to suggest specific decision areas that require attention, or offer strategies by which the effectiveness of the organization can be improved (Swisher and McClure 1984:73).

In terms of the present study it was anticipated that the results of this survey could be used to indicate areas of the Resource Centre which required or did not require attention in terms of the objectives of the Resource Centre.

5.6.2 Reliability

Reliability is concerned with the consistency of measures (Bless and Higson-Smith 1996:130). Reliability of measurement implies stability, consistency, dependability, and predictability; and repeated measurement should produce the same data (Swisher and McClure 1984:95). Thus, the greater the consistency in the results, the greater the reliability of the measuring procedure (Bless and Higson-Smith 1996:130).

It is anticipated that under relatively similar circumstances, the instrument used in this study would produce similar results.

5.6.3 Validity

Validity is an assessment of the extent to which data collection procedures actually measure what the researcher intended them to measure (Swisher and McClure 1984:97,98). Unless we can be certain that our techniques are actually measuring the things that they are supposed to be measuring, we cannot be certain what the results mean (Bless and Higson Smith 1996:135). There are many different types of validity and the three which will be briefly mentioned are internal, external and face validity.

5.6.3.1 Internal and external validity

Internal validity asks if the researcher has the correct interpretation of the data, has an additional factor not been acknowledged, and did the instrument measure the variable intended? (Swisher and McClure 1984:98). External validity asks if the findings can be generalized from a sample to the population as a whole, or were there unique factors associated with the data collection techniques, the research design, or the selection of subjects or cases that allow one to suggest that the results are not representative of a larger population (Swisher and McClure 1984:99).

5.6.3.2 Face validity

Face validity is concerned with the way the instrument appears to the participant (Bless and Higson-Smith 1995:139). It is important that an instrument be tailored to the needs of the subjects for whom it is intended. Some instruments may appear too simplistic or too difficult to the respondents, resulting in their giving up before they begin.

In this study all efforts were made to ascertain face validity by simplifying difficult terms in both the Zulu and English versions. Users who felt comfortable with either English or Zulu were given their choice. Validity was also obtained by giving respondents enough time to answer the questions if they were busy or feeling tired. As noted under 5.4.2 piloting was conducted in order that any problem identified by the respondents would be corrected before the full survey was conducted.

The application of this study to other resource centres within a community learning centre is a possibility. This study could also help the management to see whether the objectives need reviewing and to see which aspects of the Resource Centre need attention.

5.5 <u>Summary</u>

In this chapter the methodology adopted for this research was outlined. The population sample comprised teachers, students and general users of Tembaletu Community Education Centre. All teachers were questioned while the student sample was chosen on a random basis across all classes taught. The general users of the Resource Centre were "chosen" over a period of 10 days. The method and data collection technique used was the survey and questionnaire respectively. Reason for use of the questionnaire were provided as well as description of its format. The analysis of data was briefly described and finally the issues of utility, reliability and validity were commented on.

Chapter 6

Results of the survey

In this chapter the findings from the survey conducted amongst the users, namely teachers, students and general users of Tembaletu Resource Centre with regard to the evaluation of the Resource Centre are tabled and described.

The Resource Centre was set up to support and facilitate the activities of Tembaletu Community Education Centre. Like many NGOs who are currently experiencing lack of financial support, it is important for the Resource Centre to constantly evaluate whether it still supports the skills and sustains the developmental information offered by the Tembaletu Community Education Centre. This is particularly true for the Resource Centre in the face of USAID financial cutbacks that are going to greatly affect the running of the organisation as a whole.

The Resource Centre's objectives (see section 1.3) were used to evaluate the Resource Centre.

As mentioned there were fourteen teachers (14), ninety nine (99) students and twenty five (25) general users who were questioned. Question 5 (a) which asked if the respondents had "used the Resource Centre" was used as a filter question. Those respondents who indicated that they had not used it were asked to resume answering the last two questions. Hence from question 5 the number of questionnaires that were counted were all fourteen (14) teachers, eighty (80) students and sixteen (16) general users.

From question 15 all questionnaires were counted again as those that had indicated that they "do not use the Resource Centre" in question 5 had been requested to resume answering the questionnaire. All percentages are rounded off to the first decimal point.

Socio-demographic details of the three user groups

In this group will be included tables dealing with:

- age (table 1),

- qualification (table 2),

- and students on each course per teacher (table 3)

Table 1

Frequencies for age distribution of teachers, students and general users surveyed.

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN. USERS	
AGE	N	%	N	%	N	%
15-25	2	14	36	37	16	64
26-35	5	36	36	36	6	24
36-45	4	29	17	17	3	12
46-55	2	14	9	9	-	-
56-65	1	7	1	1	-	-
TOTAL	14	100	99	100	25	100

Most teachers 5 (36%) were between the age of 26 to 35 years. The average age for teachers was 37 and the youngest was 25 whilst the eldest was 58 years. Most students 72 (73%) were between the age of 15-35. The eldest student was 56 years and the youngest was 18 years. Of general users most 16 (64%) fell into the 15-25 age group. The youngest was 16 years and the oldest was 44 years of age.

Table 2

Qualifications of the three user groups surveyed

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN. USERS	
QUALIFICATION	N	%	N	%	N	%
Literacy	-	-	13	13	-	-
Primary	-	-	9	9	-	-
High school	7	50	57	58	21	84
Diploma	4	29	1	1	2	8
Degree	3	21	-	-	2	8
No response	-		19	19	-	-
TOTAL	14	100	99	100	25	100

Table 2 indicates that out of 14 teachers 7 (50%) were qualified in that 4 had Diplomas and 3 had Degrees. Another 7 teachers (50%) were not qualified. Of the students 1 had a Diploma and 57 (58%) had high school education. Of the students 13 had different levels of basic literacy education and 9 students had primary education. There were 19 (19%) students who did not respond. Of the general users 21 (84%) had different levels of high school education while 2 had degrees in higher education.

Table 3

Students enrolled in each course

COURSES	N	%
Computers	10	10
Typing	130	131
ABET Level 1	16	16
Zulu	11	11
English	65	65
Numeracy	63	63
Biology Standard 10	7	7
Literacy (Level 3)	3	3
Garment making	12	12
TOTAL*	317	318

* (Multiple responses elicited)

(This question was only directed to teachers)

Table 3 indicates that some teachers were responsible for more than 1 class. This explains why some classes such as typing are heavily loaded with 130 students to 1 teacher. The 16 (16%) Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) Level 1 class and the 65 (65%) English class represents different levels of literacy students. It also should be noted that the responses in Table 3 reflect the attendance and the current registration as at the time of the survey and not necessarily the enrolment number as it was at the beginning of the year. Some students had dropped out during the year.

Occupations of the general users

(The question of occupation was only directed to general users). It was observed that 16 (64%) general users were at school while 8 (32%) were employed. One (4%) of general users was unemployed.

Table 4

Frequencies of courses done by students (only)

COURSES	N	%
Creche & Level II	3	3
Typing & Computer	11	11
Sewing/Garment	12	13
Typing	7	7
Numeracy and literacy	11	11
Improving English	7	7
No response	48	48
TOTAL	99	100

(This question was directed only to students).

There were 11 (11%) students who indicated that they were doing English numeracy and literacy whilst 7 (7%) indicated that they were doing Typing and the same improving English. The "no response" of 48 may contain a sizeable number of literacy students who were reluctant to commit themselves to answering this particular question. (The issue of the difficulty of answering the open questions was discussed in Chapter 5).

It should be noted that the reason the number of literacy and numeracy students doing both ABET Level 1 16 (16%) and the English 65 (65%) in Table 3 do not agree with the number of students doing the same course in Table 5 is attributed to the fact that only a sample, and not all, students were surveyed.

Table 5

Frequencies for Resource Centre membership by groups surveyed.

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN USERS	
MEMBERSHIP	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	11	79	70	71	12	48
No	2	14	29	29	13	52
No response	1	7	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	14	100	99	100	25	100

Eleven (79%) of teachers were members of the Resource Centre
while only 2 were not. Asked whether they were members 70 (71%) students
indicated positively whilst 29 (29%) indicated negatively. There were 12 (48%)
general users who were members of the Resource Centre and 13 (52%) who were
not.

Table 6

Reasons for not being members by three user groups surveyed

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN.USERS	
REASONS	N	%	N	%	N	%
Not aware of membership rights	-	-	6	21	8	62
Have no time	-	-	6	21	5	38
No books on my subject	-	-	5	17	-	-
Still planning/ thinking	-	-	4	14	-	-
Not members but use the centre	2	-	-	-	-	-
No response			8	27		-
TOTAL	2	-	29	100	13	100

Although 2 teachers indicated that they were not members of the Resource Centre in Table 5 they, nevertheless, indicated that they still used the Resource Centre. Of the 29 (29%) students who said that they were not members, 6 indicated that they were not aware of membership rights. This above mentioned comment about not being aware of membership rights was also echoed by 8 (62%) out of 13 general users.

Table 7

Usage of the Resource Centre by three user groups surveyed

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GENERAL	
USAGE	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	14	100	80	81	16	64
No	0	0	19	19	7	28
No response	-	-	-	-	2	8
TOTAL	14	100	99	100	25	100

It was interesting to note that all 14 (100%) teachers had used the Resource Centre. Out of 99 students, 80 (80%) indicated that they had used the Resource Centre while 19 (19%) had not. Of the 25 general users 16 (64%) of them had used the Resource Centre. (All 25 general users were using the Resource Centre when they were identified for the survey, hence there could be a misunderstanding about the word "used" which resulted in the 7 negative responses).

Table 8

Frequency of use of the Resource Centre by three user groups surveyed

TEACHERS			STUDENTS			GENERAL
FREQUENCY	N	%	N	%	N	%
Everyday	5	36	5	6	6	38
4-5 times a week	1	7	17	21	4	25
2-3 times a week	4	29	20	25	4	25
Once a week	3	21	18	22	-	-
Less than once a week	1	7	10	13	-	-
No response	-	-	10	13	2	12
TOTAL*	14	100	80	100	16	100

Of the teachers 5 (36%) use the Resource Centre every day while (29%) use it 2-3 times a week. Of the students 5 (6%) indicated that they use the Resource Centre everyday while 10 (13%) used it less than a week. The highest number of students 20 (25%) are those who use it 2 to 3 times a week. Out of 16 general users 6 (38%) who indicated that they use the Resource Centre, used it everyday.

