



Promoting the culture of reading in private school libraries in Pietermaritzburg,
KwaZulu-Natal

By

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Declaration

I, **Tshimangadzo Nancy Mudau**, declare that:

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my family for all the sacrifices they made for me, and to all the ladies out there who are mothers, partners, and wives – pillars of their families – who still manage to work and study at the same time.

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the promotion of a reading culture at private primary schools in Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal. A school library can be seen as the “heart” of the school, and it is essential that its services are regularly evaluated to ensure they meet the needs of students. This investment in education will go a long way toward addressing the challenges of high illiteracy levels in any developing country, which also contribute to inequality, poverty, and unemployment. The literature reviewed for the study indicated that the school library today faces the challenge of competition with evolving technology, which often overshadows paper-based reading materials.

Through semi-structured interviews with 20 purposively selected teachers and school librarians, the study revealed that while school libraries and educators play a crucial role in fostering a reading culture, several barriers hinder this process. These include constraint-led factors (such as limited time for reading), lack of peer and parental support, and linguistic diversity in classrooms. Despite these challenges, librarians were found to be instrumental in encouraging early reading habits, while teachers play a pivotal role by allocating time for structured reading activities.

To enhance the promotion of a reading culture, the study recommends peer reading programs, increased parental engagement, and the integration of multilingual reading resources. These interventions can strengthen reading habits and create a more inclusive and supportive literacy environment in primary schools.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 19
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DEAR	Drop Everything and Read
DOE	Department of Education
E-book	Electronic book
ICTs	Information and communication technologies
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
NBW	National Book Week
PAMSA	Paper Manufacturers Association of South Africa
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
SA	South Africa
SABDC	South African Book Development Council
StatsSA	Statistics South Africa
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Collins and Halverson (2018) mention that the 21st century, often called the digital age, is characterised by technological advances. While these advances offer numerous advantages, they also present disadvantages, as students still need to be able to read effectively, whether on screen or paper. According to these authors, Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have become integral to people's lives worldwide, with students spending hours each day engaged with platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter (now X). However, it can be argued that although technology offers numerous benefits, it may contribute to a decline in traditional reading habits, as students spend excessive time on their mobile devices. This shift raises concerns among educators and parents about the potential long-term impact on literacy and deep reading skills. For instance, the increased reliance on chat and email as primary communication tools illustrates a broader transformation in social interactions. Despite these concerns, there is no denying that technology has revolutionised daily life, improving access to information and maintaining family relationships across geographical distances. For example, people now frequently use chat and email to communicate regardless of distance, highlighting a fascinating shift in how children interact (Collins and Halverson, 2018). Nevertheless, it is undeniable that technology has transformed the world, made life more accessible, and improved family relationships despite geographical distances.

Fleisch (2008) states that reading is essential for nation-building. However, there are growing concerns internationally regarding the reading culture in modern society. Reading serves as the foundational building block of learning, and cultivating a robust reading culture is crucial for fostering a forward-thinking mindset. Reading sharpens the mind, enabling individuals to reason rationally and objectively (Fleisch, 2008). According to Mtshali's (2023) study, the 2016 Progress in International Reading Literacy (PIRLS) Survey, which evaluated the reading comprehension of students in their fourth year of primary school, placed South Africa (SA) worst out of 50 nations. The survey revealed that 78% of students at this level were unable to read for meaning. This alarming statistic highlights the critical need for interventions to promote a reading culture in schools, particularly at the primary level.

Numerous initiatives are put in place in schools to promote students' reading habits since reading culture is widely acknowledged as a foundational element of literacy development (Govender, M. 2015a). Private primary schools, which frequently function under various administrative structures, resource allocations, and pedagogical approaches, have received relatively less attention than public schools, despite the fact that much research has been conducted on reading programs in public schools (Govender, M. 2015a). Research on reading culture usually extrapolates results from other educational domains, which may lead to the omission of the particular difficulties and possibilities present in the private school environment (Govender, M. 2015a). Research on how private primary schools handle this transition is also lacking, despite the fact that some schools have started incorporating digital resources like eBooks, audiobooks, and interactive media into their reading curricula.

The prevailing discourse frequently portrays technology as a diversion rather than a facilitator of reading culture, which leaves a shortfall in knowledge regarding how private schools use or disregard digital resources in their literacy initiatives. In order to close this gap, this study investigates how Scottsville's private primary schools carry out their reading programs and if technology helps or hinders the culture of reading. Given this context, this study focuses on private primary schools in the Scottsville area and their efforts to foster a culture of reading. This chapter outlines the study's background, research problem, and key research questions. Additionally, a brief description of the study's significance, theoretical foundation, and research methodology is included. The chapter ends with an overview of the structure of the dissertation.

1.2 Contextual Setting and Problem Statement

Despite continued attempts to raise literacy levels in South African schools, obstacles remain, notably in developing a sustained reading culture among young learners. While public schools sometimes suffer resource limits that hinder literacy development, private schools may have greater freedom to undertake reading programs and initiatives. However, the extent to which private schools actively promote reading and the success rate of their strategies remain unknown. This study aims to close this gap by looking at the particular techniques employed by private schools in the Scottsville area to foster a reading culture. The purpose of this study was to investigate the efforts of private schools in the Scottsville area, Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) to promote a reading culture. Specifically, the study aimed to explore

the strategies these schools implement to encourage reading among their learners and assess their effectiveness in fostering a sustainable reading culture. Private schools were selected as the study's focus because of their exceptional independence in curriculum development, resource distribution, and the implementation of reading programs. Private schools have more freedom in implementing creative literacy programs than public schools, which frequently follow set government regulations. The focus of this study is private schools in order to investigate how well their techniques work to foster a reading culture and how they can lead to more significant advancements in education.

1.3 Study context

Pietermaritzburg, the capital of KZN, is a vital economic and social hub of the province. It has 618,499 inhabitants housed in 163,857 homes across a 63,408-acre municipal area (Hlophe, 2020). According to KZN Online (2021), Scottsville, located on the national freight corridor connecting Durban and Johannesburg, is home to three major tertiary education institutions and several prestigious public and private schools. Despite representing only 1.3% of the municipal land area, the suburb is home to 17,499 residents, making it a desirable residential neighbourhood (KZN Online, 2021). Scottsville is a bustling suburb with a colourful past and active population. It is an ideal location for families, professionals, and students as it combines modern conveniences with cultural heritage. Established in the early 1900s during the city of Pietermaritzburg's expansion, Scottsville is situated southeast of the city centre and is bounded by rivers (KZN Online, 2021).

Despite its little-recorded past, Scottsville boasts many historically significant structures from the settler era. As alluded to, the suburb is an educational hub, housing the nationally renowned Pietermaritzburg Campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, the Riverside Campus of the Durban University of Technology, and several top private and public schools. Scottsville was once an open grassland, serving as a rest stop for travellers from Durban to Pietermaritzburg, with ox carts and stagecoaches frequently passing through. Today, Scottsville, offers a blend of residential, educational, and recreational facilities, enhancing its cultural and social significance. The Scottsville Race Course, founded more than 122 years ago, remains a noteworthy feature and contributes to the city's rich horse racing history (KZN Online, 2021).

Scottsville continues to thrive with various commercial, residential, and recreational establishments maintaining its role in Pietermaritzburg's social and cultural scene. As noted, the suburb also features some prominent schools, both independent and government-run, which significantly contribute to its vibrant educational environment. An overview of the four private (independent) primary schools located in the suburb that formed the focus of the study is provided in Chapter Four.

1.4 Study problem

Although it has been 30 years since the beginning of democracy in SA, apartheid is still blamed today for many situations, including the state of literature in indigenous South African languages. Illiteracy levels among the adult population, particularly among socioeconomic classes still mired in poverty and lacking basic reading skills, continue to be attributed to the legacy of apartheid. The post-1994 period was characterised by several policy choices that negatively impacted the development of a reading culture (Higgs and Van Wyk, 2007). De Graaf and Arts (2013) argue that for countries with a low level of inequality in their population, it is difficult to view or demonstrate the connection between levels of inequality and a poor reading culture in a country, and vice versa.

To access information and informational materials, readers need to be knowledgeable about their reading needs, which require an innovative reading culture within society. According to Botha (2002), a country's development mainly depends on its citizens' education level. The South African school education system is under continuous pressure due to expansion. The challenge is to accommodate the expanding demand for school education while maintaining qualitative viability. For this reason, school libraries contribute to the standard and quality of education. Field (2000) argues that a community that reads is undoubtedly a knowledgeable community.

The lack of reading combined with the absence of a serious interest in reading among South African youth contributes to the view that SA cannot be considered a reading society. The type of reading referred to here is reading for leisure, as leisure reading is vital to lifelong learning and one of the most effective ways to drive positive social change in society (Field, 2000). A school that promotes a culture of reading is one where the value of reading is consistently modelled and discussed. Such a school is one in which both teachers and pupils are encouraged

to read for pleasure, both at school and at home. Reading that is centred only on passing tests does not constitute true reading, as this practice will most likely disappear once the exam results are announced (Lockwood, 2008).

According to Rubin and Rubin (2020), the school library is the heart of the school and is critical to the success of the education system. It is essential for achieving the school's institutional goals and objectives. The school library fosters this through a systematic programme of knowledge acquisition, organisation, and dissemination that broadens the learning environment for all learners (Zinn, Stilwell, and Hoskins, 2016). School libraries have an essential role to play in the teaching and learning process, and it is difficult to imagine how the school curriculum can be effectively delivered without integrating library programmes into it. Additionally, a properly functioning library, where educators and learners have easy access to library-based resources, is essential (Zinn et al., 2016).

According to the Department of Education (DOE) (2012), no single technique or combination of methods can productively teach children to read. Therefore, teachers must have a deep knowledge of multiple techniques for teaching reading, as well as a solid understanding of the learners in their care. This knowledge enables teachers to create the appropriate balance of processes needed for effectively teaching reading skills to their learners (National Department of Education, 2012). Despite this, both the government and civil society organisations work tirelessly to ensure quality education. However, there is a lack of a national coordinating strategy to build a culture of reading among the youth of today.

This study sought to investigate the efforts of private schools in Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg, KZN to promote a reading culture, while also exploring strategies schools can use to build a culture of lifelong learning through reading among their learners. The community's spiritual, moral, social, cultural, and economic advancement, as well as the development of individual personalities, depend, in part, on the school library. As such, the school library is necessary for information literacy development and cultivating a reading culture among learners. Often considered merely a standard requirement, the school library's importance in the learning process is frequently overlooked.

1.5 Research aim

The study aimed to investigate the promotion of a reading culture at private primary schools in Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal.

1.6 Research objectives and questions

To achieve the aim, the objectives were:

1. What factors do educators and students perceive as facilitating or hindering the promotion of a reading culture in private primary schools?
2. What strategies do Librarians and Teachers believe effectively promote a reading culture in private primary schools?
3. How do educators and librarians describe the current state of the reading culture in private primary schools?
4. In what ways do school libraries contribute to development of a school's reading culture according to educators and students?

The research questions were as follows:

1. What factors facilitate or hinder the promotion of a reading culture in private primary schools?
2. What strategies can be used to promote a reading culture in the primary schools?
3. What is the current state of the reading culture in the primary schools?
4. How does the school library contribute to developing a school's reading culture?

1.7 Significance of the study

The significance of this study lies in its potential to inform educational practices and policies, thereby addressing a critical need for understanding and enhancing the promotion of a reading culture in private primary schools in Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg. By investigating this aspect, the study can help improve educational outcomes, establish effective strategies to promote a reading culture, and positively impact students' literacy skills, academic performance, and overall development. Understanding the role of technology can help schools strike a balance between traditional resources, incorporating technology in ways that complement and enhance the reading experience. Ultimately, the study can contribute valuable data to inform educational policies at both the school and regional levels, promoting a sustainable and enduring culture of

reading in private primary schools. Literacy skills are essential to pupils' intellectual and academic achievement.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

Due to the limited time available for the study and its nature (a short coursework dissertation), the scope was delimited to four private primary schools in Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg. The study focused specifically on Grades 4 to 7 teachers and the librarian at each of these four schools. The schools in the study are thus located in an urban area, and the findings are not applicable to school libraries in rural areas, nor are they necessarily applicable to libraries in government (public) schools.

1.9 Conceptual framework

White, Fischer, Marshall, Travis, Webb, Di Falco, and van der Wal (2009) argue a theory is a collection of connected variables, definitions, and propositions that, by defining relationships between variables, provides a systematic perspective on phenomena and serves to explain natural occurrences. Creswell and Creswell (2017) support this view, describing a theory as an interconnected set of concepts developed into propositions or hypotheses, which clarify the relationships between variables in terms of size or direction. This study adopted a conceptual framework, which serves as a theoretical structure to guide research, analysis, and problem-solving. A conceptual framework outlines the connections between key concepts, variables, and assumptions, offering a systematic and logical approach to understanding complex phenomena.

One of the most important lifelong learning and academic skills is the ability to read. The conceptual framework adopted in this study aimed to foster literacy, enhance reading engagement, and improve overall academic outcomes by encouraging a culture of reading in primary schools. Research underscores the critical importance of information literacy in modern society, which is integral to the study's broader educational context. Lantz and Brage (2006) explored the expanded Kuhlthau model, emphasising information literacy initiatives as a pathway to building a learning society. Similarly, Li (2007) proposed a model of librarian-faculty cooperation, highlighting the connection between information literacy, global citizenship, and lifelong learning. Nichols (2009) developed a conceptual framework for understanding information literacy through extensive case studies of university students'

research experiences. While these studies focused on various dimensions of information literacy. In contrast, Puranik and Lonigan (2014) examined emergent writing in pre-schoolers, presenting a theoretical framework for this developmental phase. Additionally, Börner, Bueckle, and Ginda (2019) proposed a methodology for defining, teaching, and evaluating data visualisation literacy.

According to Imenda (2014), conceptual frameworks are either narrative or graphical tools that highlight the key variables under investigation and their relationships. They enable researchers to clarify their perspective on the subject under study. According to Adom, Hussein, and Agyem, (2018), “Researchers typically use the conceptual framework when existing theories are not applicable or sufficient in creating a firm structure for the study.” In this study, the conceptual framework served to define and articulate the relationships between the primary variables, forming a clear perspective on the phenomena under investigation. The Whole School Information Literacy Model was employed, supported by key legal documents that advocate for the creation and administration of school libraries (Adom, et.al, 2018). To identify variables and clarify their relationships, the study drew on the following frameworks and guidelines:

- Education Library Information and Technology Services (ELITS) KZN School Library Policy (2003),
- National Guidelines for School Library and Information Services (2006),
- School Library Strategy (2012), and KwaZulu-Natal School Reading Strategy (2020).

The interactive features of the Whole School Information Literacy Model are illustrated in Figure 1.1 below.