Table 9

Reasons for using the Resource Centre by three user groups

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GENERAL	
REASONS	N	%	N	%	N	%
To read books	10	71	49	61	11	69
To read newspapers	10	71	2	3	10	63
To read magazines	10	71	4	5	6	38
To view cassettes	-	-	4	5	3	19
To sit and study	-	-	20	25	8	50
Other	9	57	-	-	2	13
No response	-	-	1	1	-	-
TOTAL*	39	270	80	100	40	252

* (Multiple responses were elicited)

No teacher used the Resource Centre to view cassettes while 10 (71%) used it to read books, newspapers and magazines respectively. In the other category 4 teachers indicated that they used it for photocopying while 5 indicated that they used it for "subject matter". Out of 80 students who indicated that they use the Resource Centre, 49 (61%) used it to read books and 20 (25%) to sit and study. It was also interesting to note that the highest number of general users (11 or 69%) also read books followed by 8 (50%) who sit and study while 3 (19%) general users used the Resource Centre to view cassettes. The "other" category included 2 (13%) general users who used the Resource Centre for discussion.

Table 10

Services used the most by three user groups surveyed

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GENERAL USERS	
SERVICES	N	%	N	%	N	%
To read newspapers	12	86	-	-	-	
To look up subject matter	3	21	-	-	-	
To read books	2	14	4	5	3	19
To read magazines	-	-	2	2.5	2	13
To sit and study	-	-	2	2.5	5	31
To view cassettes	-		-	-	1	6
No response	-	-	72	90	5	31
TOTAL *	17	121	80	100	16	100

* (Multiple responses elicited)

Twelve (86%) teachers read the newspaper the most while only 2 (14%) read books the most. Out of 80 students who indicated they used the Resource Centre 72 (90%) did not respond while 4 (5%) indicated they read books the most. Five (31%) general users indicated that they sit and study while 3 (19%) read books.

Table 11

Books read by three user groups surveyed

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN. USERS	
BOOKS	N	%	N	%	N	%
Novels	-	-	27	55	5	46
Literacy	8	80	18	37	2	18
Computer	-	-	2	4	3	27
Other	2	20	-	-	-	-
No response	-	-	9	18	1	9
TOTAL *	10	100	56	114	11	100

* (Multiple response elicited)

Of 10 teachers 8 (80%) who indicated they read books in Table 10 also mentioned that they read "literacy books". The 'other' category comprised computer, dressmaking and cookery. Of 49 students who indicated in Table 11 that they read books 18 (37%) indicated that they read literacy books and 27 (35%) read novels while out of 11 general users who indicated they read books, 5 (46%) indicated that they read novels.

Table 12

Magazines read by three user groups surveyed

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN.USERS	
MAGAZINES	N	%	N	%	N	%
Bona	4	40	3	50	-	-
Personality	4	40	-	-	-	-
You	3	30	-	-	-	-
Developmental journal	3	30	-	-	-	-
Newsweek	2	20	1		-	-
Drum	1	1	3		3	50
Enterprise	-	-	-	-	2	33
Tribute					3	50
Other	6	60			1	17
TOTAL*	23	221	7	50	9	150

* (Multiple responses elicited)

Although 10 teachers had indicated that they used the Resource Centre to read magazines, the same respondents indicated that they read more than 1 magazine each. The most read magazines were Bona and Personality supported by 4 (40%) teachers each. When asked what magazines they read 3 (50%) students also indicated the Bona magazine. Out of 6 general users who indicated reading magazines 3 (50%) read Tribute and Drum while 2 read Enterprise.

Table 13

Newspapers read by three user groups surveyed

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN. USERS	
NEWSPAPERS	N	%	N	%	N	%
Natal Witness	10	83	-	-	10	100
Daily News	2	17	-	-	4	40
City Press	2	17	-	-	-	-
The Mercury	2	17	-	-	-	-
Mail & Guardian	2	17	-	-	2	20
Sowetan	-	-	1	-	-	-
Ilanga	-	-	1	-	-	-
Daily News	-	-	-	-	4	40
Weekly Mail	-	-	-	-	2	20
TOTAL*	18	151	2	-	22	220

* (Multiple responses elicited)

It was interesting to note that the local newspaper Natal Witness enjoys high readership among teachers with 10 (83%) readership. When students were asked what newspapers they read no paper had more than a single support and only 2 papers were mentioned, the Sowetan and Ilanga. Of 10 general users who indicated that they read the newspaper all 10 (100%) read Natal Witness which is followed by Daily News with 4 (40%) readers.

Table 14

Purpose for which the Resource Centre is used by three user groups

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN. USERS	
PURPOSE	N	%	N	%	N	%
Relaxation	8	57	5	6	3	19
Study purposes	2	14	52	65	10	63
Subject and course	7	50	13	16	6	38
Information other than the course	4	29	10	13	2	13
TOTAL *	21	150	80	100	21	133

* (Multiple responses elicited)

Of 14 teachers 8 (57%) used the Resource Centre for the purpose of relaxation, followed by 7 (50%) whose purpose was for subject and course use. Of students 52 (65%) used the Resource Centre for the purposes of studying while only 5 (6%) used it for relaxation. Of general users 10 (63%) used the Resource Centre for studying while only 2 (13) used it for information.

Table 15

Most important purpose for which the Resource Centre is used by three user groups

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN. USERS	
MOST IMPORTANT PURPOSE	N	%	N	%	N	%
Sitting and studying	5	36	5	6	5	31
Subject and course	5	36	3	4	2	13
No response	4	28	72	90	9	56
TOTAL *	14	100	80	100	16	100

* (Multiple responses elicited)

All 3 groups surveyed namely 5 (36%) teachers, 5 (6%) students and 5 (31%) general users answered that the most important purpose for which they used the Resource Centre was a place to sit and study.

A similar number of teachers, that is, 5 (36%) considered "subject and course" to be the most important purpose of using the Resource Centre.

Table 16

Photocopying as a service used by three user groups

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN. USERS	
PHOTOCOPYING	N	%	N	%	N	%
Often	12	86	17	21	6	38
Seldom	1	7	25	31	7	44
Never	-	-	15	19	1	6
No response	1	7	23	29	2	12
TOTAL	14	100	80	100	16	100

Most teachers 12 (86%) used the photocopying machine often while 25 (31%) students seldom used it and 17 (21%) use it often. Most 7 (44%) general users seldom used the photocopying machine. It was interesting to note that 6 (38%) general users often used the photocopying machine

Table 17

Laminating as a service used by three user groups

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN. USERS	
LAMINATING	N	%	N	%	N	%
Often	0	0	2	3	3	19
Seldom	2	14	12	15	5	31
Never	7	50	25	31	4	25
No response	5	36	41	51	4	25
TOTAL	14	100	80	100	16	100

Most teachers namely 7 (50%) never used the laminating service. Of students 25 (31%) never used laminating while 41 (51%) did not respond.

Of general users 3 (19%) often used laminating while 4 (25%) never used it.

Table 18

Binding as a service used by three user groups

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN.USERS	
BINDING	N	%	N	%	N	%
Often	1	7	28	35	-	-
Seldom	1	7	17	21	7	44
Never	8	57	15	19	4	25
No response	4	29	20	25	5	31
TOTAL	14	100	80	100	16	100

Of teachers 8 (57%) never use the binding service. 28 (35%) students often use the binding service while 15 (19%) never. Of general users 4 (25%) never used the binding service while 7 (44%) seldom used it.

Table 19

Whether the computer is used to obtain information by three user groups

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN.USERS	
COMPUTER USE	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	4	29	10	12	8	50
No	10	71	62	78	6	38
No response	-	-	8	10	2	12
TOTAL	14	100	80	100	16	100

Of teachers 10 (71%) did not use the computer while 4 (29%) used it to obtain information. Of students 62 (78%) did not use the computer while 10 (12%) used it. Of general users 8 (50%) used the computer to get information while 6 (38%) did not.

Table 20

Reasons the computer is not used by three user groups

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN.USERS	
REASONS	N	%	N	%	N	%
Computer illiterate	7	70	17	27	4	67
No time	2	20	3	5	1	17
Other	1	10	-	-	-	-
No response	-	-	42	68	1	16
TOTAL	10	100	62	100	6	100

Out of 10 teachers who said they did not use the computer 7 (70%) stated that they were computer illiterate while 2 (20%) had no time to use it. The "other" said s/he did not need to use it. Out of 62 students who indicated they do not use the computer, 17 (27%) said they had no knowledge (indicating computer illiteracy) while 42 (68%) did not respond. The 4 (67%) general users also indicated computer illiteracy as a reason for not using the computer.

Table 21

Information sources used on the computer by three user groups

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN.USERS	
SOURCES	N	%	N	%	N	%
World Book Encyclopedia	3	30	4	40	5	63
Bible	1	10	3	30	-	
Science Encyclopedia	-	-	3	30	5	63
World Atlas	-	-	-		-	-
Children's game	-	-	10	100	-	-
TOTAL *	4	40	20	200	10	126

* (Multiple responses elicited)

Of 4 teachers who indicated that they use the computer 3 (75%) used it to access the World book on CD ROM while 1 (25%) used it for the Bible. Out of 10 students who used the computer, 4 used it for the World Book while 3 (30%) used it for both the World Atlas and Science Encyclopedia. Out of 8 general users who indicated they use sources on the computer 5 (63%) used the World Book and 5 used the Science Encyclopedia.

Table 22

Whether any book for sale in the Resource Centre has been bought by the three user groups

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN.USERS	
BOOKS BOUGHT	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	-	-	15	19	3	19
No	14	100	60	75	13	81
No response			5	6	-	-
TOTAL	14	100	80	100	16	100

No teacher had ever bought any book for sale in the Resource Centre. Of students 60 (75%) and 13 (81%) of general users had never bought any book for sale. Of both students and the general users 19% had bought books.

Type of books bought by the three user groups

Of 15 students that had bought books from the Resource Centre 5 (33%) bought numeracy books while 4 (27%) bought literacy books. Only 1 each of general users had bought numeracy and literacy books respectively.

Table 23

Reasons for not buying books on sale by three user groups

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN.USERS	
REASONS	N	%	N	%	N	%
Not aware of books for sale	11	79	11	18	7	54
No relevant	-	-	5	8	3	23
No response	3	21	44	74	3	23
TOTAL	14	100	60	100	13	100

Asked why not, 11 (79%) teachers, 11 (18%) students and 7 (54%) general users said they "had no idea there are books for sale in the Resource Centre" while 5 students (8%) said that the books were not relevant.

Table 24

Whether any information has been found to help solve personal problems by three user groups

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN.USERS	
INFORMATION FOUND	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	10	71	53	63	12	75
No	4	29	11	14	4	25
No response	-	-	16	23	-	-
TOTAL	14	100	80	100	16	100

Of teachers 10 (71%) and 53 (63%) students indicated that they had found information that had helped them solve personal problems. This response was echoed by 12 (75%) of the general users.

Reasons for not finding information to solve personal problems

When asked why they had not found information to solve personal problems 1 teacher, 2 students and 1 general user indicated that they were not aware of such information being housed in the Resource Centre. 1 teacher indicated that his/her problems were "beyond the scope of this Resource Centre." 1 "other" teacher indicated that he/she "had never thought about it".

Table 25

Specific information that helped solve personal problem by three user groups

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN.USERS	
INFORMATION	N	&	N	%	N	%
Education	5	50	18	34	9	75
Health	3	30	6	11	3	25
Other	2	20	-	-	-	-
No response	-	-	29	55	-	-
TOTAL	10	100	53	100	12	100

When asked to specify what information was found that helped to solve their personal problems 5 (50%) out of 10 teachers, 18 (34%) out of 53 students and nine (75%) out of 12 general users said the information was on education while 3 (30%) teachers and 6 (11%) said it was on health. The "other" category of teachers mentioned "gardening: how to make my own compost" and "life in general".

Provision of resource based work by teachers

Eight teachers (57%) agreed to have given resource based work to students while 6 (43%) have not given resource based work. Of the 8 teachers who have given resource work to students, 7 (88%) felt it was a worthwhile exercise and only 1 said it was not.

When asked to say more about why they felt giving students resource based work was a worthwhile exercise 3 (43%) teachers said that it helped students get familiar with information in the Resource Centre while 3 (43%) felt that it reinforced skills learnt. These included the alphabetical order of books, use of contents and index, skimming, summarizing, needing a bibliography and writing in their own words.

Table 26

Whether the three user groups ever borrowed video cassettes from Resource Centre

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN.USERS	
BORROWED CASSETTES	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	6	43	9	11	6	37
No	8	57	55	69	10	63
No response	-	-	16	20	-	-
TOTAL	14	100	80	100	16	100

Of teachers 8 (57%) had never borrowed an educational video while 6 (43%) had. Only 9 (11%) students had ever borrowed an educational video while 55 (69%) had not. Out of 16 general users 10 (63%) had never borrowed an educational video while 6 (37%) had.

Table 27

Reasons for not borrowing video cassettes by three user groups

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN.USERS	
REASONS	N	%	N	%	N	%
No video machine	3	37.5	38	69	5	50
No knowledge	3	37.5	8	15	4	40
No response	2	25	9	16	1	10
TOTAL	8	100	55	100	10	100

Of the 8 teachers who said they have never borrowed educational video cassettes 3 (37.5%) indicated they have no video machine while the same number had no knowledge that they could borrow the cassettes. Out of 55 students who had never borrowed a video cassette 38 (69%) have never done so because they had no video machine at home while 8 (15%) say they had no knowledge of such a facility.

Reasons for borrowing video cassettes

The reason for borrowing the videos given by all 3 groups was, understandably, for educational purposes. Responses from all 6 (100%) teachers included to, "view them before using them in tutorials, to show learners how to use the automatic teller machine (ATM) and how to approach numeracy". Responses from 6 (67%) students included for "getting educational purposes such as" to learn Word Perfect 6.0 and preparing for mid-year examination" while 3 did not respond. All 6 general users expressed the fact that they were going to use the video for educational purposes such as "to learn Word Perfect 6.0 and preparing for mid-year examination".

Table 28

Specific video cassettes the three user groups want in the Resource Centre

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN.USERS	
VIDEO CASSETTES	N	%	N	%	N	%
Educational videos	1	-	9	53	1	12.5
Science	1	-	2	12	1	12.5
Mathematics	1	-	2	12	1	12.5
AIDS	1	-	-	-	1	12.5
Human rights	1	-	-	-	1	12.5
Music	1	-	-	-	1	12.5
No response	-	-	4	23	2	25
TOTAL	6	-	17	100	8	100

* (Multiple responses elicited)

Of 17 students 13 (76%) who said they would like to see more videos in the Resource Centre, mentioned educational videos as a preference. No other subject had more than one preference.

Table 29

Whether the Resource Centre is used for meetings by three user groups

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN.USERS	
MEETINGS	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	7	50	8	10	1	6
No	7	50	57	71	1	6
No response	-	-	15	19	14	88
TOTAL	14	100	80	100	16	100

Half the number of teachers 7 (50%) used the Resource Centre for meetings while the other half did not. Of 80 respondents, 8 (10%) students used the Resource Centre for meetings. Of the 16 general users 1 replied in the affirmative, 1 in the negative and 14 (88%) did not respond.

Table 30

Regularity for using the Resource Centre for meetings by three user groups

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN.USERS	
REGULARITY	N	%	N	%	N	%
Often	3	43	2	25	-	-
Seldom	4	57	5	62.5	-	-
No response	-	-	1	12.5	-	-
TOTAL	7	100	8	100	-	-

Of 7 teachers who indicated they use the Resource Centre for meetings 3 (43%) indicated they often used it while 4 (57%) said they seldom use it. Of 8 students who indicated they use the Resource Centre for meetings 5 (62.5%) said they seldom used it while 2 (25%) said they often used it.

Type of meetings held

When asked what kind of meetings were held in the Resource Centre, all 7 (100%) teachers and 5 (62.5%) students said these were meetings of an educational nature. Three students did not respond.

Table 31

Reasons for not using the Resource Centre by three user groups

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN.USERS	
REASONS	N	%	N	%	N	%
No need for meetings	3	-	23	40	-	-
Not aware	1	-	14	25	1	-
No response	3	-	20	35		
TOTAL	7	-	57	100	1	-

Of teachers 3 said that they had offices and hence did not consider the Resource Centre as a possible venue. Of 57 students who said they did not use the Resource Centre for meetings 23 (40%) of them said it was because they had no need for a meeting while 14 (25%) of the students said they had no knowledge about the existence of this service. The only general user who answered no to whether s/he used the Resource Centre for meetings said s/he was not aware that the Resource Centre could be used for meetings.

Table 32

Materials the three user groups would like to see in the Resource Centre

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN.USERS	
MATERIALS	N	%	N	%	N	%
More books	8	57	55	55	11	44
More newspapers	6	43	15	15	5	20
More magazines	5	36	16	16	4	16
More videos	3	21	17	17	8	32
Other	-	-	-	-	4	16
No response	-	-	-	-	5	20
TOTAL*	22	157	103	103	37	148

* (Multiple responses elicited)

Most of the teachers, 8 (57%) wanted more books in the Resource Centre. Of 99 students 55 wanted more books, followed by 17 (17%) students who wanted more videos and 16% who wanted more magazines. Of general users 11 (44%) wanted more books, followed by 8 (32%) for more videos.

Table 33

Specific subjects the three user groups want in the Resource Centre

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN.USERS	
SUBJECTS	N	%	N	%	N	%
Zulu	4	29	19	9	-	-
English	3	21	10	10	-	-
Afrikaans	-	-	2	2	-	-
Biblical studies	-	-	3	3	-	-
School textbooks	-	-	-	-	16	64
Tertiary Ed.	-	-	-	-	9	36
No responses	7	50	65	66	-	-
TOTAL	14	100	99	100	25	100

When asked to specify what books they would like to see in the library, 4 (50%) teachers indicated Zulu books. Of students 19 (36%) also specified "Zulu" books. Of 11 general users who specified more books 7 (64%) wanted more textbooks and 4 (36%) indicated tertiary education books.

Table 34

Specific magazines the three user groups want in the Resource Centre

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN.USERS	
MAGAZINES	N	%	N	%	N	%
Drum	5	100	10	63	3	75
Sports	-	-	-	-	4	100
Bona	3	60	6	37	4	100
Technology	-	-	-	-	3	75
Diabetes	-	-	-	-	2	50
Other	-	-	-	-	3	75
TOTAL*	8	160	16	100	19	475

*(Multiple responses elicited)

All 5 teachers who indicated they wanted more magazines stated that they wanted Drum while 3 of the 5 mentioned Bona. Of the 16 students 10 (63%) also preferred Drum, with Bona again being the second most popular magazine with 6 (37%) students favouring it. All 4 general users mentioned both sports magazines and Bona while 3 general users mentioned Drum and technology magazines.

Table 35

Specific newspapers the three user groups want in the Resource Centre

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN.USERS	
NEWSPAPERS	N	%	N	%	N	%
Natal Witness	5	83	7	47	5	100
Ilanga	3	50	6	40	5	100
No response	-	-	2	13	-	-
TOTAL*	8	133	15	100	10	200

* (Multiple responses elicited)

When asked to specify what newspapers they preferred, the Natal <u>Witness</u> was the most preferred, followed by <u>Ilanga</u>. Of teachers 5 (83%) 7 (47%) students and 5 (100%) general users indicated that they preferred the <u>Natal Witness</u>.