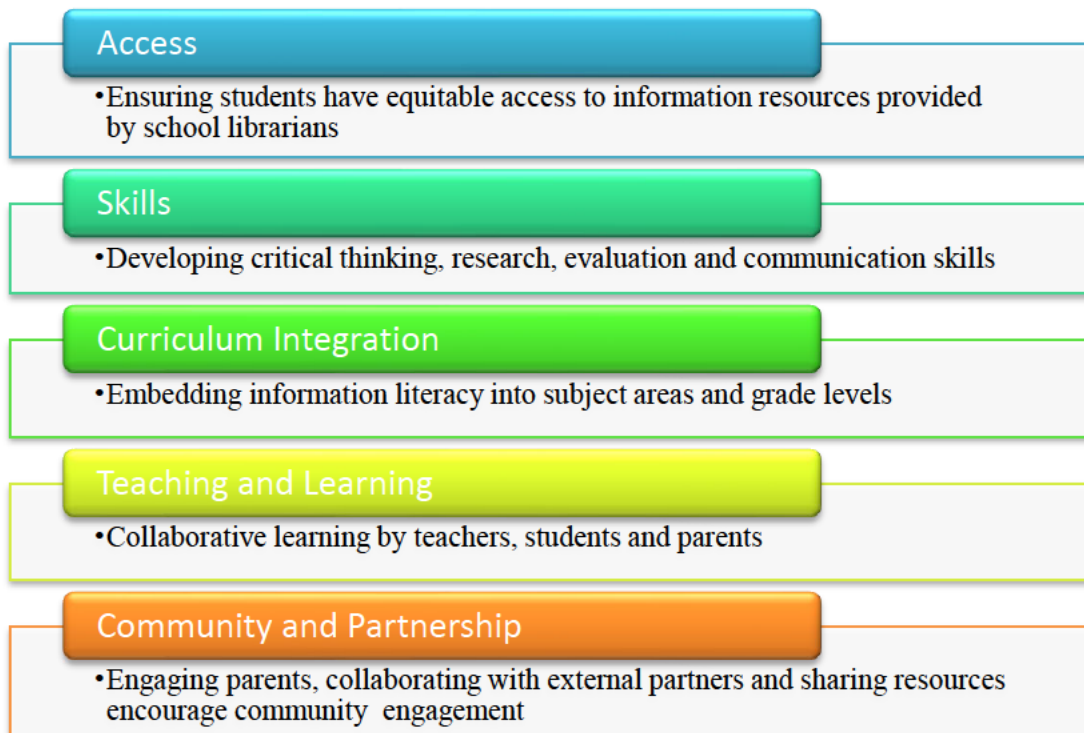


Figure 1.1: Diagram illustrating the interactive nature of the Whole School Information Literacy Model

Promoting a reading culture is typically integrated into several key components of the Model. In short, promoting a reading culture is integral to the Model. A space that values and encourages reading, cooperation, curricular integration, library resources, professional development, community participation, and continual evaluation is required. Integrating information literacy skills into the curriculum promotes a reading culture. This includes teaching pupils how to search, assess, and use information, as well as instilling in them a love of reading in all areas. Collaborative learning (as per the model) promotes collaboration between teachers, librarians, and learners to encourage a reading culture. Similarly, joint initiatives, book groups, and reading challenges can increase reader interest and participation. Library programmes and resources also encourage a reading culture. These could involve planning reading programmes, author visits, and literacy events, as well as offering a variety of reading materials to suit different interests and reading abilities. Professional development assists in providing educators with techniques and strategies to encourage reading and information literacy that, in turn, fosters a reading-focused school culture. This may include

training on how to incorporate reading into classes and encourage pupils to interact with literature. The importance of community involvement is underscored in terms of which parents and the broader community encourage reading to help boost a reading culture. Many activities may be done to achieve this such as family reading nights, partnerships with local libraries, or community reading campaigns. Finally, it is important to reflect on the effectiveness of reading efforts and seek input to improve tactics for promoting a reading culture that meets student needs (Farmer, 2001).

1.10 Definition of key terms

The various terms and concepts associated with the promotion of a reading culture are defined and discussed below. Doing so provides the reader with insight into the various concepts and terms used throughout the study.

Reading

Reading is the single most significant way to learn. Hicks (2023) asserts that reading implies that knowledge cannot be acquired or retained if it is not understood. Reading is a solitary, private activity. Allington (2012) highlights reading as a valuable, life-enhancing activity that provides life experiences and expands knowledge, recognising it as a priceless gift. Reading involves transferring information from print material to the mind through the eyes, receiving symbols and punctuation to derive meaning. Reading is crucial for individual and national development, transforming knowledge into motion and enhancing our understanding of various aspects of life. Regular reading boosts academic and financial success, social awareness, confidence, and positive personal behaviour. It is the foundation for learning outcomes and can improve lives regardless of educational level. Elkin et al. (2003) suggest that academic achievements can, thus, be described as the level at which an individual acquires knowledge to answer questions for school. Children who read frequently can perform better at school as both reading and academic achievements go hand in hand and are dependent on each other.

According to Oates (2009), turning a page (as in reading) begins a lifetime trip. Reading is the only way to willingly and frequently transform into a different body, voice, and spirit (Oates, 2009). Bashir and Mattoo (2012) note that reading can be perceived as well-planned habits of study patterns, which can result in students understanding academic subjects, assisting them in passing examinations. This will, therefore, determine the academic achievements of students.

Today, reading competes with electronic media, which is popular among the youth and perceived as the “in thing”. Nowadays, the youth are mostly concerned with having an iPhone rather than a book (Bashir and Mattoo, 2012). Reading is the process of decoding symbols and letters into sounds, words, and sentences to gain meaning. It is sometimes seen as magical. Children do not naturally learn to read the way they learn to speak; it is a process that needs to be taught. Parents can have a significant influence in helping children acquire pre-reading skills, which will make the process of learning to read easier.

Reading is the technique of gaining an understanding of written symbols by examining a series of them. It is a form of mental stimulation whereby an individual looks at a written text and begins to process the information contained in the written language message. When reading, one must utilise their eyesight to understand and provide meaning to the words in a phrase. In light of this, Smith (2012) views reading as a creative process in which the reader constructs meaning via interaction with the text.

Culture of reading

Chamberlin, Haynes, and Wragg (2005) note that literacy is at the heart of primary education and has been declared a human right by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). A community that prides itself on celebrating and respecting reading is referred to as a reading culture. Reading is the cornerstone of a curriculum cornerstone and is important for the social welfare of the children, as well as their academic and personal success. Motshekga (2010) states that the South African government strives to ensure that the culture of reading continues to grow, as it is perceived that only a small section of the public reads and buys books. Although SA has many libraries, they are primarily located in cities and towns, making them inaccessible to many poor and rural people who require transportation to reach them. Today’s world poses significant challenges for parents who often struggle to focus on their children’s reading development due to work pressures, keeping abreast with the increasingly high cost of living, the after-effects of COVID-19, and economic recessions. As a result, parents pay little attention to their children’s reading abilities, often lacking both the time and skills to read to them (Modisaotsile, 2012).

Alex-Nmecha and Horsfall (2019) define a reading culture as the practice of reading regularly, leading to a mindset and abilities that make reading an enjoyable and consistent practice. Ailakhu and Unegbu (2017) define a reading culture as the practice of reading for pleasure

outside the classroom, emphasising that, over time, reading ceases to feel like a chore. Governments worldwide are striving to build literate nations by instilling a love for reading in children from an early age. SA is also in pursuit of this goal by promoting the belief that a reading nation is a leading nation. The South African government participated in reading roundtables with educational stakeholders to discuss ways to motivate school systems to prioritise literacy and numeracy efforts. These initiatives aim to improve learners' academic performance and overall educational outcomes.

A person's ability to read, write, and calculate is essential in ensuring success in the modern world. A good primary education aims to equip learners with lifelong learning skills, which are essential for eradicating poverty, reducing child mortality rates, achieving gender equality, fostering peace, upholding democracy, regulating population growth, and ensuring sustainable development (Department of Basic Education, 2015). School libraries are pivotal in mapping the road to reading and cultivating a reading culture. They serve as gateways to knowledge, providing essential resources such as books and computers, shaping students' thoughts, and influencing their actions.

Society today is heavily influenced by technological development, which has significantly altered reading habits in communities. Technology is slowly changing our society, and the reading habits of the youth are negatively impacted. Many students now lack strong reading skills, as they rarely read for pleasure and mostly read-only to pass examinations. Nowadays, pupils are more inclined to spend their time browsing the internet, sending WhatsApp messages, watching TV, and spending hours on social media. Therefore, it is evident that a key aspect of fostering a culture of reading is motivating children to read regularly and cultivating the habit of reading books as something they will always value, need, and enjoy for the rest of their lives (Krashen, 2004).

Reading promotion

Parents remain a crucial part of the reading promotion process, as children will be influenced by how parents have read to them during infancy, toddlerhood, and preschool years. These experiences have a significant impact on a child's love for reading and their ability to read independently. South Africans are encouraged to make every day a National Book weekday by bringing light to those without access to books and promoting reading as an enjoyable activity that many can participate in.

Everyone in society can play a vital role in raising awareness about the joy as well as the importance of reading, by promoting reading campaigns through various social media platforms, community initiatives, churches, social groups, schools, and libraries (Rule and Land, 2017).

School libraries and reading

As alluded to earlier, the school library plays an essential role in assisting all members of the school community, including learners, staff, and families, in acquiring new information and skills that enhance their education and foster personal growth, benefitting them throughout their lives. Encouraging students to read is one of the school library's most important functions, significantly influencing learner's long-term reading interests and habits.

School libraries, as defined by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), are institutions within schools that provide a range of educational resources to support the school curriculum and foster lifelong learning and literacy (IFLA, 2015). They serve as spaces where students can access books, digital content, and multimedia resources while being encouraged to develop critical thinking, research skills, and a love of reading (IFLA, 2015). According to the American Association of School Librarians (AASL), the primary function of school libraries is to provide information literacy skills and foster a collaborative environment where students and teachers engage with knowledge critically and innovatively (AASL, 2009).

Teachers play a pivotal role in this process. A teacher is a person who uses their profession to assist pupils acquire information and knowledge, skills, and virtues. They are also referred to as educators. While teaching is often associated with formal training, anyone can assume the role of an instructor in various settings, such as demonstrating to a co-worker how to accomplish a given task. Some countries allow home-schooling informal instruction of school-age children by (usually) family members that serves as an alternative to conventional educational institutions such as schools or colleges.

School librarians are integrally part of the school library and work in various educational settings, including public, private, and religious schools. Their role extends beyond managing library resources; they foster a love of reading, guide students in selecting literature, and teach them to use print and digital resources effectively. According to Saunders and Wong (2020),

librarians in both primary and secondary schools, assist students in locating, evaluating, and citing information for research, focusing on critical thinking and information literacy skills. In addition to working directly with students, librarians collaborate with teachers to support curriculum development by identifying and providing relevant materials, tools, and resources that enhance lesson plans. They play a key role in integrating technology into the learning environment, teaching students to responsibly use online databases, media, and other research tools. Furthermore, school librarians often lead programmes and activities that promote reading and digital literacy (Stewart and Deans, 2020).

1.11 Outline of chapters

The dissertation is structured as follows:

Chapter One - Introduction

This chapter introduced the study. It outlined the study's purpose and context, the study problem and the research aim, objectives, and questions. This was followed by the significance of the study and its delimitations and limitations. Also provided was the conceptual framework underpinning the study and the definition of key terms used. The chapter ended with an outline of the structure of the dissertation and a summary.

Chapter Two - Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

This chapter provides an overview of the main concepts of the study and discusses the relevant literature and the conceptual framework adopted in this study.

Chapter Three - Research Methodology

This chapter examines the research methodology employed in the study. Pertinent issues, including sampling, data collection, data analysis, population, and research design are presented and discussed.

Chapter Four - Research Findings and Discussion

This chapter presents and discusses the results derived from the interviews conducted with the selected teachers and school librarians who comprised the study sample.

Chapter Five - Summary of Results, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This chapter summarises (and to some extent discusses) the findings presented in the previous chapter. The research questions provide a basis for the summary. Conclusions are drawn and recommendations are made.

1.12 Summary

This chapter included a description of the study's context as well as its purpose and significance. Other issues included the research objectives and questions, the conceptual framework, and definitions of key terms used in the study.

Chapter Two follows and comprises a review of the relevant literature on promoting a reading culture.

Chapter Two

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

2.1 Introduction

A literature review is a crucial component of research as it answers key questions, summarises previous findings, and identifies areas that require further, more focused investigation. It provides up-to-date information and helps researchers identify appropriate theories, methodologies, and gaps in the existing body of knowledge. Books and journal articles are examples of valuable resources that can be used for this.

This chapter will examine studies conducted on school libraries, librarians, and reading. Key topics include reading, reading promotion, reading motivation, reading culture, definitions of reading, and reading promotion campaigns. These are all topics that can be associated with the promotion of a reading culture.

2.2 Reading

Reading is the intellectual process of decoding symbols to determine a text's meaning. When we read, our eyes receive written symbols (such as letters, punctuation marks, and spaces), and our brain converts them into words, sentences, and paragraphs that communicate something to us, that is, meaning. Reading is a mental process where an individual examines a written text and identifies the information contained in it. Additionally, it requires using eyesight to recognise words in a phrase and give them context.

According to the DOE (2021), reading is the primary technique through which people learn. Aina, Okusaga, Taiwo, and Ogundipe, (2011) assert that reading implies that a person cannot acquire or retain information if they do not understand what they are reading. Mojapelo (2023) describes reading as a private activity typically done in silence and alone. Mojapelo (2023) also highlights reading as a life-enhancing activity that provides valuable life experiences, expands knowledge, and serves as a priceless gift. Reading involves transferring information from print material to the mind through the eyes, receiving and decoding symbols and punctuation to derive meaning. It is crucial for individual and national development, transforming knowledge into actionable insights and enhancing our understanding of various aspects of life.

Reading also plays a vital role in the mastery of other subjects and is considered one of the best predictors of long-term learning achievement. Furthermore, reading is a dynamic and sophisticated activity that takes years for learners to master. Without the acquisition of reading abilities for comprehension and decoding, learners will struggle to progress with their studies. According to research, students who cannot read for meaning are often unable to complete their education and drop out of school.

The results of the 2021 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) paint a bleak picture, with South African learners in Grades 4 to 6 unable to read for meaning increasing from 78% in 2016 to 81% in 2021 – the lowest among all participating countries. The DOE has made reading a priority area, working to improve the quality of primary education, especially for learners from previously disadvantaged communities (Sari, Pratiwi, and Thereana, 2019). Regular reading boosts academic and financial success, social awareness, confidence, and positive personal behaviour. It serves as the foundation for strong learning outcomes and can improve lives, regardless of one's educational level. Redding, Cavazos, Layland, Twyman and Vuong (2021) suggest that academic achievements can be described as the level at which an individual acquires knowledge to answer school-related questions. Children who read frequently tend to perform better academically, as reading and academic achievement are interdependent. Reading is described as the only activity that allows individuals to willingly and frequently transform into different bodies, voices, and spirits.

Redding et al. (2021) further argue that reading can be perceived as a well-planned habit of study patterns, enabling students to better understand academic subjects and succeed in examinations, ultimately determining their educational achievements. Schwabe, Kosch, Boomgaarden and Stoker, (2022) suggest that reading now competes with electronic media, which is highly popular among the youth and perceived as the “in thing”. Many young people today are more concerned with having an iPhone rather than having a book, giving rise to the metaphor “the death of the book”. Keyser (2021) views reading as a creative process in which the reader collaborates with the text to construct meaning. It is an interactive process that requires active engagement between the reader and the text. Keyser (2021) emphasises that all schools should launch readership promotion campaigns to promote a reading culture among young children. He stresses the importance of starting early, as the lack of a reading culture can affect the quality of graduates a country produces.