Table 36

<u>What the three user groups think needs to be done in the Resource Centre</u>

TEACHERS			STUDENTS		GEN.USERS	
TO BE DONE	N	%	N	%	N	%
Orientation programme	3	21	-	-	-	-
Needs studycubicles	2	14	-	-	3	12
Space between the shelves	2	14	-	-	-	-
Open on Saturdays	1	9	-	-	-	-
More computers	3	21	13	13	6	24
More books	3	21	10	10	3	12
No response	-	-	76	77	13	52
TOTAL	14	100	99	100	25	100

When asked (in an open question) what they would like done in the Resource Centre an orientation programme, computers and books were supported by 3 (21%) teachers each. Of teachers 2 (14%) and 3 (12%) general users agreed that there was a need for study cubicles. Users from all 3 groups agreed that more computers and more books need to be provided. However the 77% and 52% non response by students and general users respectively deprived this question of a broader view.

Chapter 7

Discussion of results and conclusions

In this chapter the results of the survey are discussed.

The Resource Centre was set up to support and facilitate the activities of Tembaletu Community Education Centre. Like many NGOs who are currently experiencing lack of financial support, it is important for the Resource Centre to constantly evaluate whether it still supports the skills and sustains the developmental information offered by the Tembaletu Community Education Centre. This is particularly true for the Resource Centre in the face of USAID financial cutbacks that are going to greatly affect the running of the organisation as a whole.

The aim of the study was to evaluate the Resource Centre within Tembaletu Education Centre as a community learning centre. All research questions were based on the above objectives. It must be pointed that some of the objectives such as objective (a) and objective (e) overlap. This means that the information activities offered at the Resource Centre can be applied to more than one objective.

7.1 Support of the non-formal educational activities, that is,literacy and the high school matric classes.

The research question asked was:

Does the Resource Centre support non-formal educational activities?

In order to address provision of **formal** and **non-formal** education a number of issues were addressed, that is, predominant age, courses done by students, number of students per teacher and students in each course per teacher were investigated.

7.1.1 Age

It is apparent from Table 1 that there were many young users of the Resource Centre who were between the age 15 to 25.

This age group has been a concern which was raised by the Resource Centre staff in discussions with the researcher. Staff members had realized that the centre was attracting many young people.

According to a Resource Centre staff member (Mvubu 1997) these young people had registered for skills training and were placing more demands on the information material, particularly during the height of violence in Pietermaritzburg when many students had left their schools. This led to a consideration to review the mission statement of Tembaletu as a whole and the Resource Centre in particular so as to address the needs of its young group more fully.

The above has led to the holding of a strategic planning exercise (Institute for Community Management Services 1996:34) in which Tembaletu staff addressed the issue of accommodating the youth in their programmes by planning:

> To assess, design and mount a youth enterprise and job skills programme that will effectively address the unemployment problems of youth and seek cooperation with the Governmental National and Provincial Youth Commission with the view to reducing the levels of disillusioned youth in the region.

7.1.2 Reasons for Resource Centre use

Table 9 illustrated an interesting feature when a majority of users were asked what they use the Resource Centre for. Of respondents 10 (71%) teachers, 49 (61%) students and 11 (69%) general users indicated that they read books. This was followed by reading newspapers with 10 (71%) teachers, 2 (3%) students and 10 (63%) general users.

In the light of this evidence it is reasonable to conclude that the Resource Centre is seen by all users as having an educational focus and that the books are still the main reason why respondents come to the Resource Centre.

Of students 20 (25%) indicated (Table 9) sitting and studying as the second most important use to reading books. Ten (71%) of teachers read both newspapers and magazines and 6 (38%) of general users read magazines. Given the above it is apparent that students are more concerned with reading books and studying. They however do not read newspaper that much as only 3% of 80 indicated that they read them.. However the same amount of teachers read books, newspapers and magazines while the general users also indicated a preference for these formats.

The researcher was told of, and witnessed, a class of about five "graduates" from the garment making class who had been allocated their own class by Tembaletu management. They were using their own sewing machines to start their own businesses. When the researcher introduced himself and explained the reason for his presence, these people first said that they had nothing to do with the Resource Centre and therefore the questionnaire might be irrelevant for them. But they remarked to the researcher that they need information about places to sell their wares. They also said that the Resource Centre should display their finished wares. Their needs may not be identified as reading needs as they relate more to small business development. This observation is similar to one made by Mchombu (1991:28) who in researching rural needs in Botswana, Tanzania and Malawi found that the rural people wanted to know:

> the different types of vegetables we can grow here, how to recognise early signs of early pests, and the names of medicines which we can use to kill the pests. We need to know where we can sell our vegetables at a good price before they are spoiled.

Mchombu (1991:28) concluded that individuals seemed to articulate their information needs in terms of what was their daily life and related problems, otherwise information need was seen in terms of direct inputs such as medicine, fertilisers, literacy materials, physical facilities and so on. Therefore it is wrong to assume that "information needs and information seeking behaviour will be the same" (Mchombu 1991:28).

Drawing on Mchombu's observations and the views of the Tembaletu garment making class it would seem important that the Resource Centre continually researches and provides for the diverse needs of their users, particularly users such as the garment makers. For instance a needs assessment might reveal the need for information on the Hawkers Association which could be displayed in the centre for the benefit of those who, after completing their course, may need to know which informal business organisation to contact, how to start their own business or apply for a loan.

The Resource Centre should offer information that will not only assist the students in their subjects but also assist them with information relating to employment opportunities when they have completed their studies.

7.1.3   Purchasing of literacy and numeracy materials

The Resource Centre has for many years been selling literacy and numeracy material in the Resource Centre. These books were produced by the Resource Centre staff as there was a lack of such material in the Resource Centre.

Table 22 reflects interesting information regarding this support service. All teachers (100%), 75% of students and 81% of general users had never bought such material. Furthermore, 11 (79%) teachers, 11 (18%) students and seven (54%) general users indicated that they were not aware of the books which were for sale (Table 23). Given this latter point it is important that an awareness of the resources available in the Resource Centre be created by the staff.

Lack of awareness of Resource Centre services leads to non-use. Awareness can be created by adopting a marketing strategy. Mostert (1996:90) says that part of the marketing strategy is to have "cordial relationships with the community as a whole. Staff attitudes such as friendliness and general helpfulness, should form the cornerstone of this strategy".

However the researcher is of the opinion that since the books on sale are elementary literacy books aimed at helping the newly literate adult readers reinforce their skills, teachers would only use these books as reference material as there is a variety of information material which exists in the Resource Centre that could be adapted and reproduced as supplement for lesson preparation (as mentioned in section 2.4.4).

Teachers indicated and confirmed in Table 11 that although they did not buy these books they still read them. When asked which books they read 80% of 10 teachers indicated that they read literacy books.

It is understandable that teachers consulted literacy books as a frame of reference and a basic source for literacy material, especially in the absence of a wide publication of such books in this country.

Literacy and numeracy books were bought by 5 (33%) and 4 (27%) students respectively. Of general users only 1 each bought numeracy and literacy books. As these books were meant to reinforce literacy and numeracy skills, particularly for students, there is a need to emphasize the marketing of the information both by the Resource Centre staff as well as by the teachers.

7.1.4   Resource-based work

An organised and educational way of exposing students to information is giving them resource-based work. The Lambert Wilson Library in Pietermaritzburg was set aside solely as a project library.

This was because of the demand that was being made on the Natal Society Library by school students (Zondi 1997). Resource based work could open the eyes of the students to some new work and stimulate them to read even more than the prescribed information material and this would help ensure use of the Resource Centre.

Teachers were asked whether they had given resource based work to students. Of 14 teachers 8 (57%) indicated they had and of those 8, 7 (88%) found it a worthwhile exercise because they felt it helped students to get familiarized with information and reinforced skills learnt. One respondent expressed that s/he believes "that orienting learners to the importance of information gathering is very important". It was interesting to note that some teachers see the link between the Resource Centre with the skills taught in the classroom in that 3 (43%) mentioned that resource based work reinforced skills learnt in the classroom.

One of the 6 teachers who said they had not given resource based work mentioned that his/ her students could not yet read and would therefore not benefit from resource based work. He/she also cited the fact that information containing "typing" was not available. This comment should be seen in the light of the Resource Centre's endeavour to purchase material that will support the programmes offered at Tembaletu.

It is therefore important for teachers to be involved in book selection to ensure that their courses have support material to be used by their students in the Resource Centre and to accommodate the illiterate students by means of repackaged information (see chapter 8).

Although teachers and students selection is taken into consideration when selection is made (see 2.4.6) it may be that both teachers and students have not made full use of this service. It is possible that their input needs to be emphasized more.

A resource based teaching approach can be a more holistic way to involve students in the Resource Centre. According to Karlsson (1996:13) it departs from "teaching with media" to "learning with media" (see 3.4.1).

With the availability of so many resources in the Resource Centre, for instance students can be shown a video on <u>Molo Fish</u> (which is available in the Resource Centre) and the teachers can integrate it with life skills, literacy and many facets of both their syllabus and the Resource Centre without expressly mentioning to students that they were learning about the importance of the Resource Centre.. This approach will support the curriculum and motivate students to use the Resource Centre. Students learn the relatedness of the material in the Resource Centre and their own subjects. Resource based approaches could be used as a way of reinforcing skills learnt and could therefore be used for the benefit of the students. Six (43%) of the teachers had not given students resource based work. It could therefore be concluded that those students may find it hard to understand what the Resource Centre has to do with their subjects.

7.1.5 <u>Resource Centre membership</u>

In Table 5, 70 (71%) students and 12 (48%) general users confirmed that they were members of the Resource Centre meaning that they voluntarily filled in the application form.

In Table 7 six of the 29 students and 8 of the 13 general users who were not members of the Resource Centre said that they were not aware of membership rights.

Although 79% of 14 teachers, 71% of 99 students and 48 % of 25 general users indicated that they were members of the Resource Centre (Table 5) 21% of 29 students and 62% of 13 general users indicated that they were not members because they were not aware of membership rights whilst 5 (17%) of 29 students said they were not members because there were "no books on our subjects" (Table 6). In the light of the above it is apparent that the issue of membership rights could be made more apparent to users, particularly general users.

Conclusion

It is difficult to say whether the first objective which is to "support formal and informal education" has been achieved or not. This is so because there are positive signs such as the high membership of the Resource Centre by users and the association of the Resource Centre with sitting and studying. However denials of knowledge by users of services such as the selling of literacy and numeracy material sold in the Resource Centre is a negative indication towards fulfilling this objective.

7.2   Support of Tembaletu's extension programmes.

The research question asked was:

(a)   Does the Resource Centre support the extension programmes?

The discussion in this section focused on whether or not the Resource Centre fulfils the objective of supporting the extension programme and if so, how.

7.2.1   Box libraries

It was mentioned that Tembaletu Education Centre has extended its programmes to outlying areas such as Qanda and many others. These extension programmes rely on the Resource Centre for information support. One form of support provided by the Resource Centre are the box libraries which are supplied to the outlying centres and exchanged after a certain period.

As the survey did not cover students from the outlying centres no observation can be made but discussion with the Resource Centre staff confirmed that this service was well used and supportive of the courses offered in each particular centre. It was also not possible to ascertain whether there were any students from the outlying centres who were using the Resource Centre as these students were not surveyed.

7.2.2 Loaning of educational videos

It was explained to the researcher that recording of educational video cassettes is one service, not only opened to all users, but to the extension centres as well and therefore regarded by the staff as part of an extension programme (Mvubu 1997). A question was asked to all three groups whether they had borrowed a video cassette, for what purpose and to explain why they had not, in case they had not.

In Table 26 it was interesting to note that 6 (43%) teachers had borrowed educational videos. All 6 teachers had borrowed them understandably for educational purposes such as to view them before tutorials and to see how to approach the teaching of numeracy and to "show learners how to use the automatic teller machine".

The researcher was told by the Resource Centre coordinator that there was a video machine and a television set held in the Resource Centre that users can use to watch the video cassettes inside the Resource Centre. However this room can only sit 30 people and some students number about 40 per class (Mvubu 1997). This would understandably be a stumbling block in terms of an entire class viewing a video and creative ways of resolving the problem need to be explored.

It was found though that a majority of both students and general users 55 (69%) and 10 (63%) respectively (Table 26) have not benefitted from the videos as they have never borrowed them. In both groups it was found that the unavailability of video machines was the main reason why videos were not borrowed (Table 27), a problem for which the Resource Centre was not responsible and it could not solve.

It became clear that these groups were also not aware of the fact there was a video machine and television set that could be used to watch the video cassettes. The researcher again observed the importance of relaying information and the marketing of the services and facilities of the Resource Centre as 4 (40%) general users and 8 (15%) (Table 27) students expressed that they were not aware of the fact that they could borrow the video cassettes. In view of the educational nature of the cassettes it is important that more exposure to cassettes and facilities available to view them be provided as of the users 6 (100%) teachers, 6 (67%) of the students and 6 (100%) of the general users who had borrowed the video cassettes had done so for educational purposes.

This is an encouraging sign that even though there is little use of this service a broad support service exists in the Resource Centre and can be used to help any user in his\her pursuit of knowledge.

Given the above it can be concluded that the video cassettes which contain relevant educational information have not been used effectively, because teachers and students either did not have video machines at home to watch at leisure or were not aware of the service. However the availability of a room, video machine and a television set, giving clear guidelines as how to use the cassettes should be made known to users.

7.2.3 Opening on Saturdays for PROTECH students

The other extension programmes supported by the Resource Centre is the opening of the Resource Centre on Saturdays for the PROTECH students to come and borrow books and do their assignments. Unfortunately as these students were not registered students of Tembaletu and only attended on Saturdays it was not possible to survey them as their teachers in Tembaletu had asked them to cease attending to prepare for their examinations. The Resource Centre coordinator though, emphasized the fact that PROTECH students used and kept the centre busy on Saturdays.

This comment by the Resource Centre coordinator agreed with findings from both Table 14 and Table 15 which confirmed the important educational nature of the Resource Centre. Of students 52 (65%) and 10 (63%) general users indicated using the Resource Centre for study purposes.

This was confirmed in Table 15 when 5 (36%) teachers, 5 (6%) and 5 (31%) general users indicated sitting and studying as the most important purpose for which they use the Resource Centre. Thus the Resource Centre is seen as a support service to the educational information of the users.

Conclusion

In view of the above discussion it is difficult to assess whether or not the objective of supporting Tembaletu's extension programme has been met given that there is no documented evidence about how many students from the extension programmes use the box libraries or borrow cassettes. However, if the loaning and use of educational videos is seen as an extension programme one could argue that this objective has still to be fully realized.

7.3   To provide materials and information for life skills.

The research questions asked were:

(a)   Does the Resource Centre provide information for life skills?

(b)   Which information material is provided for life skills?

(c)   Are the users finding the information helpful for solving their own problems?

Regarding whether or not the users use the information provided for life-skills and whether or not they had found this information helpful in solving their personal, it was noted that in all user groups, namely 71% of teachers, 63% of students and 75% of general users had found information that helped them solve their personal problems. When asked what the information was on 5 (50%) teachers, 18 (34%) students and 9 (75%) general users stated that the information was on education.

Health was the topic next mentioned by all 3 user groups (Table 28). The availability of such information will make the users realize that the Resource Centre houses a very wide variety of materials. A very small number of respondents however indicated that they were not aware they could get information that could help them. This again points to the need for the Resource Centre to publicize its services and collection. In the light of the availability of health information it is important that displays related to eventful days such as World AIDS Day should be launched.

All the material such as books, leaflets, magazines, newspaper cuttings and posters should accompany the display. The Resource Centre buys video cassettes, some of which contain information related to health and posters with information such as AIDS. These posters are displayed in the Resource Centre.

Conclusion

It is apparent from the above discussion that there is provision of material for life skills and that it is used by the users although awareness of a variety of materials other than the educational should be made. Hence it can be said that this objective has been achieved.

7.4   To provide a venue for meetings

The research questions asked were:

(a)   Is the Resource Centre used for meetings?

(b)   What meetings is the Resource Centre used for?

This objective was implemented many years ago when organisations like the Library and Information Workers Organisation used the Resource Centre as a venue to conduct meetings. The reason why the above questions were asked were to find out whether use of the Resource Centre as a venue for meetings is still relevant in the light of more meeting rooms and a bigger hall being available.

In Table 29 half the teachers (50%) had used the Resource Centre as a meeting venue and both teachers namely seven (100%) and five (63%) of eight students had used the Resource Centre for educational meetings. However half the number of teachers and students had not used it while 88% of general users did not respond. In Table 31, 23 (40%) students mentioned that there was no need for them to hold meetings in the Resource Centre while 14 (25%) students and one general user indicated that they were not aware of the fact they could use the Resource Centre for meetings. This objective may not be very relevant as the Tembaletu Community Education Centre has a big hall and various other spacious classrooms. If the Resource Centre staff still want to provide the Resource Centre as a venue they need to address the issue of users who are not aware of such a facility.

It is apparent from the above discussion that there are teachers who do hold educational meetings in the Resource Centre namely three who do so "often" and four who seldom do so "seldom" (Table 30) but as mentioned there needs to be a review of this objective as more space for meetings has been provided by Tembaletu Community Education Centre over the years.

Conclusion

Although this objective has been achieved it is the opinion of this researcher that it could be left out as there are many other venues that can be used for meetings.

7.5 To provide information resources for the Tembaletu community in general.

The research questions asked were:

(a) What information is provided for the Tembaletu community in general?

(b) Is that information being used by Tembaletu community in general?

It should be noted that this objective overlaps with the first objective, that is, support of the non-formal educational activities, to a large extent. Furthermore, findings concerning the "Tembaletu community in general" that is the outside users have been listed and discussed under previous objective and to isolate the findings concerning this group is considered unnecessary.

Given the above, the issue of use of other facilities (photocopying, binding and laminating) as well as that of computers will be discussed in this section.

7.5.1 Other facilities

7.5.1.1 Photocopying, binding and laminating services

There are also photocopying, binding and laminating services which are available to all users. Users have to pay a sum of 20 cents to have photocopies made by the Resource Centre staff. The researcher observed that teachers used a lot of material from the Resource Centre and also brought in material from outside to be photocopied for students. As mentioned in section 2.4.3.1, the Resource Centre staff started producing literacy and numeracy material because there was not enough material.

The literacy material on sale and video cassettes have been mentioned and analyzed under previous objectives and will therefore not be repeated although there are applicable under this objective.

Another provision of material open for the wider community is the use of the photocopying, binding and laminating services (Tables 16, 17 and 18). As mentioned teachers and general users were observed making use of the photocopy machine. Also as mentioned any user, except teachers, has to pay 20c per page to make a photocopy. In Table 16, 38% of general users confirmed that they often used photocopying while 44% seldom use it. The "never" and "no response" responses were very low. It is apparent from the above observation that all, particularly general users, are making good use of the service.

However Table 17 indicated a low usage point for laminating. Only 2 (14%) teachers and 14 students have used it. Unexpected by the researcher was the fact that 8t (50%) combined, that is, 3 "often" and 5 "seldom" of the general users had used the laminating service. It is important to note that many students and general users come from a background where these services (binding and laminating) are not usually used. The non-use of these services is not necessarily an indication of a lack of demand as the cost a user would have to bear should s/he need to use this service could be prohibitive for many users.

7.5.1.2 Computer use

Users were asked whether they use the computer to get information. Table 19 showed that many users namely 71% of teachers, 78% of students and 38% of general users had never used the computer. The main reason given by teachers, students and general users (70%),(27%) and (67%) respectively for not using the computer is computer illiteracy (Table 20). In Table 21 it was found that 3 out of 4 teachers, 4 (40%) and 5 (63%) students and general users respectively had used the computer to get information from World Book Encyclopedia as well as 3 (30%) students and 5 (63%) general users who had used it for information on the Science Encyclopedia. The computer as a resource contains invaluable information but is grossly underused by all users of the Resource Centre.

Perhaps simple leaflets on how to access it need to be produced and displayed in the Resource Centre. Sessions in which groups of users are taken through the process of using the computer to access and retrieve information need to be arranged. Underuse of the computer grossly undermines an expensive and potentially very useful resource but it also points to the fact that users from the Resource Centre are still at an "information developing stage" where computer skills are not yet apparent.