2.3 The role of librarians in promoting a reading culture

Librarians, also known as school media specialists, play a vital role in promoting a school-wide reading culture. They work closely with teachers to enhance learning, guide students toward lifelong reading habits, and create transformative learning environments rich in both print and digital resources. One of their most crucial roles is supporting literacy by providing diverse resources, guiding students in academic reading, and using inquiry-based methods to foster critical thinking skills (Keyser, 2021).

Recognising the impact of well-resourced school libraries, many educational institutions invest in qualified librarians as a critical component of their literacy programmes. Research indicates that the involvement of librarians in literacy instruction is closely linked to improved academic performance, greater motivation to read, and increased engagement in learning. Moreover, librarians contribute significantly to developing school-wide literacy policies and cross-curricular initiatives, making them essential partners in education. Their ability to integrate digital and print resources across subjects enhances vocabulary acquisition and supports student learning at multiple levels (Lee, 2020).

2.4 The state of reading in South Africa

Studies show that a considerable percentage of students in South Africa struggle with reading competency, highlighting the country's serious literacy issues. 81% of Grade 4 students in South Africa are unable to read for meaning in any language, according to the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2021 (Van Staden, Gustafsson, Spaull, and Pretorius, 2022). Ineffective early reading interventions, underfunded school libraries, and restricted access to reading materials are some of the causes of this literacy crisis (Department of Basic Education, 2022). The reading culture in South Africa differs between public and private schools. The lack of properly functional libraries and skilled librarians is a common problem for public schools, particularly those in disadvantaged communities (Spaull and Pretorius, 2021). The Read to Lead Campaign and Nal'ibali Reading Clubs are two government-led programs that attempt to address these inequities, but there are still obstacles in the way of developing a reading culture across the country.

2.4.1 Literacy Trends in Private Schools: National, Regional, and Global Perspectives

While most research focuses on public school literacy initiatives, private schools are often overlooked in national literacy discussions. Private schools in South Africa generally have more financial resources, allowing them to implement innovative literacy programs, modern libraries, and digital reading tools (Van der Berg, Van Wyk, Gustafsson, Meyer, Chari, Van Biljon and McCallum, 2023). Many private institutions integrate e-books, audiobooks, and online reading platforms into their curriculum, providing students with greater access to diverse reading materials compared to public schools (Van der Berg, et.al, 2023). However, disparities exist even within the private sector, as high-cost independent schools differ significantly from low-fee private schools in terms of library resources and digital access (Department of Basic Education, 2021).

At a regional level, private schools in Sub-Saharan Africa have increasingly adopted blended learning approaches to literacy education (Van der Berg et al., 2023). For example, schools in Kenya, Nigeria, and Ghana have implemented mobile libraries, AI-driven reading applications, and personalised learning platforms to encourage reading engagement (Mosha, 2025). However, there is limited research comparing the literacy outcomes of private vs. public schools in these regions, highlighting a gap that requires further exploration (Chilisa, 2023). Globally, private schools in developed nations have integrated digital literacy tools to enhance reading comprehension, including virtual reality books, adaptive AI reading tutors, and gamified reading programs (Mosha, 2025). These interventions have shown positive results in improving literacy rates, particularly in countries such as Finland, Canada, and Singapore (Chilisa, 2023). The challenge remains in ensuring equitable access to these advanced resources across all private institutions, particularly in lower-income settings.

2.4.2 Identifying the Research Gap

There is a significant knowledge gap regarding private school literacy initiatives because most South African literacy research is on public schools. Little is known about how private schools' literacy practices compare to those of public schools, or whether they provide better long-term reading outcomes, despite the fact that they frequently have greater autonomy and resources (DBE, 2023). By investigating how Scottsville's private primary schools foster a reading culture with a focus on digital resources, library services, and literacy development programs this study aims to close this gap. According to research conducted by the 2001 Global Competitiveness Group, South Africa is considered one of the most developed countries in

Africa (Thaba-Nkadimene and Emsley, 2020). It is a democratic country that gained its democratic status in April 1994 under the leadership of the world-renowned Nelson Mandela. Although SA has celebrated 30 years of freedom, many issues within the country are still being attributed to the legacy of apartheid. Given the inequalities resulting from the past, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) has focused on improving the provision of services such as classroom libraries, mobile schools, and community libraries to ensure schools have functional libraries and information services. Unfortunately, despite many years of democracy, statistics reveal that only approximately 5% of parents read to their children on a regular basis, with just 14% of South Africans becoming avid readers. A survey conducted by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA, 2018) found that 92.9% of the South African adult population is considered literate, as measured by classifying anyone older than 15 years and with at least a Grade 7 education.

However, the assumption that anyone with a Grade 7 (or above) is literate is unrealistic, as it does not reflect how well an individual can read or write. Thus, these statistics can be misleading and the DOE, through the Annual National Assessment results, has reported that SA's literacy levels remain a national disaster, despite billions of Rands invested in education and teacher training. This raises the question: Do teachers know how to teach reading effectively? Reading should be instilled at a young age. Parents should read to their children even before they fully understand, as this will help them associate books and reading with affection and love (Government Online 2021).

According to information released by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (Hanemann, 2015), literacy rates among the adult population, including the youth, continue to rise. Young women aged 15-24 have made the most substantial gains but still lag behind young men. For over 40 years, UNESCO has commemorated International Literacy Day, reminding the global community that literacy is a human right and the foundation of all education. Moreover, literacy is a cause for celebration, with over four billion literate persons worldwide. However, achieving universal literacy for children, teenagers, and adults remains an unfulfilled and ever-changing objective. While global literacy rates are improving, UNESCO reports that over 763 million young people and adults still lack fundamental literacy skills. International Literacy Day, celebrated annually on September 8th, underscores the importance of literacy for human dignity and a more sustainable society. According to data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics Hanemann, (2015), 87% of female youth possess basic literacy skills, compared to

92% of males. Literacy rates among youth exceed 95% in almost half of the countries with available data. Despite recent progress, two-thirds (493 million) of the 774 million adults (15 years and older) who still lack reading and writing skills are women. Furthermore, the number of illiterate people worldwide is declining; however, the percentage of women among the illiterate population has remained constant at 63% to 64% (Lor, 2012). According to Statistics South Africa, at least 98% of South African children attend school. Sullivan and Brown (2021) state that, despite the South African government spending 18.5% of its annual budget on education, there are significant signs of a crisis in education. This is evident when many matric pupils pass without meeting the minimum university entrance requirements. As a result, these underprepared high school leavers have no option but to stay home while trying to find employment. Modisaotsile (2012) argues that learners are hindered from receiving a quality education due to factors such as the lack of teacher training and the lack of formal education for school governing bodies (SGBs). This leads to weak operational services and a lack of participation by parents in their children's education.

Reading levels among learners should be encouraged to make SA a reading nation, as it is often pointed out that a reading nation is a winning nation. Although books may seem less prevalent in today's world, they are still filled with knowledge, parables, and wisdom about various aspects of life, such as love and helpful advice. Books can change lives, and one can experience new things through reading books and be rewarded with enhanced memory and understanding. Through books, we learn about our history, cultures, extinct species such as dinosaurs, and significant historical events such as the World Wars. Brian (2018) argues that children who read more tend to be more aware of the world around them. They become more assertive and can face the world confidently, as they are well-informed. Books help people develop critical thinking skills and perform better at whatever they do. Reading teaches people how to solve problems and acquire knowledge.

In observance of International Literacy Day, which UNESCO has celebrated for over 40 years, people worldwide are reminded that literacy is a fundamental human right and the cornerstone of all education. Moreover, with over four billion literate individuals globally, being literate is a cause for celebration. However, literacy remains an ever-evolving goal that must be achieved for all children, teens, and adults. The DOE in SA has introduced several grassroots initiatives to promote and instil a reading culture. A national reading plan has been developed and implemented across all provinces and schools to guide teachers, principals, school management

teams, SGBs, learners, and district, provincial, and national officials on reading-related activities outside and within the classroom. The DOE planned to increase library access in provinces with the lowest levels over a five-year period with an expected completion by 2014. Districts and provinces would implement several innovative strategies, including the formation of reading clubs, the use of reading coaches, and the provision of reading norms, all supported by regular testing, monitoring, and reporting of progress. However, it is patently evident that much work still needs to be done as reflected in the statistics provided by PIRLS earlier in the chapter.

The aforementioned PIRLS's (2021) findings, along with other relevant research, highlight the importance of fostering a reading culture, particularly among primary school children. As noted, PIRLS (2021) evaluates the reading comprehension and literacy levels of 4th-grade students worldwide, offering valuable insights into the importance of nurturing strong reading habits early in the education journey. The results make it abundantly evident that fostering a reading culture in elementary schools is crucial for improving literacy levels.

Communities, families, and schools must collaborate to create an environment that values and promotes reading. This can be achieved by encouraging parental involvement in reading participation, ensuring age-appropriate literature is available in homes and schools, training educators on methods for promoting reading, and creating dedicated reading spaces such as libraries and reading corners in schools. Research suggests that funding primary school reading programmes is crucial for producing a generation of skilled and confident readers. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA, 2018) also reveals that reading ability influences general academic achievement as well as lifetime learning. It was found that students who develop a passion for reading, typically excel in other courses. School libraries play a key role in promoting a reading culture within the school community by providing resources and creating spaces where children can access books.

Early reading interventions, as emphasised, are also crucial. Research from the National Institute for Literacy (2010) shows that activities such as reading aloud to children and providing interesting books significantly encourage a love of reading and enhance literacy outcomes in later years. Public and school libraries play a key role in fostering a culture of reading, as noted by IFLA (2022). PIRLS (2016) highlighted the importance of early reading development, noting significant differences in reading literacy across countries.

Singapore and Russia, with strong reading cultures, performed well in the study. The findings emphasise the importance of family and school contexts in fostering a reading culture. According to PIRLS, children who participated in literacy activities from a young age had access to books at home and were read to by their parents, performed better in reading. This underscores the importance of community-based initiatives and family participation to promote reading outside of the classroom. PIRLS (2021) also emphasised the vital role of educators in encouraging reading. Students with higher reading literacy were more likely to attend schools that actively promoted reading beyond the curriculum, supported teacher professional development, and provided access to reading resources.

2.5 Socioeconomic factors and family literacy practices in developing reading cultures

Mtshali's (2023) study provides valuable information on the reading habits of students in KZN, emphasising the significant role that socioeconomic factors play in shaping their engagement with reading materials. Similarly, Levy and Hall (2021) identify family literacy practices as crucial to promoting a reading culture, noting that the involvement of parents and guardians in literacy activities is critical for young readers. Mtshali (2023) examined the significance of school libraries and teacher-librarians in cultivating a reading culture within the uThukela District, Bergville Circuit. The research emphasised the important function of libraries in offering access to reading resources and establishing a conducive environment for literacy growth.

Additionally, Mtshali emphasised the crucial role of teacher-librarians in selecting appropriate materials, assisting students in their reading endeavours, and incorporating library activities into the broader educational context. This current research focused on how private primary schools in Scottsville foster a reading culture and contrasts with Mtshali's (2023) study with its focus on rural public-school libraries. It explores how these well-resourced private institutions utilise their unique environment to encourage reading. Further expanding on Mtshali's (2023) work, this study examined broader institutional approaches, including teacher-initiated reading programmes, administrative strategies, and parental engagement in cultivating a reading-centred atmosphere. While Mtshali concentrated on teacher-librarians, this study broadened the scope to encompass classroom teachers and school librarians. Both

studies, however, shared the common objective of understanding a school's role in nurturing a reading culture.

By combining findings from these different educational contexts, this research not only extends Mtshali's (2023) insights but also broadens the discourse to include private school settings. This approach comprehensively views literacy promotion strategies across diverse educational landscapes. By building on Mtshali's (2023) call for localised approaches and Johnson's (2010) emphasis on family involvement, this study advocates for community-based programmes tailored to the specific needs of learners in this region. Such programmes are not only designed to address resource shortages but also aim to foster a collaborative approach to literacy that involves schools, families, and local stakeholders. In a related study, Levy and Hall (2021) investigated how family-based literacy activities contribute to developing a culture of reading, emphasising the crucial role that parents and guardians play in supporting young readers' literacy development. Their research highlights that limited access to resources in disadvantaged communities often impedes families' participation in reading-related activities. While Johnson (2010) primarily focused on resource limitations as the main challenge, Mtshali (2023) argues that intervention programmes should consider learners' unique cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, especially in regions such as KZN.

2.6 Challenges faced by school libraries in developing a reading culture

A school library is critical for improving education as it not only provides children access to reading materials and exposes them to the joys of reading but also provides a space for studying, which may not be available at home. Education and skills development remain among the government's top priorities and are central to its policies. Education remains one of the most significant expenditure items in the government budget and, as such, is a key focus area. However, society today rarely devotes leisure time to reading, and reading for pleasure is undervalued as an empowering skill. Reading is continuously competing with technology, and there is a growing concern that it has taken a back seat across all ages, with the internet dominating households worldwide.

The high cost of books also contributes to the nation's lack of reading culture in a country where a quarter of the working-age population is officially unemployed. The absence of engaging literature, phone addiction, social media chatter, and television watching are

obstacles preventing pupils from developing a reading habit. Researchers recommend that teacher-librarians use social media to promote reading and organise school-wide reading-related events to encourage students to read.

Furthermore, creating eye-catching book displays in the library can effectively capture students' attention and encourage them to explore reading materials. Creating a strong reading culture in school libraries may be a difficult task owing to several variables. Here are some of the major issues faced by school libraries:

2.6.1 Poverty

In the South African context, poverty remains a significant barrier to literacy, particularly in rural areas. Many children in these regions face challenges accessing educational resources, including books, due to the high cost of living. Families living on government grants often prioritise basic necessities over purchasing books. This issue is further compounded by the fact that libraries are frequently located far from rural areas, making it difficult for children to access them. In provinces such as Limpopo and the Eastern Cape, school libraries are either poorly resourced or non-existent, which severely limits students' opportunities to develop essential reading skills. As earlier pointed out, the 2021 PIRLS revealed that 81% of South African learners in Grades 4 to 6 cannot read for meaning, underscoring the gravity of the literacy crisis. This crisis is particularly acute in impoverished, rural communities, where limited access to libraries and reading materials is exacerbated by high poverty levels and historical inequalities in education (PIRLS, 2021).

Achieving literacy goals in SA faces multiple challenges including overly ambitious targets, inadequate resources (especially in rural areas), and underestimation of the extent and complexities of addressing literacy issues. Furthermore, launching multiple similar literacy-related projects at the same time often dilutes their impact. A reading nation is an aspiration shared globally, with many countries, particularly in Africa, striving to improve literacy levels to foster renewed political, social, and economic engagement both locally, nationally, and internationally. In SA, many children grow up in primarily oral cultures, where storytelling by parents and grandparents serves as the main mode of learning. Furthermore, for children from disadvantaged communities, reading and owning books are rare experiences. Placing books in children's hands not only helps them realise that reading is enjoyable but is something they will want to do on their own. According to Allington and Cunningham (2002), we need to teach

children to read and be devoted and lifelong readers. The DBE has recognised the importance of partnerships in addressing literacy challenges. In 2015, the DBE collaborated with stakeholders such as NGOs, businesses, communities, and individuals to establish functional libraries in 1,000 impoverished schools by 2019 (DBE, 2015).