There is a vast amount of information on computer which is not fully utilised (it should be pointed out though that this information could in fact be accessed and retrieved from print material). However, it is obvious that more needs to be done to introduce teachers, students as well as the general users to the use of this computer facility as a means of accessing and retrieving information.

Conclusion

In the light of many users who have not used the computer as well as the binding and laminating services it could be argued that this objective has not been achieved and that much could still be done to encourage and promote use of these services. As mentioned this objective "to provide information resources for the Tembaletu community in general" overlaps with the first objective and it should thus be seen in conjunction with this first objective.

7.6   To initiate and support information provision projects that will empower the wider community of the Pietermaritzburg area.

The research questions asked were:

(a)   Who are the wider community of the Pietermaritzburg area?

(b)   Does the Resource Centre initiate and support information provision for the empowerment of the wider community of the Pietermaritzburg area?

Again the point needs to be made that this objective has essentially been covered in the discussion under the various other objectives and further discussion would therefore be repetitive and thus superfluous. However, the following point needs to be made. The inclusion of the words "project" and "empowerment" in the objective "to initiate and support information provision projects that will empower the wider community of the Pietermaritzburg area" make this objective confusing and therefore it needs to be redefined.

The researcher is of the opinion that this objective needs to be revisited and reviewed.

7.7 What needs to be done in the Resource Centre to make it more useful to the users?

As to what needs to be done to make the Resource Centre more useful 21% of teachers pointed out in Table 36 that they need to have a user orientation programme for adult learners who are not familiar with resource centres or with library books. This is indicative of the fact that teachers realize there must be an organised exposure to information material to students in particular.

In that case when the teachers give resource based projects students should not spend a long time either being shown where the material was or looking for information themselves. All groups were agreed on the fact that more books and more computers need to be bought. A small proportion of teachers (14%) and general users (12%) indicated that they needed study cubicles located near the books.

Summary

In this chapter the results of the study were discussed. The results of the study indicated that Tembaletu is catering for a spread of old and young people with the emphasis on the young. It was observed that students indicate that they use the Resource Centre to read books and study as their first priority. It was found that newspapers and magazines were not used much.

Many services such as the computer, laminating and binding were not used to the full. Many users indicated that there were unaware of many of the services offered by the Resource Centre. This is where the problem lies with the non-use of certain facilities and services provided by the Resource Centre. Marketing and repackaging of information material was raised as means of bringing awareness of these facilities and services. It was also mentioned that many objectives of the Resource Centre overlapped. The Resource Centre staff need to review them in order to make them more explicit and measurable.

Chapter 8

8.1 General conclusion, observations and recommendations.

In chapter 1 the background to and broad overview of the problem was given. Relevant terms were defined, the significance and limitations of the study were pointed out and the structure of the study was outlined.

8.2 Summary of the thesis

In this concluding chapter a brief summary of the thesis is provided. Following this some general conclusions, observations, recommendations and suggestions for further research are made.

In chapter 2 the history of Tembaletu Community Education Centre prior to and after 1994 was given. It was noted that the Resource Centre was established to support and facilitate the activities of the Tembaletu Community Education Centre.

In chapter 3 the history of the Resource Centre was discussed. It was mentioned that an interest in resource centres began in schools in the 1950's. Gradually their location moved from schools to communities. The African perspective was discussed. It was mentioned that in South Africa resource centres came about as a result of political oppression but are now regarded as part of community development.

In chapter 4 the concept evaluation was discussed. Attributes of evaluation were described and briefly discussed. It was pointed out that this study could be seen as a summative evaluation which contains the following attributes of evaluation: macro evaluation, micro evaluation, quantitative and qualitative attributes.

In chapter 5 the methodology adopted for this research was outlined. It was indicated that the population sample for this study comprised teachers, students and general users of Tembaletu Community Education Centre.

It was mentioned that the method and data collection technique used was the survey and questionnaire respectively. The analysis of data was briefly described and finally the choice of instrument was discussed.

In chapter 6 the results, which were presented in table format, were described.

In chapter 7 the results of the study were discussed in terms of the objectives of the resource centre. Users indicated that they use the resource centre to read books and study. It was found that newspapers and magazines were not used much. Many services such as the computer, laminating and binding were not used to the full. Users often indicated that there were unaware of many of the services offered by the Resource Centre. It was mentioned that many objectives of the Resource Centre overlapped.

8.3   General observations and recommendations

A number of positive and negative indicators of the use of the Resource Centre were revealed by the survey. These will need to be addressed as part of the new survival strategies as Tembaletu Resource Centre faces the future without adequate financial support. In the past few years the Resource Centre survived on generous USAID funding.

Consequently it could afford to introduce extension programmes such as a computer course and literacy materials development initiative, thereby contributing to the enrichment of the wider Pietermaritzburg community. That made it achieve one of its objectives. Other objectives were, however, not fully achieved through the lack of a coordinated marketing strategy of the services and facilities by the Resource Centre.

Provision of services and the awareness and use of those services by users are two different issues. Both of these concerns deserve attention. Many services such as books on sale in the Resource Centre, laminating, binding and the use of the computer as an information source remain grossly underused. Before there can be usage of facilities there needs to be an awareness of those facilities. Coordinated ongoing publicity by teachers and the Resource Centre staff through leaflets and notices should be increased. At the beginning of the year separate orientation programmes for students and general users, irrespective of whether students have been exposed to the orientation in the past, should be organised.

The information materials bought at Tembaletu are determined by the nature of education offered at Tembaletu Community Education Centre (Cunnama 1997). This should not preclude periodic needs analysis to determine the information needs other than those that are subject related. In that case users, particularly those that are involved in skills training, will be able to give their opinions and choices of information material they would like to see in the Resource Centre.

On one of the days the questionnaire was administered the garment making students mentioned to the researcher that they had nothing to do with the Resource Centre. This indicated to the researcher that there needs to be a link between skills training and information available in the Resource Centre that is useful for that group of students. This is confirmed by Ahrtag (1996) (see 3.6) who said that resource centres must select appropriate resource materials for use in education and training. In that respect information relating to what they do such as where they could advertise their wares, how to advertise and reading material for example sewing and cooking need to be exposed to them.This is confirmed by the Arts and Culture Task Group's (see 3.9), that because library and information services have a close relationship with education, resource centres must develop and sustain skills learnt in education and training by generating information by conducting research and storing information relevant to their users.

In order to reach out to those of low literacy information needs to be repackaged to alert users with limited literacy skills about the contents of the computer, the importance of using the video cassettes to improve life and workskills gained, explaining unusual terms like lamination and binding and their usefulness.

Sturges and Chimseu (1996) (see 3.9) confirm that print related services tend to be even less effective in helping the semi-literate and non-literate majority population living in the rural and urban marginal areas. Hence it is important that a wide variety of activities and information suitable to the users of the Resource Centre should be prepared and delivered to them.

Very good examples of this were provided by Bethel (1996) (see 3.9) who said that: audio cassettes could be circulated for rural poor societies.

Oral histories and people wearing traditional attire can be invited and cooking demonstrations can be done. Local authors and musicians can be organised. Visual impacts, arts and artifacts with a bibliography can be prepared. Commemorative programmes to honour South African heroes can be presented.

Repackaging of information for this group is not easy and will therefore mean that the Resource Centre staff liaise and network with organisations dealing with rural sector development and various others. Tembaletu Resource Centre is fortunate in that unlike Magwentshu's claim of 'resource centres run by non- professional and volunteers' (see 3.5) it has, as mentioned, two full time qualified personnel (see 2.4.2). Given the financial support the staff can use their expertise to research the needs of the users.

Networking and collaboration with other Resource Centres will become invaluable for exchanging repackaged material and sharing expertise, particularly as lines between public, community libraries and resource centres get blurred and competition for scarce financial resources increases.

In ascertaining full use of the Resource Centre the suggestions as offered by Ahrtag (see 3.6) should be put to use. These are

(a) Promotional, often acting as catalysts and sometimes initiating action.

(b) Supportive, providing a forum for people from different backgrounds and levels of awareness to discuss socio- economic and political issues.

(c) Selecting appropriate resource materials for use in education and training programmes.

(d) Organising the information for ease of use.

(e) Advising or assisting people to locate the right information and possible ways of using it in their work (particularly when the users may be inexperienced with using documentation

or electronic information services).

(f) Translation, adaption, and/or production of resource materials.

(g) Disseminating and sharing information through publications, exhibitions and demonstrations, workshops, newsletters and other outreach strategies.

(h) Documenting practical lessons learnt.

(i) Organising campaigns, in response to identified needs.

(j) Networking, for example, between health and other community workers, between different development sectors, government and non-government agencies, and national and international organisations and centres (Ahrtag 1996).

8.4 Specific recommendations

8.4.1 Orientation programme and open days

As mentioned it was clear that users whether staff, students or general users were not aware of all the information material and services offered by Tembaletu Resource Centre. This calls for a well structured and well timed marketing campaign that will expose the information material in, and services offered by, the Resource Centre.

The campaign may include such services as the CD ROM as an information source, binding and laminating as a service offered and motivate why the users needs these services.

As "adult basic education and training represents the key strength of the Tembaletu service delivery" (Zuma 1994: 159) the approaches adopted to conduct the orientation programme should take into consideration the level of literacy, background and sophistication of the users (especially in communicating CD ROM information).

The Resource Centre staff and the teachers of Tembaletu must attempt to link the Resource Centre with both literacy students and matric students by organising their learning activities around the material available in the Resource Centre. For outside users an open day can be organised so that those who will continue to use the Resource Centre would not only know the contents of the Resource Centre but will be confident to come and make use of it without the assistance of the Resource Centre staff.

8.4.2   Public access catalogue

In the opinion of the researcher the Resource Centre should have its own public catalogue. This will expose all the information available to those who can use it.

While literacy students may request information from an assistant there are many other users who may be knowledgeable of a catalogue system and would therefore not be dependent on the Resource Centre assistant.

8.4.3   Resource-based work

It is important that teachers provide resource based work as part of students' assignments. These may be tailored according to the reading level of the students. Resource based work will expose students to the contents of and the need to use the Resource Centre. If the teachers do not actively encourage use of the centre, it is unlikely that their students will do so.