Libraries are rightly recognised as pillars of educational achievement, offering quiet spaces for reading, access to reading materials such as books, and play a vital role in improving literacy levels and, ultimately, academic growth. Despite these efforts, poverty remains a significant and persistent obstacle. Alarming, only 14% of South Africans read books, and half of the population does not have leisure books at home. For many families, purchasing books remains a luxury they cannot afford, placing children from these households at a significant disadvantage (Mtshali, 2023).

2.6.2 Lack of awareness

In today's busy world, it may be challenging for parents, pupils and educators to understand the importance of reading, which results in the underutilisation of library resources.

2.6.3 Competing interests

The concern regarding the rise of digital media, social media, and other extracurricular activities is that learners may prioritise these over reading, making it difficult to foster a culture centred on reading. Even though technology can be a powerful tool for promoting reading, it can also distract students from reading physical books, as they may prefer digital entertainment over traditional reading (Ahuja, 2021). Students attending private schools may have greater access to digital devices, which can divert their attention from conventional reading practices. Libraries that do not provide digital resources might find it challenging to compete with the enticing nature of smartphones, tablets, and gaming options.

2.6.4 Physical environment

The library's design and setting may not encourage reading. A pleasant, warm, and interesting setting is essential for motivating pupils to read (Ahuja, 2021).

2.6.5 Factors Influencing the Culture of Reading

Access to reading materials has been transformed by digital technology, which provides dynamic and fascinating experiences. By offering numerous educational possibilities, tools like

eReaders, eBooks, and digital storytelling platforms can aid in the development of literacy. Although technology is seen as a distraction by some educators, it also offers opportunities to improve student engagement, especially for younger readers. The effectiveness of using digital aids in reading programs is still up for dispute, with differing opinions.

2.7 Strategies adopted to overcome reading challenges

Reading transports us to unique places. It influences how we see and understand the world and contributes to our personal growth. It should be possible for every child to access reading materials and cultivate a lifelong love of reading. Establishing a strong reading culture places reading at the heart of the educational experience. Prioritising reading in the classroom helps pupils become skilled and committed readers, nurtures their well-being, builds community, and enhances academic performance. Learners' reading habits significantly influence their personal development. Regular reading strengthens their capacity for critical thought and provides them with the tools needed to make informed decisions (Issa et al., 2012). Additionally, reading exposes pupils to various cultures, viewpoints, and ideas, expanding their horizons and igniting a passion for lifelong learning.

Reading also provides learners the confidence to express themselves creatively, communicate effectively, and articulate their ideas. It fosters a strong sense of community, as students create a welcoming and supportive environment when they come together to discuss literature and exchange recommendations. Through these shared experiences, connections, relationships, and knowledge are formed between students and their peers. Reading comprehension is also vital outside of the classroom. Reading fluency is a key predictor of success in higher education, research, and the workforce. By cultivating a love for reading, schools play a crucial role in helping pupils reach their full potential and succeed academically. The benefits of reading are thus numerous and far-reaching (Clark and Rumbold, 2006).

2.7.1 DEAR (*Drop Everything and Read*)

Implementing a DEAR programme can significantly influence children's reading habits by dedicating 15 minutes of uninterrupted daily solo reading time. This initiative fosters independent reading, helping children develop a lifelong habit of reading. The KwaZulu-Natal Reading Strategy builds upon the current reading environment to address the national reading crisis. The foundation of the reading strategy lies in addressing both the peripheral factors and

the underlying challenges contributing to poor literacy outcomes. Research strongly supports the idea that parental engagement in their children's literacy development is very helpful, emphasising its essential role in fostering reading habits – there is no need for peripherals. Reading, both for meaning and comprehension, serves as the cornerstone of a solid basic education system.

Experts affirm that reading for meaning is a research-based approach that equips readers with the comprehension skills needed to navigate and understand complex texts effectively (Thabakadimene and Emsley, 2020).

2.7.2 Get competitive

To encourage learners to read one needs to find techniques to make reading enjoyable for them. Research has demonstrated that motivation is critical in determining the effectiveness and quality of learning results. To foster motivation in certain pupils, teachers may need to provide incentives for reading until it becomes second nature and a deeply rooted habit. Offering reading challenges is a good way to foster healthy competitiveness (Beanstack n.d).

2.7.3 Get Families Involved

According to Cervetti and Wright (2020), promoting reading in the school context requires maximising active involvement and engagement with parents and caregivers. Parental inclusion is essential and can be achieved through various approaches, such as hosting webinars to present the school's online reading programmes and conducting in-person Q&A sessions to provide parents with insightful information on how they may support their children's reading success at home. Additionally, organising family reading challenges, contests, and even an online book club can promote a sense of community and cultivate a shared love for reading among parents and children.

2.7.4 Promote learner independence

To foster a genuine love of reading, it is critical to actively involve pupils in setting their own reading goals. Establishing clear and attainable goals can boost their self-confidence and give them a sense of ownership over their reading journey. When developing these goals, consider implementing a whole-school approach that emphasises the importance of reading across all subject areas, reinforcing the idea that everyone is working together to achieve success (Edutopia, 2020).

2.8 Teachers' perceptions of the importance of reading

Mtshali (2023) asserts that reading is one of the most valuable skills a person can possess as it gives them access to a world of opportunities and knowledge. For children and adults alike, reading is essential for several reasons.

Studies have indicated that reading exposes people to various viewpoints and new ways of thinking, which helps them develop critical thinking skills and improves their decision-making abilities. The DBE (2019) emphasises that reading helps both adults and children expand their imagination. Reading enhances memory and supports long-term cognitive growth. Newman and Ogle (2019) state, "Use your brain by doing challenging activities, such as puzzles, reading, playing music, making art, or anything else that gives your brain a workout!" The importance of reading is further highlighted by its profound influence on improving people's verbal and writing skills, enabling frequent readers to express themselves more effectively. Reading is also viewed as an important part of childhood development. When parents read to their children, they not only build stronger bonds but also foster better communication skills.

The art of reading is encapsulated in the phrase, "The more you read, the more knowledge you will have. The more you learn, the more places you will go" (Newman and Ogle, 2019). Patterson, Cormack and Green, (2012) assert that "we should spend less time worrying about the number of books children read and more time introducing them to quality books that will turn them on to the joy of reading and turn them into lifelong readers." According to Patterson et al. (2012), reading to children is not just an educational tool but also a means to show love. Parents spend time in a one-on-one situation when reading to their children, encouraging a positive relationship with books, making learning fun, and encouraging bonding. Reading is a cornerstone of intellectual growth, enhancing knowledge, vocabulary, and language development. Moreover, the ability to read critically is one of the most important outcomes of regular reading. It introduces readers to fresh concepts and diverse perspectives, enabling them to evaluate information critically and make informed decisions (Patterson et al., 2012).

2.9 Benefits of reading: A foundation for lifelong success

While the advantages of reading have been extensively discussed, it is crucial to note that reading is more than just a skill; it is a gateway to greater intellectual and emotional growth.

Reading promotes critical thinking, creativity, and empathy, in addition to enhancing vocabulary and understanding. It gives students the tools they need to perceive the world around them, solve issues, and participate meaningfully in society. Furthermore, the practice of reading promotes lifelong learning, allowing people to adapt to an ever-changing environment. In today's digital world, when information is ubiquitous, the ability to read critically and discriminate between trustworthy sources is more important than ever.

While much has been said about the fundamental advantages of reading, its far-reaching influence on personal development, academic performance, and societal progress cannot be exaggerated. Today's task is to ensure that these advantages are available to everyone, particularly through new initiatives in schools, families, and communities (Snow, Griffin and Burns, 2000).

According to Spaul (2015), reading has both short- and long-term benefits. These include assisting children in passing through the lower grades of education, improving matric results, and enhancing the population's capacity to communicate in an ever-changing digital world. These skills, in turn, contribute to economic growth by creating a workforce that has proficient reading and writing skills. Ajumobi (2017) has shown that when parents read to children from an early age, it provides them with a lifelong advantage. There is no doubt that children who spend their childhood reading, continue to enjoy reading as adults and explore various types of reading materials. Ajumobi (2017) emphasises that there is no such thing as starting reading too early when it comes to reading to children. Research shows that reading to a child as early as possible in their life, yields significant benefits, including strong language skills, a deep appreciation for books, and a passion for reading. Reading aloud is also considered to have a beneficial effect on brain development, with benefits even in children as young as three years old.

Motshekga (2020) encourages parents to read to their children and to continue doing so even after their children can read independently. Reading together provides an opportunity for bonding while allowing children to experience and enjoy books beyond their reading ability. The DBE message is straightforward for all South African parents: read to your child and keep reading. This not only demonstrates to them that their parents value reading, but they also see reading as a pleasurable activity and one worth dedicating time to throughout life. Communities should reflect on a simple question: *When was the last time you read a book, a magazine, a*

newspaper, or even just any article? In this digital age, daily reading has to compete with social media platforms such as Twitter (X), Facebook, and Instagram, which dominate the attention of young people (and adults) worldwide.

According to Spaul (2015), reading offers a significant number of benefits, such as mental stimulation, which enhances vocabulary, imagination, and knowledge of the world by keeping the brain active and engaged. This, in turn, promotes brain health and strength.

Moreover, while it may seem surprising, reading a good book has significantly reduced stress by calming the mind and providing an escape from the pressures of daily life, work, and personal challenges. Spaul (2015) also emphasises that reading broadens knowledge by developing listening, visual, and hearing skills, all while providing new information and ensuring understanding, even in moments when everything seems overwhelming. In contrast, the rise of the internet and multitasking has led to an increase in distractions, with people simultaneously working, sending emails, and engaging with others via platforms such as WhatsApp and Skype (Gibson, 2022).

Online sources of free entertainment, such as eBooks, are easily accessible through computers, laptops, tablets, and iPads, allowing users to find new content at their convenience. However, reading is mainly associated with print material, which may seem less appealing, especially to teenagers (Gibson, 2022). While newer electronic media, popular with youth, offer benefits, they cannot replace the personal and intellectual development that frequent reading provides. For example, a person who regularly reads the daily newspaper stays informed about current events, both locally and globally. Modisaotsile (2012) emphasises that leisure reading is crucial, as it enhances general knowledge, fosters empathy, improves self-confidence, and instils a lifelong motivation to read. Additionally, reading expands vocabulary, increases general knowledge, and contributes to language development, ultimately boosting enjoyment and self-confidence. The message is clear: “Drop Everything and Read” (Thaba-Nkadimene and Emsley, 2020).

2.10 School library contribution to the development of a reading culture

The school library is responsible for providing essential resources such as books and computers, helping shape students’ thoughts, and influencing their actions. In today’s society, technological developments have significantly altered reading habits, particularly among the

youth. Students now primarily read to pass examinations rather than for pleasure or personal growth. Instead of engaging with books, they often spend their time browsing the internet, sending WhatsApp messages, watching TV, and spending hours interacting on social media. As a result, fostering a strong reading culture requires constantly motivating students to read for pleasure and to make reading a habit that they will always find enjoyable and fulfilling throughout their lives (Krashen, 2004). The school library and librarian have an important role to play in this regard.

A reading culture encompasses the values, behaviours, and practices that shape a society's relationship with books and reading. It entails encouraging reading in schools, families, and communities while facilitating access to books through digital platforms, bookstores, and school libraries (Baron, 2015). Mahala (2010) emphasises that a nation with a strong reading culture is better positioned to contribute to academic, economic, and technological progress, ultimately increasing citizens' knowledge and skills. According to the DOE (2008), reading is important for nation-building in any developing country, as it encourages confidence and human development.

2.11 Motivation for reading

In SA, significant efforts have been made to promote a culture of reading. The DBE (2019) has implemented numerous initiatives to bridge literacy gaps and ensure a literate society. The department's vision is to promote a love of reading from an early across all spheres of life. This commitment is evident on the DOE's official website, which stresses that reading a book every day can make one smarter. Hawthorne (2021) supports this notion, stating that reading has been shown to stimulate brain growth and that a reading nation is a winning nation. Learners across all educational levels and spheres should be encouraged to become engaged and motivated readers, as literacy development relies heavily on promoting a school-wide reading culture. In its quest to improve literacy levels among the adult population, the South African government launched the "*Kha Ri Gude* Mass Literacy Campaign" in 2008, spanning all nine provinces.

This campaign aimed to enable 4.7 million South African adults above the age of 15 to acquire spoken English (given its universal appeal) along with reading, writing, and calculating in their home tongue (that is, one of the country's 11 official languages) and aligned ABET Level 1 Unit Standards. This campaign was part of SA's commitment made to the Dakar Declaration

of 2000, where United Nations (UN) member countries pledged to achieve education for all and reduce national illiteracy levels by half by 2015. The DOE played a key role in ensuring the *Kha Ri Gude* campaign's success. The DOE (2014) introduced the *Read to Lead Campaign*, a four-year initiative (2015-2019), aimed at improving the reading capabilities of South African children. The campaign sought to ensure that all learners achieved age-appropriate reading levels by 2019. Launched to coincide with Mandela Day activities, the campaign also aimed to establish and resource 1,000 school libraries to benefit underprivileged schools.

Furthermore, it presented schools with clear directives regarding the DOE's reading expectations and that teachers were to ensure that expected performance benchmarks were achieved. While these campaigns aimed to improve learners' reading achievements, motivating children to adopt reading as a lifelong habit and cultivate a passion for this critical skill is important. The DOE (2019) is calling on all stakeholders and partners to take part in instilling, developing, and sustaining a culture of reading – one that will in the long term, be extended into homes, communities, schools, and businesses.

Companies are encouraged to support reading initiatives and invest in school libraries through their social responsibility programmes. Stranger-Johannessen (2014) emphasises that, although we live in the 21st century where ICTs dominate every aspect of our lives, printed materials such as books remain essential for both learning to read and continuing to read for pleasure. Young children, for example, benefit greatly from engaging with attractive picture books which help develop a love for reading. The South African Book Development Council (SABDC), working together with the Department of Arts and Culture, launched the National Book Week (NBW) in 2010. Celebrated annually in September, the NBW promotes a culture of reading by celebrating books for an entire week. Publishers have also joined these efforts through campaigns such as *#BUYABOOK*, which encourages those who can afford books to purchase and donate them to those who cannot afford to buy books for themselves (Le Roux, 2017).

Le Roux (2017) points out that publishers such as Penguin Random House South Africa, NB Publishers, and Pan MacMillan South Africa, are participating in the *#BUYABOOK* campaign by offering a range of heavily discounted books – some priced as low as R20.00 – and available at Bargain Books and Exclusive Books outlets stores across the country. These books can then be placed in designated NBW book bins in stores and later distributed to local libraries. Additionally, NBW, with the support of local celebrities such as Stoan Seate, Jena Dover, Lupi

Ngcayisa, Pearl Thusi, Aaron Moloisi, and Refiloe Mpakanyane, runs the *#GOINGPLACES* campaign. Now in its thirteenth year, the campaign tours South African provinces during NBW, offering books to inspire readers “to read their way around the world” (Le Roux, 2017).

2.12 Gaps in the literature

The literature discussed above provided essential data for the investigation. However, none of the literature reviewed applied to the development of a reading culture in private schools. This study aimed to address this gap by conducting in-depth interviews with librarians and teachers to explore the growing concern about low reading abilities and the lack of a reading culture in primary schools (with a focus on private primary schools). Much of the literature and research has focused on the paucity of resources in public schools, such as the lack of libraries, the scarcity of resources, and the scarcity of librarians in these schools. There thus remains a notable lack of studies addressing these issues within private school settings in SA.

2.13 Summary

This chapter explored the definition of reading and examined the key variables associated with it, including reading promotion, motivation for reading, and reading culture. An overview of the literature on reading promotion was provided.

The research methodology adopted for the study is presented and discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology employed in the study. The aspects examined and discussed are the research design, population and sampling, data collection techniques and the data collection process, data analysis, and validity and reliability of the research. The ethical considerations are outlined and the chapter ends with a summary. In short, a mixed-methods design was adopted utilising face-to-face interviews and focus groups. The chapter begins with an overview of the concept of “research methodology”.

3.2 Paradigm adopted

This study is based on the interpretivism paradigm, which stresses understanding the subjective experiences and meanings that people attach to their social realities (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2017). The interpretivist technique was chosen because it allows for a thorough investigation of participants' viewpoints, which is critical for understanding how school librarians and instructors foster reading culture in their schools. This paradigm impacts study design by emphasizing the context and individuals' lived experiences, which are best documented via qualitative approaches. As a result, interviews were chosen as the major data gathering tool. Interviews allow researchers to collect rich, comprehensive information about participants' viewpoints in their natural surroundings, allowing them to comprehend the distinctions of their experiences better.

3.3 Understanding methodology

Research methodology is defined as the methods, techniques, and processes used to apply the research plan, including the essential beliefs and assumptions that guide their application (Babbie, 2011). Sreekumar (2023) defines research methodology as the processes and procedures used to gather and analyse data on a specific study topic. It is the process by which researchers design their study to fulfil their objectives with the research tools they have chosen. It encompasses all the major aspects of research, such as study design, data collection techniques, data analysis methods, and the general research framework. Kothari (2004) describes research methodology as a systematic approach to solving a research challenge.

It can be understood as the study of scientific research method, utilising its established principles and standards to guide the selection, application, and execution of research methods in accordance with the underlying research paradigm. From another perspective, research methodology encompasses the researcher's understanding of social reality, the interpretation of a phenomenon, and the necessary framework for devising suitable research methods, including approaches to address the research questions. Rebeck (2002) defines methodology as "a set of procedures that can be followed for achieving an objective". In this context, the goal is to investigate observable occurrences and determine their underlying origins and consequences.

This study, influenced by the interpretivism paradigm, adopted interviews (both one-on-one and focus group) as its primary qualitative research method, aligning with Dworkin's (2012) description of qualitative research as a blend of various techniques, such as interviews and document reviews. Because qualitative data can provide a deeper understanding of participants' thoughts and feelings, they serve as a reliable tool for helping the researcher better understand the social phenomena under study.

3.4 Research design

Dawadi, Shrestha, and Giri (2021) state that the qualitative method values the opinions of its participants and provides a deeper understanding of the problem under investigation. Qualitative research adds depth to a study by capturing participants' lived experiences and perspectives (Poth, 2018). Therefore, this study follows a qualitative research design to explore the promotion of a reading culture in private primary schools. This approach aligns with the interpretivist paradigm, prioritising subjective meanings and the social context of literacy practices (Paudel, 2024).

The study employs two qualitative data collection methods:

Semi-structured interviews, which allow participants to express their experiences and insights in a flexible, in-depth manner (Dworkin, 2012). Focus groups, which facilitate discussion among teachers, revealing shared perspectives and challenges in fostering a reading culture (Krueger and Casey, 2015). By relying exclusively on qualitative methods, this study ensures a rich, contextual understanding of how educators promote reading in private schools. Unlike

quantitative research, which seeks numerical patterns, qualitative research captures the complexity of human experiences making it the most appropriate design for this study.

3.5 Population and sampling

The population of the study comprised the school librarians and teachers of Grades 4 to 7 of four private schools in Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg, KZN. **This population was chosen purposefully because these educators play a crucial role in supporting reading initiatives within the schools.** According to Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2006), sampling is the process by which a researcher examines a subgroup of the total population and generalises the traits found there to the full population. This means that rather than trying to sample every member of the population, pertinent information can be gathered from a chosen group to represent the population.

3.5.1 Justification for Selecting Four Private Schools

The selection of four private schools was intentional to ensure a manageable yet diverse sample that allows for comparative insights into how private schools promote a reading culture. Private schools operate within different curricular and resource frameworks compared to public schools, making their perspectives distinct and valuable in understanding literacy promotion. Meanwhile, Grades 4–7 were chosen as they represent the upper primary phase, a critical period where learners transition from learning to read to reading to learn (Spaull and Pretorius, 2019). Teachers in these grades are central to integrating literacy practices into the curriculum and fostering independent reading. School librarians play a key role in curating reading materials, organizing literacy programs, and supporting reading initiatives (Krashen, 2011). By including both teachers and librarians, the study ensures multiple perspectives on how a reading culture is promoted. Furthermore, selecting four schools maintains feasibility, allowing for in-depth data collection via interviews and focus groups, in line with qualitative research principles (Poth, 2018).

3.5.2 Sampling method

Sampling techniques are used to select a representative selection of people, things, or observations from a broader population. The goal is to draw conclusions about the population from the sample. This section outlines various sampling techniques employed to select a representative subset from a larger population, enabling researchers to draw valid conclusions

and insights without needing to study the entire group. The researcher adopted purposive sampling as described below.

3.5.2.1 Purposive sampling

Patton (2015) discusses purposive sampling as a strategic method in qualitative research, aimed at selecting information-rich cases to provide in-depth insights. This technique allows the researcher to focus on specific characteristics or conditions that align with the study's goals, helping to address the research questions effectively. Unlike random sampling, purposive sampling deliberately targets a subset of the population with the desired traits or experiences, allowing for a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

The population in this study was a collection of individuals who share one or more traits. Two techniques for purposive sampling were employed:

Expert sampling: This method selects individuals with specific knowledge or experience in the field. It is particularly useful when a study requires opinions from individual people who are very knowledgeable about the subject.

Homogeneous sampling: This technique involves selecting a group of participants with similar characteristics or experiences relevant to the study. It allows for a focused exploration of a particular subgroup (Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim, 2016).

In this study, purposive sampling was used to select the participants. The researcher applied personal judgment in identifying participants who best met the study's objectives, selecting individuals capable of contributing insights as well as individuals with similar characteristics or experiences (Bless et.al, 2006). As Denscombe (2017) stated, researchers often rely on their judgment to select respondents who align with the study's purpose. It is important to note that purposive samples are typical in qualitative research (Patton and Cochran, 2002).

3.5.3 Sample size

Various aspects of this study were considered when determining the appropriate sample size. Most importantly, the researcher ensured that the sample was sufficiently representative to allow for significant generalisation of the results. Another consideration was that the sample size should not be so large that it presents difficulties when data is collected and analysed. Twenty respondents, with the following breakdown: 16 Grades 4 to 7 teachers and four librarians, comprised the study sample. The reason for choosing these levels of teachers is that

reading skills should be instilled at the primary school level to ensure they grow (Slavin, Lake, Chambers, Cheung, and Davis, 2009).

Additionally, and as mentioned, they, together with the school librarians, would be most likely to support reading initiatives in the selected schools. Finally, the schools (four) were selected based on their type (that is, private) and accessibility to the researcher.

3.6 Data collection techniques

This section discusses the data collection techniques used to gather qualitative data for the study.

3.6.1 Interviews

The study employed interviews for data collection. Interviews are primarily beneficial for gathering information about the participants' experiences. Cohen and Crabtree (2008) define interviews as a conversation between the interviewer and the respondents. Furthermore, they explain that it helps the researcher continue, prompting the respondents to ensure they acquired certain information. The researcher used an in-depth interview to obtain detailed information for the study. The librarians were interviewed to get an idea of how they encourage reading in their respective schools. The interview method allowed for probing and gathering more information depending on the participants' knowledge, ability, and experience. The researcher used the interview method of data collection because it is reliable in obtaining both verbal and non-verbal information from respondents (Cohen and Crabtree, 2008).

Each participant underwent a face-to-face interview and the teachers also participated in focus group discussions (see 3.6.2 below). Two semi-structured interview schedules were used as instruments for data collection – one directed at the school librarians (see Appendix 4) and the other directed at the teachers (see Appendix 4). The questions used in the interview schedules were predominantly open-ended and arranged systematically according to the research objectives, which allowed for consistent conversation between the researcher and the interviewees. Participants were allowed to express their views and ideas without limitations and were also provided with the opportunity to indicate if they were not comfortable answering certain questions. The instrument was prepared in advance in English, as this was the medium of instruction in the four schools. The interviews lasted between 20 and 40 minutes.

3.6.2 Focus groups

In addition to the one-on-one interviews, focus group interviews were also used by the researcher. A focus group usually comprise a small group of respondents. The researcher poses questions to the group and encourages conversation among participants. Four focus group discussions with four teachers per school were held. Each session lasted approximately one and a half hours. The questions in the interview schedule served as prompts for the discussions. An open-ended more interactive environment was encouraged by the researcher and responses and discussion were wider-ranging. However, the research purpose was continually borne in mind to ensure that the discussions remained focused.

3.7 Data collection process

Permission to conduct research was formally requested (and granted) from the headmasters of the four private schools involved in the study. The selected teachers and the four school librarians were also approached to participate in the study and to provide their consent. Each interview was electronically recorded after receiving permission from the participants to do so. Interviews were conducted after hours either in the educator's classroom or, in the case of the librarians, in the school library. The focus group discussions were held in a classroom. During the fieldwork, the researcher had the opportunity to observe the environment of the four schools as well as the libraries and their resources. Notes were taken in the belief that doing so would help provide useful information and further enrich the study. No difficulties were experienced in conducting the interviews and the entire data collection process ran smoothly.

3.8 Data analysis

The recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim to ensure accuracy and preserve the authenticity of participant's responses. The researcher meticulously listened to the audio recordings multiple times to verify that the transcriptions accurately reflected responses to ensure that the transcriptions accurately reflected participants spoken words, pauses and emphasis. The study employed Thematic analysis a widely used qualitative method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data Clarke and Braun (2006). Thematic analysis was chosen because it provides a flexible yet structured approach to making sense of large qualitative datasets, allowing the researcher to systematically examine recurring patterns and derive meaningful insights. The data analysis followed the Miles (1994) framework which consists of three interconnected steps.

3.8.1 Data Reduction

The researchers immersed themselves in the data through repeated readings of transcripts. Initial codes were generated based on significant words, phrases, or concepts directly relevant to the research questions. Codes were grouped into categories that reflected common themes across different participants' responses.

3.8.2 Data Display

Coded data were organized into a thematic matrix to facilitate comparisons across participants and schools. The researcher used tables, mind maps, and visual charts to display relationships between themes and sub-themes. At this stage, some themes were refined or merged if they overlapped. Final themes were reviewed against the full dataset to ensure they accurately represented participants' perspectives. Direct participant quotations were selected to illustrate key themes and ensure credibility. Findings were cross-checked against existing literature to determine alignment with prior studies or to highlight new contributions.

3.8.3 Thematic Coding Approach

The process of coding and identifying themes was guided by the study's research objectives, rather than attempting to identify every potential theme in the dataset. As Meyers, Rowell, Wells, and Smith (2019) emphasize, analysing themes involves looking for patterns that reveal meaning, rather than merely summarizing data.

Initial (Open) Coding: The researcher inductively coded transcripts, meaning that codes were generated from the data itself rather than imposed from existing frameworks.

Axial Coding: Relationships between codes were identified, leading to the formation of broader categories.

Selective Coding: The final themes were developed by integrating the most prominent categories into meaningful narratives. The flexibility of thematic analysis also meant that research questions could evolve as coding progressed (Meyers et al., 2019). While the initial research questions provided a foundation, they were refined in response to emerging themes to capture new insights that were not initially anticipated.

3.9 Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of a study concerns the reliability and validity of the data collected (and thus the findings). Consistency is a prerequisite for reliability, even though it does not guarantee validity. Connelly (2016) states that the trustworthiness of a study refers to the degree of confidence in the data, their interpretation, and the methods used to ensure the quality of a study using certain criteria. As described above, this study employed semi-structured interview schedules. To ensure that genuine and trustworthy instruments were used, the opinions of school librarians and teachers at the four schools were also considered. A thorough explanation was given by the researcher to the participants about the purpose, content, and context of the study to ensure a clear perception and understanding of the study. As noted, participants were selected based on their understanding of the subject under study. Given this, it was anticipated that the quality of the data collected through the one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions would enhance the reliability and trustworthiness of the data and the subsequent findings.

3.10 Ethical considerations

All research is required to be conducted ethically. Ethical approval for the study was granted by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (see Appendix 1). Throughout the study period, ethical issues were carefully addressed to ensure the reliability and accuracy of the information gathered. The following ethical considerations were adhered to:

3.10.1 Confidentiality

Protecting the identity of study participants is a crucial consideration in research. To this end, the researcher assured the selected participants that their confidentiality would be strictly maintained throughout the research process and that no names would be used in the reporting of the findings. The participants were also informed that the information they provided would be used solely for research purposes. No incentives were offered in exchange for the information provided.

3.10.2 Informed consent

All participants were required to sign an informed consent form indicating their willingness to participate in the study (see Appendices 2 and 3).

The researcher furnished details concerning the aim of the investigation, advantages for the participants, anticipated length of involvement, and protocols to be adhered to. She was obliged to get the participants' agreement and disclose that their participation in the study was entirely voluntary and that they were free to withdraw from the study at any stage. As alluded to above, the researcher assured the participants that the information they provided would not be used improperly both during and after the study.

3.10.3 Honesty

Throughout the study, the researcher maintained a high standard of integrity. To prevent plagiarism, the researcher properly credited the academic works utilised during the study. She was also completely honest with the participants throughout the entire data collection procedure. Finally, the collected and analysed data were reported as received but carefully analysed and arranged to facilitate presentation.

3.11 Summary

This chapter has outlined the research methodology and methods used in the study to address the research problem discussed. Important issues such as sampling, data collection, research design, study population, data analysis, and trustworthiness were covered. A total of 20 participants, comprising teachers and school librarians, comprised the purposively selected sample for the study. Data were collected through interviews as well as through focus group discussions.

Chapter Four follows and presents and discusses the research findings.

Chapter Four

Research Findings and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the research findings. The results are drawn from the semi-structured interviews with school librarians and teachers of Grades 4 to 7 regarding the promotion of a reading culture in private schools in Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg, KZN. The data collected are instrumental in shedding light on the promotion of a reading culture in private primary schools. The perceptions of the 16 teachers and four librarians were collected and analysed using thematic analysis. The diverse responses received offer distinct perspectives useful for analysis and critical engagement. The findings below are presented and discussed in terms of the themes identified in the data analysis. To begin with, demographic details of the study participants are given. Details concerning the participating schools are also provided.