Furthermore it would also be useful for teachers to take students to the Resource Centre as well and set an example by actively using the Resource Centre themselves.

8.4.4   Study space

The need for study cubicles was indicated by users, probably because of privacy afforded by the cubicles. Although making more study space available is a trend in many libraries the researcher is of the opinion that the present study space is only heavily used as the examination period approaches. It therefore may not be necessary to have the study cubicles as there was no noise disturbance heard during the research period.

8.4.5   Educational video cassettes

This service needs review as many of the target group do not make use of it. Although respondents mentioned the fact that they do not have video machines it is important to note that it appeared that not many of the target group were aware that they were able to borrow these cassettes. This is a helpful teaching and learning aid for all users. A Resource Centre video machine could be used either inside the centre or taken to the classroom for students to watch a relevant cassette. Making the user community aware of the fact that they can borrow from this collection should also form part of the marketing campaign. It would be a pity if such a valuable collection lay on the shelves unused. The Resource Centre staff could constantly update the teachers and users about the latest recorded videos especially because of appeal of such materials for new readers and learners as was evident in the Mboza Project (Stilwell 1991:304).

8.4.6   Provision of books

Teachers and students indicated that they want more books in Zulu and English. It is safe to assume that these are books associated with literacy and numeracy in particular. It is important, therefore, for the Resource Centre staff to liaise with the users, perhaps by means of a suggestion box placed next to the issue counter to obtain the users' opinions for the selection of books.

It is also important to advertise the books which are for sale as students, general users as well as teachers indicated that they were not aware that there were books for sale in the Resource Centre.

As all three groups of users suggested "Zulu" and "English" books the researcher is of the opinion that a combination of fiction books, with a variety of literacy books, needs to be part of the collection. These books will help reinforce literacy and numeracy skills for newly literate students who do not live in the vicinity of libraries and will also provide recreational reading.

8.4.7   Other services offered by the Resource Centre

8.4.7.1 Photocopying, laminating and binding services

Although photocopying is well supported, laminating and binding seem to be hardly known by users. It is recommended that its publicising should fall within an open day or orientation programme. Users need to see an example of a laminated and bound copy and made to understand when and why laminating and binding are important.

8.4.7.2 Computer facilities

As mentioned the computer is underutilised by users. It has information which if used to its fullest could be of help to them. Many respondents (including teachers) mentioned that they were computer illiterate and the researcher believes that a workshop for the teachers on computer literacy could help. Teaching teachers in a workshop situation could relieve the librarian or library assistant of further requests for help and, crucially, increase usage of the computer facility. A step-by-step well illustrated poster as well as pamphlets detailing how to access information on the computer could be displayed next to the computer.

8.4.8 Continued funding for the Resource Centre

There is need for continued funding for the Resource Centre so that existing facilities and material will continually be upgraded and the Resource Centre staff could be trained to face new challenges for example an increasing number of youths enroling at Tembaletu Community Education Centre. It is unfortunate that because of the funding crisis two members of the Resource Centre staff have had to leave. The need for literacy and a variety of other skills will continue to escalate. This will demand more funding as new material will need to be bought and new services will need to be offered by the Resource Centre.

8.5 Conclusion

The observation from this evaluation are that not all objectives of the Resource Centre have been fulfilled. There is evidence that there is provision of information material and services that is relevant for users of Tembaletu as well as for general users. But provision has not guaranteed full usage. Before users use information they must be made aware of it. Lack of awareness of the availability of information and services has been mentioned by users as a reason why they do not fully use them. Well researched and vigorous awareness programmes, orientation courses and workshops need to be planned and implemented throughout the year so that new and existing information and services will be exposed to the users.

As some objectives overlap and others have become irrelevant for the present day Resource Centre this researcher recommends that the Resource Centre reviews all objectives and decide which ones have to remain. Those that remain need to be made more explicit and measurable. The Resource Centre needs to gear itself for the new challenges and open more opportunities for information it contains and services it offers to be fully used.

8.6   Suggestions for further research

This research has opened more opportunities for further research particularly in the area of marketing of information and awareness of services offered. There is scope for further research on whether recommendations produced by this research will have any impact, should they be implemented, on Tembaletu Community Centre and its users and on the usage of information material in the Resource Centre.

Tembaletu is a multipurpose centre such as those advocated by Mbeki (1995). This research provides an evaluation from an external source at a crucial time. It is important that Tembaletu Community Education Centre should continue to be funded and that the Resource Centre itself be allowed to integrate itself more fully into the Centre and the community at large with refocused and more explicit objectives.

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Appendix 1

20 Pitcairn Road

Glenmore

12 August 1997

The Director

Attention Mr G. Stobie

Tembaletu Community Education Centre

206 Burger Street

Pietermaritzburg

3200

Dear Sir

Permission to conduct a research on Tembaletu Resource Centre

I wish to request permission to conduct a research on Tembaletu Resource Centre on 22 to 31 October 1997.

I am a registered student at the Department Of Information Studies, University Of Natal. My chosen title is: an evaluative study of Tembaletu Community Learning Centre with particular reference to Tembaletu Community Education Centre.

The research will be conducted on the users of Tembaletu Resource Centre.
I hope not to disturb the running of any of your programmes during the time of the research.

Yours Faithfully

Sipho Lombo

Appendix 2

Questionnaire on Tembaletu Resource Centre

My name is Sipho Lombo. I am a student at the University Of Natal in Pietermaritzburg doing research on the use of Tembaletu Resource Centre. This is important in order that the authorities and the government will appreciate the significance of resource centres like that of Tembaletu. It is therefore vital that you help me by answering all questions. Your answers will be kept confidential.

Teachers

Please answer the questions as thoroughly as possible. Where applicable please place a tick in the square.

1. Age.......................

2. Highest qualification...............................

3. Which course/s are you responsible for. Please indicate how many students are in each.

Course/s   Number of students

(a) ....   (a) ....

(b) ....   (b) ....

(c) ....   (c) ....

4 (a) Are you a member of the Resource Centre?   Yes ☐   No ☐

   (b) If no, could you please tell me why not? ....
   ....

5 (a) Have you used the Resource Centre?   Yes ☐   No ☐

   (b) If no, could you please tell me why not? ....
        ....

   (c) If no, please answer only questions 15 and 16.

   (d) If yes to question 5a how often do you use the resource centre?

        (i)   everyday   ☐

        (ii)   4 - 5 times a week   ☐

        (iii) 2 - 3 a week   ☐

        (iv)   once a week   ☐

        (v)   less than once a week   ☐

   (e) If less than once a week for example once or twice a month, please
        specify ....
        ....
        ....

6 (a) What do you use the Resource Centre for? Tick those that apply.

        (i)   to read books   ☐

        (ii)   to read magazines   ☐

        (iii) to read newspapers   ☐

        (iv)   to view cassettes   ☐

        (v)   to sit and study   ☐

        (vi)   other, please specify ....
               ....
               ....

   (b) If you have ticked more than 1 in 6a which do you use the most? ......
        ....

(c) If you read books can you tell me what books you read? . . . .

(i) novels support material ☐

(ii) literacy books ☐

(iii) computer books ☐

(iv) cookery books ☐

(v) garment making books ☐
(vi) other, please specify

. . . .
. . . .

(d) If you read magazines, what are the names of the magazines you read?
. . . .
. . . .

(e) If you read newspapers, what are the names of the newspapers?

. . . .
. . . .

7 (a) For what purpose/s do you use the Resource Centre? Please tick those that apply.

(i) for relaxation purposes ☐

(ii) for study purposes ☐

(iii) for subject and course purposes ☐

8. How often do you use the following services provided by the Resource Centre?

(a) Photocopying	often	seldom	never

(b) Laminating	often	seldom	never

(c) Binding	often	seldom	never

9 (a) Do you use the computer in the Resource Centre to get information?

Yes ☐   No ☐

(b) If no, could you please tell me why not?

. . . .

. . . .

(c) If yes, which of these sources have you used on the computer?
Tick those that apply.

(i) World book encyclopedia ☐

(ii) World atlas ☐

(iii) children's games ☐

(iv) Bible ☐

(v) science ☐

(vi) other, please specify . . . .

. . . .

(d) If more than 1, which do you use the most? . . . .

. . . .

10 (a) Have you ever bought any books which are for sale in the Resource Centre?

Yes ☐   No ☐

(b) If no, could you please tell me why not? . . . .

. . . .

(c) If yes, which of these have you bought?

(i) numeracy books ☐

(ii) literacy books ☐

(iii) other, please specify . . . .

. . . .

11 (a) Have you found any information in the Resource Centre that has helped
you solve a personal problem?   Yes ☐   No ☐

(b) If no, could you please tell me why not? . . . .
. . . .

(c) If yes, please specify what the information was on, for example health
matters, employment etc. . . . .
. . . .

12 (a) Have you ever given work to your students which involves obtaining
information from the Resource Centre?   Yes ☐   No ☐

(b) If no, could you please tell me why not? . . . .
. . . .

(c) If yes, in general do you feel that it was a worthwhile exercise?

     Yes   ☐   No   ☐

(c) Please tell me why? . . . .
. . . .

13 (a) Have you ever borrowed educational videos from the library?

     Yes   ☐   No   ☐

(b) If no, could you please tell me why not? . . . .
. . . .

(c) If yes, for what reasons? . . . .
. . . .

14 (a) Do you use the Resource Centre for meetings?   Yes ☐   No ☐

(b) If no, could you please tell me why not? . . . .
. . . .

(c) If yes, do you do this

    (i)   often   ☐

    (ii) seldom   ☐

(d) What is the approximate size of the group? . . . .

(e) Could you please tell me what kind of meetings? . . . .

15 (a) What kind of material i.e newspapers, magazines, books, videos would you like to see more of in the Resource Centre? Please tick those that apply.

    (i)   more books   ☐

    (ii) more magazines   ☐

    (iv) more newspapers ☐

    (v) more videos   ☐
    (vi) other, please specify . . . .
        . . . .

(b) If you ticked "more books" please specify the subjects . . . .

(c) If you ticked "more magazines" please specify the titles . . . .
    . . . .

(c) If you ticked "more newspapers" please specify the titles
    . . . .
    . . . .

(d) If you ticked "more videos" please specify the subjects . . . .
    . . . .

16. What else do you think needs to be done in the resource centre to make it more useful?
    . . . .

Thank you for taking your time to answer the questionnaire

My address is:

20 Pitcairn Road
Carrington Heights
Glenmore
4001

Tel. 031- 812993 (H)   031-213112 (W).

Appendix 3

Questionnaire

My name is Sipho Lombo. I am a student at the University Of Natal in Pietermaritzburg doing a research on the use of Tembaletu Resource Centre. This is important in order that the authorities and the government will appreciate the importance of the Resource Centres like that of Tembaletu. It is therefore important that you help me by answering all questions. Your answers will be kept confidential.

Students of Tembaletu

Please answer the questions as thoroughly as possible. Where applicable please place a tick in the square.

1. Age . . . .

2 Highest Qualification . . . .

3. Which courses are you doing this year at Tembaletu ? . . . .

4. (a) Are you a member of the Resource Centre? Yes ☐   No ☐

   (b) If no, why not? . . . .

5. (a) Have you used the Resource Centre?   Yes ☐   No ☐

   (b) If no, why not? . . . .

   (c) If no, please answer only questions 27 and 28.

(d) If yes how often do you use the Resource Centre

    (a) everyday ☐

    (b) once a week ☐

    (c) once a month ☐

    (d) less than once a month ☐

6. What do you use the Resource Centre for? Tick those that apply.

    (i) to read ☐

    (ii) to read magazines ☐

    (iii) to read newspapers ☐

    (iv) to view cassettes ☐

    (v) to sit and study ☐

    (vi) other, please specify ....

(b) If you read books can you tell me what books you read

    (i) novels ☐

    (ii) literacy ☐

    (iii) computer ☐

    (iv) cookery ☐

    (v) garment making ☐

(c) If you have ticked more than 1 which do use the most? ....

(d)   If you read magazines, what are the names of magazines do you read?

. . . .

7.   Why do you use the Resource Centre?

(a)   mainly for relaxation purposes   ☐

(b)   mainly for study purposes   ☐

(c)   mainly for information purposes   ☐

(d)   Any other purposes, please specify   ☐

8.   How often do you use the following services provided by the Resource Centre?

(i)   Photocopying

often	seldom	never

(ii)   Laminating

often	seldom	never

(iii)   Binding

often	seldom	never

(b)   If you have ticked more than 1 which do you use the most?

. . . .

9.   Do you use the computer in the Resource Centre to get information?

Yes   ☐   No   ☐

(b) If no, why not? . . . .

(c) If yes, which of these sources do you use the computer for? Tick those that apply.

(i) world book encyclopedia   ☐

(ii) world atlas   ☐

(c) children's games ☐

(d) bible ☐

(e) science ☐

(f) other, please specify . . . .

. . . .

. . . .

(d) If more than 1, which do you do the most? . . . .

. . . .

10. Have you ever bought any books which are for sale in the Resource Centre?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(b) If no, why not? . . . .

. . . .

(c) If yes, which of these have you bought?

(i) numeracy books ☐

(ii) literacy books ☐

(iii) other, please specify. . . . .

11. Have you found any information in resource the centre that has helped you

solve a personal problem? Yes ☐ No ☐

If no, why not? . . . .

If yes, please specify what the information was on, for example information on health matters

    (a)   information on employment   ☐

    (b)   information on health matters   ☐

    (c)   other, please specify . . . .

12. Have you ever been given work by the teacher/s of your course's which involves obtaining information from the Resource Centre?

        Yes   ☐   No   ☐

If yes, please give me some details about this . . . .

13. What kind of books would you like to see in the Resource Centre which would make it more to make it more useful for you. . . . .

    . . . .

14. What else do you think needs to be done in the Resource Centre to make it more useful?

Thank you for taking your time to answer the questionnaire

My address is :

20 Pitcairn Road

Glenmore

4000

Tel: 031- 812993 (H)

           031- 213112 (W)

Appendix 4

Questionnaire on Tembaletu Resource Centre

My name is Sipho Lombo. I am a student at the University Of Natal in Pietermaritzburg doing research on the use of Tembaletu Resource Centre. This is important in order that the authorities and the government will appreciate the significance of Resource Centres like that of Tembaletu. It is therefore vital that you help me by answering all questions. Your answers will be kept confidential.

Once you have completed the questionnaire please hand it to a member of staff at the Resource Centre.

General users of the Resource Centre

Please answer the questions as thoroughly as possible. Where applicable please place a tick in the square.

1.   Age . . . .

2.   Highest qualification. . . . .

3.   Male   ☐   Female   ☐

4.   Are you

   (i)   employed   ☐

   (ii)   unemployed   ☐

   (iii) at school   ☐

5.   Which course/s are you doing this year?

   Names of course/s

   (a)   . . . .

   (b)   . . . .

   (c)   . . . .

(d) ....

6 (a) Are you a member of the Resource Centre? Yes ☐ No ☐

(b) If no, could you please tell me why not? ....

....

7 (a) Have you used the Resource Centre? Yes ☐ No ☐

(b) If no, could you please tell me why not? ....

(c) If no, please answer only questions 16 and 17.

(d) If yes to question 6a how often do you use the resource centre?

(i) everyday ☐

(ii) 4 - 5 times a week ☐

(iii) 2 - 3 a week ☐

(iv) once a week ☐

(v) less than once a week ☐

(e) If less than once a week for example once or twice a month, please specify.

....

8 (a) What do you use the Resource Centre for? Tick those that apply.

(i) to read books ☐

(ii) to read magazines ☐

(iii) to read newspapers ☐

(iv) to view cassettes ☐

(v) to sit and study ☐

(vi) other, please specify . . . .

(b) If you have ticked more than 1 in question 8a which do you use the most?

. . . .

(c) If you read books can you tell me what books you read

(i) novels ☐

(ii) literacy support material ☐

(iii) computer books ☐

(iv) cookery books ☐

(v) garment making books ☐

(vi) other, please specify . . . .

(d) If you read magazines, what are the names of the magazines you read?

. . . .

(e) If you read newspapers, what are the names of the newspapers? . . . . . .

. . . .

9 (a) For what purpose/s do you use the Resource Centre? Please tick those that apply.

(i) for relaxation purposes ☐

(ii) for study purposes ☐

(iii) for subject and course purposes ☐

(iv) for information purposes other than subject/course ☐

(v)   any other purposes, please specify . . . .

(b) If you have ticked more than 1 what purpose do you consider to be the most important?

10. How often do you use the following services provided by the Resource Centre?

(a)	Photocopying	often	seldom	never
(b)	Laminating	often	seldom	never
(c)	Binding	often	seldom	never

11 (a)   Do you use the computer in the Resource Centre to get information?

Yes ☐   No ☐

(b)   If no, could you please tell me why not ?

. . . .

(c)   If yes, which of these sources have you used on the computer? Tick those that apply.

(i)   World book encyclopedia   ☐

(ii)   World atlas   ☐

(iii)   children's games   ☐

(iv)   Bible   ☐

(v)   science   ☐

(vi)   other, please specify . . . .

(d)   If more than 1, which do you use the most? . . . .

12 (a)   Have you ever bought any books which are for sale in the Resource Centre?

Yes ☐   No ☐

(b)   If no, could you please tell me why not? . . . .

(c)   If yes, which of these have you bought?

(i)   numeracy books   ☐

(ii)   literacy books   ☐

(iii)   other, please specify . . . .

13 (a)   Have you found any information in the Resource Centre that has helped you solve a personal problem?

Yes ☐   No ☐

(b)   If no, could you please tell me why not?

(c)   If yes, please specify what the information was on, for example health matters, employment etc. . . . .

14 (a)   Have you ever borrowed educational videos from the library?

Yes ☐   No ☐

(b)   If no, could you please tell me why not? . . . .

(c)   If yes, for what reasons? . . . .

15 (a)   Do you use the Resource Centre for meetings?

Yes ☐   No ☐

(b)   If no, could you could you please tell me why not? . . . .

(c)   If yes, do you do this

(i)   often ☐

(ii) seldom ☐

(d) What is approximate size of the group? ....

(e) Could you please tell me what kind of meetings? ....

16 (a) What kind of material i.e newspapers, magazines,books, videos would you like to see more of in the Resource Centre? Please tick those that apply.

  (i) more books ☐

  (ii) more magazines ☐

  (iii) more newspapers ☐

  (iv) more videos ☐

  (vi) other, please specify ....

(b) If you ticked "more books" please specify the subjects ....

(c) If you ticked "more magazines" please specify the titles ....

(d) If you ticked "more newspapers" please specify the titles ....

(e) If you ticked "more videos" please specify the subjects ....

17. What else do you think needs to be done in the resource centre to make it more useful?

....

....

Thank you for taking your time to answer the questionnaire

My address is:

20 Pitcairn Road

Carrington Heights

Glenmore

4001

Tel: .   031- 213112 (W)

         031- 812993 (H)

Appendix 5

The Director: Education Programmes

Attention Mrs J. Bhengu

Tembaletu Community Education Centre

206 Burger Street

Pietermaritzburg

3200

Dear Madam

Appreciation of cooperation during research period

I wish to thank you, your staff and the students for the cooperation, and the good spirit with which I was assisted, in conducting the research.

In particular I wish to thank Nokuthula Nawa who daily organised and personally saw to it that I met teachers and students from different levels and courses at the Resource Centre.

Last, but not least, I wish to thank the Resource Centre staff, particularly Margaret Cunnama, who tirelessly helped in handing out and collecting questionnaires form the users.

Yours Faithfully

S. Lombo **(Researcher)**

GARMENT MAKING STUDENTS AT WORK

SOME OF THEIR FINISHED PRODUCT HUNG ON THE WALL

.USERS STUDYING AT THE STUDY SPACE IN THE RESOURCE
CENTRE

USERS STUDYING AT THE STUDY SPACE IN THE RESOURCE
CENTRE