4.2 Demographics of participants

The study participants had varying levels of experience. Teachers' tenure ranged from five to 24 years. Participants were predominantly female (15) and five were male. The four school librarians were all female. The qualifications of the participants ranged from Bachelor's degrees to Master's degrees level. All were full-time employees of the four schools (hereafter referred to as Schools A to D). According to Meyers et.al (2019), the only person who can inspire students to learn is a teacher who has a positive outlook and a genuine passion for reading. As the key to the student's success, the teacher is essential in providing the students with pertinent knowledge and preparing them to be positive members of society and themselves. Arguably, the same can be said about the school librarian.

In addition to common school demographics, more information on reading culture was acquired. The participating schools' libraries were well-stocked, with holdings ranging from 3,000 to 6,500 books, including digital resources and audiobooks. Teacher experience in literacy instruction varied, with the majority (60%) having more than five years of teaching experience and some receiving specific literacy training. Students used the library twice a week on average, but involvement levels varied by school. Despite considerable institutional support, educators saw parental participation as a barrier. All four schools are located in the suburb of Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg.

4.2.1 School A

School A is a Christian School with a Methodist ethos, located on 15 hectares (37 acres) of land. It is an Independent Schools Association of South Africa member. The school provides a rich and diverse education for boys and girls from Grade R to Grade 7. It takes pride in preparing pupils for a future where they are confident, knowledgeable, and multi-faceted. School A has facilities for academic, sporting, and cultural pursuits. Furthermore, it has been the top school in SA in various sporting codes (Davidge, 2011). For the past 125 years, the school has stood as a remarkable institution that has embraced a profound and enduring purpose. This has been built on the pillars of faith, compassion, and courage, which have shaped generations of young minds with unwavering dedication. The school stands as a testament to the power of education that inspires individuals to reach their fullest potential while fostering an atmosphere of inclusivity and unity. The boarding facility offers termly, weekly, or overnight boarding for girls in Grades 6 to 7. The school opened its doors on 3 August 1898 with the enrolment of 45 pupils (PMCB, n.d.).

This school librarian is in her forties and is a qualified librarian with a degree and a Postgraduate Diploma in Library and Information Studies. The teacher participants in this school are all qualified teachers with university degrees and Postgraduate Certificates in Education. Two were male and two were female and taught Grades 4 to 7. Their work experience ranged between 15 and 25 years.

4.2.2 School B

School B was founded in 1875. It has a Christian ethos and is boys only. It offers Grade RRR to Matric, with boarders from Grade 4 upwards. The school is situated on 15 acres of land in Scottsville. School B provides various sports facilities, including 11 fields used for cricket, rugby, football, and hockey and several other sporting facilities, including two swimming pools (School B. nd).

The school librarian is in her seventies and is a qualified teacher who retired from teaching and subsequently offered the position of librarian, a position she has held for six years. The teacher participants in this school have qualifications that range from a BEd Degree to a Master's Degree. Three were male and the fourth was female with work experience ranging from five to eight years.

4.2.3 School C

School C is a boarding and day school for girls. It was founded by the Society of Sisters and has an Anglican foundation (School C, n.d.). Initially an orphanage located in the city of Pietermaritzburg, in 1898, it became a school for girls from kindergarten to matric. It later (School C, n.d.). The school later moved to a site in Scottsville where it had larger grounds, a better school building, and more accommodation for boarders (Davidge, 2011).

The school librarian is in her late thirties. She is a qualified librarian with a Degree in Social Science and a Postgraduate Diploma in Information Studies. She is experienced, having been with the school for seven years. The four teacher participants were all female with work experience ranging from five to 16 years. Their qualifications ranged from a Bachelor's Degree to a Master's Degree in Education.

4.2.4 School D

School D is a co-educational Christian school catering to learners from Grades 4 to 12. It is a small, connected school with pastoral values and a focus on academics and sports as pillars that provide the foundations that young people need to mature mentally, physically and spiritually (PMCB, n.d.).

The school librarian is in her fifties and has a Degree in Education and a Postgraduate Diploma in Librarianship. She has 24 years of experience and has been with the school as a librarian for 15 years. The teacher participants were two females and two males, all of whom were experienced and had qualifications that ranged from a Bachelor's Degree to a Master's Degree. The school has a dedicated media centre (PMCB, n.d.).

4.3. Findings and discussion based on the identified themes

The following discussion is based on themes identified during the analysis of the data collected via interviews held with the study participants and in light of the interview questions asked. These are depicted in Figure 4.1 below:

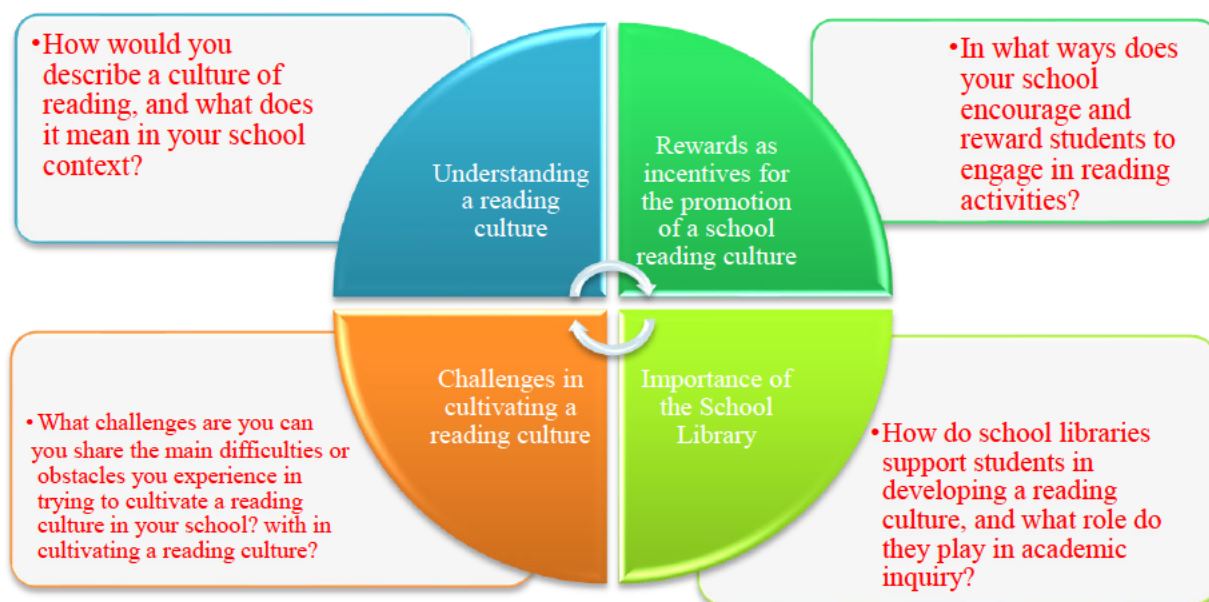


Figure 4.1: Interview questions and identified themes

4.3.1 Theme 1: Understanding of a reading culture

According to the participants, reading involves deriving meaning from a set of written symbols. Reading is the method of looking at a written text and beginning to understand the information it contains. Reading necessitates the use of one’s eyesight to comprehend and interpret many words in a sentence. If teachers want their students to become proficient readers, they must be committed to teaching them effectively. In terms of their understanding of a reading culture, participants had the following to say:

“Well, reading culture contributes to the success of students’ assessments and improves them” (School A - librarian).

“What can I say? For me a reading culture carries the power of reading and understanding and has been a tool for the pupils’ education” (School D - librarian).

“Reading culture is a step towards shaping student knowledge through consistent reading” (School A - teacher).

“Oh well, hmm... reading culture involves reading books and reading them every day, it is a process of reading and where reading is part of a person’s life” (School B - teacher).

The responses above show a diverse understanding of reading culture. Key aspects include its contribution to knowledge, and that a reading culture must be an integral part of pupils’ lives, especially as they grow academically. The understanding of a reading culture by teachers and school librarians plays a significant role in shaping efforts to encourage reading.

4.3.2 Theme 2: Promoting a reading culture

Making reading assignments in class relevant for students is one of the ways in which teachers and school librarians can support students' intrinsic motivation. Relevance provides them with the motivation to start and complete the reading assignment. Responses included:

“We engage in a variety of promotional channels to encourage our students to visit the library” (School C - librarian).

“A lot of meetings and programmes have been geared towards promoting reading such as reading for rewards; these have seen an increase in student numbers who visit our school library” (School D - librarian).

“As an institution under IEB, we encourage reading through a variety of channels, including rewards, which come when a student takes reviews and provides written evidence that they are reading” (School D - teacher)

“We promote reading culture through a reading competition where a student wins a book(s); this takes place every year, and it is a growing initiative, and we are seeing a change in how pupils read” (School D teacher).

The responses above demonstrate the efforts taken to improve and promote a reading culture among primary school pupils. This highlights the groundwork librarians and teachers undertake to facilitate a reading culture. All participants share a common understanding regarding the promotion of reading and reading culture.

4.3.3 Theme 3: Importance of the school library

It was observed during fieldwork that the libraries in the four schools are well-used by both teachers and learners. Learners spent their time reading, researching, and borrowing books in the library. The school library is important as it supports the teaching and learning process and forms a significant part of educational development. According to Aribisalaa et al. (2022), reading various reading materials provided by the library can assist students in improving their literacy abilities. Research emphasises that having a library in the school is essential because it supplies learners with books and other materials while providing a quiet space to read for pleasure and conduct research. Responses from study participants included the following:

“Well, school libraries contribute a lot; this involves channelling the availability of books in a particular space which learners may know” (School B - librarian).

“All I can say is, there are many contributions of school libraries including giving learners an opportunity to read; this can also involve spaces that promote learner union” (School B - librarian).

“To tell the truth, school libraries help learners attend to a variety of academic inquiries reading and completing their work which we always promote” (School C - teacher)

“Hmm, ahh, ok. Well, I think school libraries are the backbone of basic education as a teacher for all these years I have seen their role, especially on students’ project writing” (School C - teacher).

“Ok, my sister, the reason school libraries have lost value is due to technology, but the contribution I saw was based on increasing the learners’ capacity to understand vocabulary. As an English teacher, I love libraries as they develop learners’ understanding” (School D - teacher)

According to participants’ responses, it is evident that the school library serves a variety of functions, each impacting learners’ capacities differently. The responses demonstrated that the library plays an important role in promoting reading, assisting with project completion, and uniting learners who can share ideas. A book is genuinely a magical doorway to another world. One can always pick up a book and read; one is never too old, crazy, or wild to do so. Ailakliu and Unegbu (2017) claim that reading requires a cognitive process with comprehension as the main focus. Reading is not just for young people or the highly intelligent – anyone can read if they so desire. According to Kumar and Acharya (2021), promoting reading habits among library users aims to increase awareness of the cognitive, emotional, and social benefits of reading, such as better literacy abilities, critical thinking, empathy, and knowledge across many areas.

A reading culture is an environment in which reading is embraced, cherished, respected, and promoted. Reading is central to the curriculum and essential to a child’s personal, social, and academic achievement, as well as their overall well-being. Establishing a reading culture is primarily about helping people make reading a habit they respect and enjoy. The study by Kumar and Acharya (2021) examined several factors contributing to a poor reading culture and highlighted the important roles that school libraries play in improving and promoting a reading culture among their users. This study provided insights into several critical factors necessary for improving and cultivating a successful reading culture both currently and in the future. According to Sethy (2018), the library’s goal is to encourage a reading lifestyle.

The library is not only there to facilitate readers' access to books but also to promote a culture of reading. As a result, the library allows its users to spend their time intellectually while also enjoying life.

4.3.4 Theme 4: Challenges in promoting and developing a reading culture

The promotion of a reading culture among primary school pupils is influenced by various factors, as highlighted by teachers and school librarians. These include insufficient time allocation for reading, multilingualism, a lack of motivation among pupils, and a lack of parental involvement and support in their children's reading. Fortunately, however, the four participating schools have functioning and well-resourced libraries/ media centres to support the promotion of a reading culture. These findings are consistent with previous studies by Merga and Mason (2019), which emphasise that curriculum constraints and limited reading time in schools negatively impact reading habits.

Multilingualism is a particularly significant difficulty, since it enriches but also complicates the formation of reading culture. Teachers said that students who speak distinct home languages frequently fail to read fluently in the school's principal language of instruction. This is consistent with Helman, (2012) who discovered that multilingual learners need more scaffolding and focused reading interventions to achieve good literacy abilities. Furthermore, the lack of parental participation became a persistent topic. While prior research Rhoades, (2023) has shown that family interaction improves children's reading habits, many educators in this study reported limited parental involvement in literacy programs. This necessitates school-community collaborations to bridge the gap and boost parental involvement.

Despite these limitations, the four participating schools have well-resourced libraries, which may help to reduce some of these issues. As stated in the WSIL model (Chapter One), access to reading materials is critical in promoting literacy. However, as modern school libraries become multimedia literacy hubs, teachers and librarians must use digital literacy resources (e-books, audiobooks, and online reading platforms) to meet various learning requirements. The 21st-century classroom is a mosaic of diverse student needs and backgrounds. Teachers are challenged to cater to students with varying learning styles, abilities, and cultural differences. This calls for personalised and inclusive teaching strategies to ensure that no one is left behind. The majority of people associate libraries with books.

While that is undoubtedly the case, books come in a variety of formats, including electronic books (e-books) and audiobooks. School libraries in the 21st century are about much more than just books; they encourage literacy. They are dedicated to assisting learners in acquiring the computer literacy and reading abilities required to prosper in a global information society.

4.4 Some reflections on the study participants

Four school librarians and 16 teachers participated in the study, the majority of whom were female. All had work experience and were considered well-informed on the topic under study. The participants were racially and linguistically diverse, with the latter comprising Afrikaans, English, and isiZulu speakers. However, as noted, English is the language of instruction. Nonetheless, this diversity among the participants resulted in a very useful range of perspectives being offered during the interviews. Regarding the language issue, a recent study carried out by Kretzer and Kaschula (2020) in Limpopo Province revealed considerable differences between the official school language policy (the use of one of the official languages but usually either English or Afrikaans, rather than an indigenous language) and the actual daily language policy in classrooms. To aid students in understanding concepts, teachers employ code-switching and a translanguaging procedure that involves alternating and merging languages. In essence, they speak more than one language in the classroom. This is because studies have consistently shown that students learn best in their mother tongues (Kretzer and Kaschula, 2020).

The 20 participants possessed various but relevant qualifications – the teachers had Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) Degrees, with some having more advanced degrees such as Honours and Masters. The school librarians were equally well-qualified with most possessing Post-graduate Diplomas in Library and Information Science. The participants' qualifications set the tone for particular teaching practices and the encouragement of student reading. Lee (2020) notes that higher achievers are more likely to have high expectations for their students and faith in their capacity for success. They let pupils know what is expected of them and motivate them to push themselves and take chances. A highly skilled educator helps students develop a growth mindset, confidence, and self-efficacy by supporting and encouraging them (Lee, 2020). They strive to instil a positive attitude toward learning in pupils because they recognise how important it is to foster a growth mentality.

As noted, all the participants had work experience (some as much as 38 years) either as teachers or school librarians. According to Podolsky, Kini, and Darling-Hammond (2019), more experienced teachers are generally better at boosting student achievement than less experienced ones. This is due to more than just the fact that better-qualified educators are more likely to work in institutions and classrooms with more advantaged students. Research has found that experienced teachers are typically more successful than less experienced ones in the classroom. As alluded to earlier, the teachers' varied perspectives on a range of subjects, including libraries, reading, and the promotion of a reading culture, were valuable. As evident from the participants' responses, all four schools were involved in various reading-related programmes and initiatives aimed at developing and expanding reading amongst students and, in doing so, promoting the creation of a reading culture in the schools.

However, reading can be challenging, particularly if the material is complicated, technical, or new. The importance of comprehending and cultivating sound reading habits is emphasised by this task. Bakkaloglu and Pilten (2023) assert that student's reading habits have a direct impact on their ability to relate to and assimilate educational material, which makes them a crucial component of academic counselling. Academic counsellors must conduct a needs assessment to ascertain the student's present reading habits and areas of difficulty to address these concerns. This tailored approach aids counsellors in creating strategies to assist children in overcoming obstacles linked to reading (Hurriyah, 2017).

4.5 The Lost Potential of Technology

According to the study's findings, Scottsville's private primary school instructors primarily saw technology as a distraction rather than a tool for promoting a love of reading. Although worries about screen time and digital distractions are legitimate, this viewpoint ignores how digital tools might enhance normal reading techniques. Participants' comments did not address digital reading materials or interactive platforms, which might indicate a disconnect in how technology is viewed in literacy development. Schools should look into how to effectively incorporate technology so that it promotes reading engagement rather than detracts from it.

4.6 Conclusion

Beyond schooling, people read for a variety of purposes in the 21st century. Numerous motivations exist for reading, such as the desire for personal growth, the need to stay current

with events, leisure, and enjoyment (Aina et al., 2011). All things considered, every government hopes to create a reading nation to enhance stability and advance developmental goals. As such, reading is a skill that must not be undervalued and bypassed. Instead, it needs to become a regular activity. A reading culture remains the means by which both adults and children can succeed in expanding their vocabulary and language abilities through consistent reading aimed at attainable goals. It is important to promote a culture of reading through library collections, readership promotion campaigns, reading groups, and World Book Day events.

4.7 Summary

This chapter presented and discussed the findings of the study. Verbatim responses of some of the participants were provided in line with the themes identified. Some reflections on the participants in the study were given and challenges in developing a reading culture were highlighted. A conclusion and summary ended the chapter.

In the final chapter that follows, the researcher presents the main findings, draws conclusions, and makes recommendations.

Chapter Five

Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

Investing in education will go a long way toward addressing literacy challenges in any developing countries, where issues such as inequality, poverty, and unemployment persist. This study explored the promotion of the reading culture in four private primary schools in Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg, focusing on the roles of School librarians and teachers. Using a purposive sampling method 20 participants, school librarians and teachers were selected based on their experience and relevance to the study's objectives. Their insights provided a comprehensive understanding of how reading is encouraged in private schools and the challenges they encounter. This chapter presents a summary of key findings based on responses from school librarians and teachers. It then discusses these findings in relation to the study's research questions, followed by an analysis of their implications and significance. The study's limitations are acknowledged, and recommendations are provided to address practical challenges and guide future research. Overall, this chapter synthesizes the study's contributions and highlights its relevance to both academic discourse and educational practice.

The sample comprised both school librarians and teachers all with work experience and who were well-suited to respond to the study's research questions. As stated in Chapter One, the study aimed to determine the extent to which the four private primary schools in the suburb of Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg, were encouraging a culture of reading in their schools. Both the school librarians and the teachers were seen as playing a pivotal role in this regard.

The chapter begins with a summary of the findings as they relate to the school librarians and the teachers respectively. Questions asked in the interviews provide the basis for the summary. This is followed by the findings as they relate to each of the research questions posed. Conclusions are then made taking into consideration their implications and significance in relation to the research questions. The limitations of the study are then outlined. Finally, the researcher offers recommendations based on the conclusions reached, suggesting practical applications and further areas of research that could build on the study. These recommendations may address gaps in the literature, propose strategies for addressing practical challenges, or

offer guidance for future research directions. Overall, this chapter summarises the research findings, highlights their significance, and provides guidance for both academic and practical implications.

5.2 Summary of findings: School librarians

The findings relating to the school librarians' understanding of a reading culture, their nurturing of reading skills, their encouragement of reading practices, and the challenges encountered in promoting a reading culture in the school are summarised below. A brief mention is made of their acquisition of reading resources.

5.2.1 Understanding of a Reading Culture

Librarians see reading culture as an important educational instrument that broadens vocabulary, knowledge, and abilities, giving readers the confidence to cope with various situations and discuss multiple topics. A student's reading and writing skills are essential to success and managing life overall. A reading culture can be defined in many ways and is regarded as a setting that promotes, honours, respects, and encourages reading. Reading can be viewed as the "core" of the curriculum and is crucial for a child's intellectual, social, and personal development as well as their overall well-being.

Research shows that school librarians, including those in this study, recognise that the ability to read is one of the most essential skills that children must acquire. The ability to read not only unlocks access to knowledge and learning but also stimulates critical thinking and creativity. A strong reading culture fosters an environment that is both engaging and calming, encouraging children to explore and learn with confidence. Promoting literacy and nurturing a culture of reading from an early age is crucial, especially in this fast-paced and often confusing time.

5.2.2 Nurturing of reading skills

It is important to consider the insights shared by school librarians concerning the development of reading skills. According to research, one of the primary roles of a school librarian is to help pupils decode symbols and letters into sounds, words, and sentences, allowing them to infer meaning. This process is sometimes described as "magical" in its transformational power, as infants do not spontaneously learn to read in the same manner that they learn to talk; reading is a skill that requires specific instruction and assistance.

Furthermore, librarians play an important role in fostering a reading culture by promoting excellent reading habits and offering tools to help this progress. Librarians may work with teachers and parents to establish early pre-reading abilities, making the process of learning to read easier and more exciting. According to the librarian participants, motivated learners are more ready to read when they choose information that interests them and have the freedom to read when and where it is most convenient. This independence encourages an innate enjoyment of reading and an active participation in the learning process.

5.2.3 Encouraging reading practices

The school librarians reported using various mechanisms to encourage a reading culture, such as newspaper clips, reading corners, reading cards, and the careful selection and promotion of books that increase students' curiosity for reading. A classroom where reading is regularly promoted, honoured, appreciated, and encouraged is beneficial to students. As emphasised, a child's overall well-being and social, academic, and personal success depend greatly on their reading ability, which is why it is at the centre of the curriculum.

5.2.4 Challenges in promoting a reading culture

The world we live in today is fast-paced, and technology has significantly transformed social norms. As a result, developing and encouraging a reading culture in schools has become increasingly challenging. Parents often face time constraints due to work commitments, leaving them exhausted and unable to read to or with their children at the end of the day. A child's love for reading largely depends on parental involvement and the home environment.

The school librarians highlighted the lack of parental commitment as one of the persistent challenges the schools face. They also pointed out that the world has evolved in fundamental ways, citing the use of cell phones posing a significant barrier to promoting reading, as children spend hours chatting with their friends or even playing games. Additionally, television also plays a role in shifting focus away from reading, with both children and adults often viewing screen time as a way to relax or spend quality time by themselves. Research has shown that technology-related challenges are at the forefront of discussions at school library forums, as they significantly impact reading skills. Librarians have also highlighted the introduction of fashionable e-books in some schools as a concern, as it limits their ability to monitor and understand what children are reading. What is new? What is influencing children's reading habits today? There is a need for careful oversight to ensure that learners maintain a balance in reading and are not overly

consumed by certain genres, such as excessive science fiction or fantasy. On the other hand, classic series such as *The Secret Seven* and *The Hardy Boys*, remain popular given their accessible language and engaging content and, as such, continue to benefit young readers.

5.2.5 Acquisition of Reading Resources

Schools have increasingly engaged the parent community to ensure sufficient resources for their libraries through initiatives such as *Donate a Book Day*, where learners contribute by buying a book for their school library. The school librarian oversees the acquisition of all books, magazines, and newspapers, ensuring the library remains well-stocked and relevant to learners' needs.

5.3 Summary of findings: Teachers

As with the school librarians above, findings relating to the participating teachers teaching Grades 4 to 7 in the four selected primary schools are summarised below. Aspects summarised are the teachers' understanding of a reading culture, their nurturing of reading skills, and the reading incentives they provide to pupils.

5.3.1 Nurturing of reading skills

Studies indicate that instructional strategies play a critical role in enhancing students' reading proficiency. Reading is a universal activity, that spans age, gender, class, and race. At any moment one can take a free "magic carpet ride", through reading, to any location on Earth or beyond. Teachers indicate that reading allows pupils to explore new worlds and ideas, and sparks curiosity and imagination. Teachers believe that students of all ages and learning levels should have access to written resources. While learning to decode, divide, and mix texts is crucial, readers should also build a lifelong love of reading. By cultivating a profound respect for the written word, children not only become proficient readers but also learn to interact critically with the world around them.

Developing a strong school reading culture is essential for cultivating this desire. A reading culture that promotes lifelong reading habits helps ensure that all students become proficient readers at an early age, avoiding challenges and demotivation later on. Fostering this culture in schools with learners who are unsatisfied or have negative attitudes toward reading might be difficult, but not impossible.

Teachers can use tailored instructional tactics to establish supportive settings that engage learners and encourage them to view reading as a worthwhile and joyful activity.

5.3.2 Incentives for pupils

Participants mentioned that motivating students is a key strategy for increasing learning and participation in reading and reading-related activities. Incentives and rewards play a vital role in boosting student motivation, helping them focus and complete tasks more effectively. Many teachers use rewards to stimulate learning and encourage positive behaviour. Teachers must ensure pupils become proficient and engaged readers at an early age to prevent reading difficulties and demotivation. Participants mentioned that they consistently use a reward system to encourage students to achieve reading milestones while reading for pleasure. Physical rewards, which can be used at school, also serve as tokens for motivation.

When rewarded, learners conform to appropriate behaviour, either intrinsically or extrinsically. Incentives serve as a motivating factor, encouraging students to perform at their best. This, in turn, fosters a sense of pride and achievement. A reward system facilitates success, ensuring the happiness of learners and promoting self-confidence. Learners who are rewarded take pride in their accomplishments and are motivated to achieve more. Ultimately, rewarding students supports school efforts and leads to improved student outcomes.

5.4 Answers to the research questions

This study was underpinned by four research questions and the findings relevant to each are provided below:

5.4.1 What challenges do the school libraries face in developing a reading culture in primary schools?

According to findings, one of the key challenges that school libraries face in developing a reading culture in primary schools is keeping up with the latest technological advancements and trends. While technology provides tremendous potential to improve library services, such as increased quality, engagement, efficiency, and accessibility, it also poses considerable problems. To fulfil current demands, libraries must constantly upgrade their equipment, software, and processes. This entails learning new skills and tools, creating new standards or regulations, and ensuring data confidentiality and safety. Furthermore, incorporating

technology into the library setting may be time-consuming and expensive, especially in schools with limited resources.

School libraries face the challenging issue of reconciling the traditional function of fostering reading and literacy with the requirement to include electronic resources. To handle these issues, school librarians (and teachers) need to stay current on technology developments, be adaptable and innovative in implementing new solutions, and work together through continual training and professional development. While technological innovations may bring new opportunities to engage children with reading materials, they must also be carefully considered to ensure that they are consistent with the broader objective of creating a strong reading culture within the school. Due to the demands of their curriculum, teachers may not prioritise or completely support library initiatives. This can result in the underuse of library resources and lost chances to include reading in everyday instruction. When instructors are not actively promoting reading, it is difficult for the library to foster a strong reading culture.

5.4.2 What strategies can be employed to enhance the reading culture in the primary schools?

Participants mentioned that many schools are moving to e-books to keep up with technological advancements. However, it is a constant challenge for schools to stay aligned with rapid technological changes, and to continue to support learners' success in the process. The focus of school libraries is to maximise the potential of learners and ensure that the library is a welcoming, enjoyable space that learners are eager to visit. It was emphasised that the library is a safe space for learners to sit with friends, listen to stories, and read in groups. Participants pointed to establishing a strong reading culture that prioritises reading as one of the main goals of schools. It was also suggested that the community should come together to support the development of an innovative and engaging reading culture, one that fosters proficient and dedicated readers while also enhancing well-being, nurturing a sense of community, and improving academic achievement.

Schools should collaborate with the community, local government, and provincial and national government to improve literacy and numeracy across the country, as high literacy levels are essential for children's success in many aspects of life. Children must process a constant stream of information from various sources, including schools, homes, public transportation, cars, and digital technologies.

In addition to being crucial for future career success, reading skills will benefit children in their relationships, managing household tasks, and navigating all aspects of daily life.

5.4.3 How do teachers perceive the importance of promoting a reading culture in private primary schools?

The findings revealed that the teacher participants recognised the critical importance of promoting a culture of reading in their schools. They highlighted its significance in the following ways:

Academic success: Teachers understood that reading proficiency is fundamental to educational achievement across all subjects. They recognised that students who read regularly tend to perform better in comprehension, writing, vocabulary, and overall academic performance.

Critical thinking skills: Reading fosters critical thinking and analytical abilities. Teachers value these skills as essential for students to succeed both academically and in their personal and professional lives.

Language development: Reading plays a crucial role in language development, including vocabulary expansion, grammar, and syntax. Teachers appreciated that exposure to diverse reading materials helps students enhance their language proficiency.

Cognitive development: Teachers acknowledged that reading stimulates cognitive development, fostering imagination, creativity, and problem-solving skills.

They believe that exposing students to various genres and topics broadens their perspectives and enhances cognitive flexibility.

Empathy and social understanding: Reading literature, both fiction and non-fiction, enables students to gain insight into different cultures, perspectives, and experiences. Teachers recognised the role of literature in fostering empathy and social awareness among students.

Lifelong learning: Teachers viewed reading as a lifelong skill and habit. They understood that instilling a love for reading in primary school lays the foundation for continued intellectual and personal growth.

Preparation for the future: In an increasingly information-driven world, proficient reading skills are essential for success in higher education and future careers. Teachers believe that promoting a culture of reading in primary school prepares students for the challenges and opportunities they will encounter in the future.

Personal enrichment and well-being: Reading contributes to personal growth, joy, relaxation and self-discovery. Teachers saw it as a valuable tool promoting mental health, emotional resilience, and overall well-being.

In summary, the teachers in Grades 4 to 7 in the four private primary schools perceived the promotion of reading not only as a pedagogical duty but also as a transformative force that empowers students academically, intellectually, socially, and emotionally.

5.4.4 How does the school library contribute to the development of the school's reading culture?

According to the participants, the school library serves as the learner's initial introduction to library use. Research indicates that school libraries, among other reasons, are established to encourage reading among students and to act as a central hub for literacy and learning. In today's digital age, where information is readily accessible, school libraries remain essential for encouraging pupils to read. They play a crucial role in achieving the school's objective of instilling a reading culture by providing a conducive environment for reading, comfortable seating, and proper lighting. Furthermore, school librarians serve as mentors, guiding learners in selecting books that align with their interests and reading levels. Through these efforts, school libraries continue to be a cornerstone in promoting a lifelong love of reading among students.

Research also shows that learners who consistently visit the library enjoy reading and being read to and appreciate reading stories in group settings – activities often encouraged by the school librarian. However, as emphasised earlier, promoting a reading culture should not be the responsibility of one individual only but should involve all stakeholders in a collective effort.

5.5 Recommendations

School libraries and librarians are crucial in fostering a reading culture within the school and they do so through the following:

The study's conclusions lead to the following suggestions to improve the development of a reading culture in private primary schools:

Short-Term Interventions (Prompt Measures) for Teachers & Schools:

To promote reading as a habit, incorporate scheduled reading time into the daily school plan. By actively reading and discussing literature with children, teachers can set an example for their students.

To encourage interest and zeal for reading, host book clubs and reading contests.

Make the most of already

existing libraries by making sure they are friendly, easily accessible, and well-stocked with a variety of reading material.

In order to accommodate linguistic variety, create a multilingual approach to reading by including books in the various languages that pupils speak.

❖ For parents and caregivers:

Create a home reading environment by reading with children and giving books appropriate for their age and interests. Attend reading workshops or school-sponsored awareness seminars to have a better understanding of the value of reading at home.

❖ For Librarians and School Administrators:

To keep students interested in reading, create book collections around their interests.

Collaborate with teachers to link library resources to classroom topics to boost learning.

Encourage digital literacy by including audiobooks and e-books for students who prefer digital media.

Long-term interventions (sustainable strategies) for schools and private school.

Ensure ongoing investment in library resources, such as varied literature, technology, and pleasant reading areas.

Hire and retain qualified librarians who can create and carry out effective literacy initiatives.

To foster interdisciplinary reading, include reading in the school curriculum in addition to English and language disciplines.

For Government and Non-Governmental Organizations:

Fund reading efforts, provide books, and organize reading activities. Form collaborations between schools and public libraries to improve access to extra reading materials.

For Parents and Community:

Create community-based reading projects in which parents, local businesses, and volunteers help support school reading programs. Encourage storytelling sessions and cultural reading activities to spread literacy outside the classroom.

- Providing access to a wide range of books, magazines, newspapers, and digital resources, catering to various interests, reading levels, and cultural backgrounds. By doing so, school libraries encourage students to explore different genres and topics, expanding their reading horizons.
- Promoting literacy by providing resources and support for developing reading and comprehension skills. School librarians often organise reading challenges and book clubs to engage students and encourage regular reading habits.
- Supporting the school curriculum: by offering resources that support classroom learning. Students can find supplementary materials, reference books, and research resources to deepen their understanding of subjects studied in class.
- Serving as spaces for critical inquiry and intellectual exploration. Students learn to think critically, evaluate information, and form opinions through reading and analysing various texts.
- Promoting lifelong learning habits by instilling a love for reading from an early age. Students who frequent the school library are more likely to continue reading for pleasure outside of school and throughout their lives.

- Providing a quiet, welcoming environment for reading and studying. This environment encourages students to immerse themselves in books and fosters a sense of community among readers.
- School librarians themselves guide students in selecting appropriate reading materials, recommending books based on individual interests, and organising engaging library events.

In summary, school libraries and their librarians contribute significantly to developing a reading culture by providing access to resources, fostering literacy skills, supporting the curriculum, cultivating critical thinking, encouraging lifelong learning, creating a positive environment, guiding students in their reading, and organising library-related events.

Simba, Agak, and Kabuka (2016) in his study pointed out that users of libraries anticipate not only pertinent materials for their work but also a location where they may read, research, chat with friends, complete schoolwork, and check out books. While Simba et al., 2016 was referring to the academic library, the points he made are equally applicable to the school library. Arguably, once the school library “space” becomes an integral part of learners’ daily routines, and when learning, teaching, and reading are prioritised by all concerned, including the principal, teachers, and librarian, its potential to not only promote but establish a reading culture in the school will be realised.

5.6 Limitations of the study

This research was limited to four private primary schools in Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg, KZN. Twenty participants were purposively selected to participate in the study: four school librarians and 16 teachers of Grades 4 to 7. The information collected did not include the learners’ views and several stakeholders such as the principals, parents, the DOE, and the community. The opinions of private primary schools outside of Scottsville are not reflected in the study. The research findings and conclusions are solely based on the perspectives of the school librarians and teachers. While the study’s goal was not to extrapolate its findings and conclusions, they are arguably of relevance to other private primary schools in the province and, indeed, across the country. The findings and conclusions could also be of interest to government primary schools with functioning libraries and employing dedicated librarians. The study was based on an informative paradigm-based qualitative research methodology,

which does have implications for the generalisability of its findings and conclusions as noted above.

5.7 Conclusions

The findings of this study have several important implications for teachers, school librarians, the participating schools, and the broader reading culture in private primary schools.

5.7.1. Implications for Study Participants (Teachers, Librarians)

The findings emphasize the critical role of teachers and librarians in establishing a reading culture. Teachers must set aside time for structured reading activities, and librarians must ensure that libraries remain exciting, accessible, and useful. The report also underlines the need for collaboration between teachers and librarians when implementing interactive reading programs.

5.7.2. Implications for the Selected Schools.

The study found that, while the participating schools had well-equipped libraries, hurdles such as language variety, restricted reading time, and a lack of parental participation impede the full development of reading culture. To successfully support all learners, these schools should explore creating reading policies that include peer-assisted learning, encourage parental participation, and incorporate multilingual literacy resources.

5.7.3. Implications for the Reading Culture.

On a larger scale, this study emphasises the importance of comprehensive literacy development initiatives that go beyond the classroom. Creating a reading culture necessitates systematic interventions such as school-wide reading programs, digital literacy integration, and community-based reading projects. Schools can also lobby for legislation that highlight reading as a vital skill, ensuring that libraries remain central to literacy development even as technology advances.

In light of the study's findings and the reviewed literature, the following conclusions are made:

❖ Access to Reading Materials and Library Resources

The study found that private primary schools in Scottsville understand the importance of providing reading resources to all students, regardless of age or ability.

Schools have invested in their library facilities and resources, maintaining a “Love thy library” philosophy to encourage lifelong reading habits (Research Objective 1).

❖ **Challenges in Promoting a Reading Culture**

Participating schools have prioritized financing for library resources and hired qualified librarians to oversee collections and lead reading programs in spite of budgetary restrictions. This is consistent with research that highlights the vital role that trained librarians have in directing reading habits outside of the classroom (Research Objective 2).

❖ **The Role of Schools and Educators in Developing Reading Habits**

Results show that by including library use into the curriculum, schools are turning reading into a regular habit rather than a one-time pastime.

Teachers are essential in setting an example for students' reading habits, motivating them to read, and scheduling dedicated time for reading activities (Research Objective 3).

❖ **The Value of Teamwork in Promoting a Culture of Reading**

Collaboration between schools, parents, caregivers, and community stakeholders is necessary to establish a strong reading culture. The study's conclusion that parental participation is still difficult to achieve supports previous research on how home surroundings affect kids' reading habits (Research Objective 4).

❖ **Recognition and Celebrating Reading Accomplishments**

Similar to academic and athletic accomplishments, schools that aggressively celebrate reading milestones witness an increase in students' excitement for reading. Public recognition via school exhibits and webpages has encouraged pupils to read on their own.

❖ **The Benefits of Reading for Enjoyment**

Results show that students enjoy being read to, cherish their library time, and respect the book selection process. This bolsters studies showing that reading for enjoyment, when students read at their own speed, improves academic performance and self-motivation (Cremin, 2019).

❖ **Institutional Commitment to Reading and Leadership**

The study emphasizes that no one person should be solely responsible for promoting a culture of reading. To ensure durability beyond individual efforts, department heads, school

administrators, and principals must include reading into curricular priorities and school identity (Research Objective 5).

Overall, this study reaffirms that reading is not just an academic skill but a crucial life tool that enhances literacy, personal development, and social awareness. By providing structured reading opportunities, well-resourced libraries, and supportive educators, private primary schools can sustain a thriving reading culture that benefits learners beyond the classroom.

In summary, reading is not only an enriching and satisfying pastime but also a powerful tool for personal and academic growth. Books serve as companions and sources of comfort, while also educating learners about the world, themselves, and diverse cultures.

5.8 Future Research

Research highlights the importance of preventing reading difficulties and demotivation in children fostering a love for reading early on. Schools must implement sustainable strategies to ensure that learners become proficient and engaged readers. Below are key recommendations:

Daily reading initiatives

- Schools should integrate events such as *World Book Day* into daily routines rather than observing them as once-off events.
- Daily reading habits and coordinated plans should be prioritised to maintain long-term reading promotion.

Reading for pleasure

- Reading for pleasure is linked to academic success across all subjects, not just English. Schools should allocate more time for students to read, fostering enjoyment and engagement with books.
- Teachers should lead by example by sharing their favourite books and discussing what they are currently reading with students.
- Silent reading periods should include teachers actively participating in reading alongside students, again to set an example.

Parental involvement

- Parents should be encouraged to read to their children as much as possible and ideally daily. This will supplement what they learn in the classroom and provide valuable one-on-one support that is not always possible in the classroom.
- Early reading habits should begin during infancy, with parents reading aloud, pointing at pictures, and engaging with their children through stories.
- Schools can organise and host family reading nights and provide resources to guide parents in fostering reading habits at home.

Diverse book selection

- School libraries should offer a broad variety of books across genres, cultures, and perspectives to encourage exploration, and cater to different student interests.
- Learner should be encouraged to recommend books to their peers and share their thoughts on what they have read. This peer-to-peer recommendation system can effectively get students excited about reading.

Reading programmes and initiatives

- **Book clubs:** Establish reading groups or book clubs where students can discuss the books they have read, exchange ideas, and build a community around reading.
- **Author visits:** Arrange for authors to visit the school and engage with students about their books and writing processes. Such interactions can offer valuable insights into the literary world and inspire students.
- **Reading challenges:** To encourage increased reading among students, implement reading challenges or competitions, along with rewards or incentives for achieving specific milestones, such as completing a set number of books.
- **Drop Everything and Read (DEAR):** This is an initiative where all students (and ideally teachers) in the school regularly take a break from their current activities to engage in reading for 30 minutes.
- **Reading aloud sessions**
 - Incorporate regular read-aloud sessions into the curriculum, where teachers or guest speakers (or even students) read excerpts from books to the students.
 - Reading aloud introduces students to new genres and authors, and improves listening skills.

- **Literary events**

- Organise literary events such as book fairs, poetry slams, or storytelling sessions to create excitement around reading.
- These events offer opportunities for creative expression and expose students to different forms of literature and diverse literary experiences.

Integrated curriculum

- Integrate literature into subjects such as history, science, and art to demonstrate the relevance of reading across disciplines and in various aspects of life.
- An interdisciplinary approach fosters a deeper understanding of the material and shows students the connections between different subjects.

Digital resources

- Embrace technology by providing access to e-books, audiobooks, and online reading platforms. This accommodates different reading preferences and learning styles.
- Ensure digital resources are easily accessible to all students, fostering inclusivity in reading opportunities.

By implementing these recommendations, private primary schools can create an engaging, inclusive, and dynamic reading culture. This will not only enhance literacy outcomes but also foster intellectual curiosity, social empathy, and a lifelong love for reading among students.

5.8 Leveraging Digital Tools for Reading Engagement

To support the development of a strong reading culture, schools could consider integrating digital reading tools alongside traditional methods. Interactive reading applications, audiobooks, and eBooks may offer new ways to engage students, particularly those who struggle with conventional reading approaches. Additionally, professional development initiatives could help educators explore strategies for balancing digital and print-based literacy activities in ways that are effective and sustainable.

5.9 Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the study, presented a summary of the findings, answered the research questions posed, the study limitations and, finally, the key conclusions and recommendations. The study aimed to investigate the promotion of a reading culture in private

primary schools in Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg, from the perspectives of the school librarians and Grades 4 to 7 teachers in the schools involved. The findings and recommendations drawn from both the study and the literature aim to enhance the quality of school libraries in these private institutions.

5.10 Further Research

While this study focused on the opinions of school librarians and teachers, future research might look at students' experiences and ideas on encouraging a reading culture. Furthermore, researchers should look at the influence of digital reading aids on children's reading habits, particularly in private elementary schools. Comparative studies of private and public schools can also provide useful insights into the efficacy of reading efforts and aid in the creation of focused tactics for various educational environments.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Ethical Clearance Approval



UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI

28 October 2013

YAKWAZULU-NATALI

Mrs Nancy Mudau (202513685)
School of Social Sciences
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Protocol reference number: HSS/0961/013M
Project title: Promoting a culture of reading in private school libraries in Pietermaritzburg,
KwaZulu-Natal

Dear Mrs Mudau,

Expedited Approval I wish to inform you that your application has been granted Full Approval.

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

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully


Dr Shenuka Singh (Acting Chair)

cc Supervisor: Dr Ruth Hoskins cc Academic
Leader Research: Professor Sabine Marschall
cc School Administrator: Ms Nancy Mudau

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
Dr Shenuka Singh (Acting Chair) Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building,
Edgewood

Appendix 2: Consent Form

Informed Consent Document

Dear Participant,

My name is Nancy Mudau (202513685). I am a master's candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus. The title of my research is *The Promotion of the Culture of Reading in Private Schools in Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg*. The aim of the study is to investigate the perceptions of second-year social science students about electronic information resources offered by the UKZN library. The study seeks to establish the extent of use and perceptive factors that influence the use of electronic information resources. I am interested in interviewing you so that I can share your experiences and observations on the subject matter.

Please note that:

- The information that you provide will be used for scholarly research only.
- Your participation is entirely voluntary. You have a choice to participate, not to participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalised for taking such an action.
- Your views in this survey will be presented anonymously. Neither your name nor identity will be disclosed in any form in the study.
- The survey will take about a maximum of 15 minutes.
- The record as well as other items associated with the interview will be held in a password-protected file accessible only to myself and my supervisors. After a period of 5 years, in line with the rules of the university, it will be disposed by shredding and burning.
- If you agree to participate please sign the declaration attached to this statement (a separate sheet will be provided for signatures)

I can be contacted at: School of Social Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg. Email: Cell:

My supervisor is Dr. Siyanda Kheswa who is located at the School of Social Sciences, Pietermaritzburg Campus / Howard College Campus, Durban of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Contact details: email Kheswa1@ukzn.ac.za. Phonenummer: 033 260 6987

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

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

Appendix 3: Declaration Form

DECLARATION

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

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time should I so desire. I understand the intention of the research. I hereby agree to participate.

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

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

.....

Appendix 4: Interview Schedules

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR LIBRARIANS

Promoting a culture of reading in private school libraries in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal.

Interviewer...Nancy Mudau.....

Community: Librarians at five Private schools in the Scottsville area

Date of Interview.....

Introduction: Hello, my name is Nancy Mudau from the University of KwaZulu-Natal in Pietermaritzburg. I would like to ask you a few questions for a survey I am conducting for my Master's degree University programme. This interview will last about 10 minutes. Your answers will be kept confidential and anonymous (*IF NEED BE RE-ASSURE THE INTERVIEWEE THAT YOU NEITHER GOING TO INDICATE HIS/HER NAME NOR ADDRESS ON THIS "FORM"*).

You must please say if you would rather not participate, you may withdraw at any point.

- (a) The purpose of this survey is to find out the role that the library plays in the promotion of the culture of reading.
- (b) It is hoped that the results of this survey will assist the people working in library and information services and other agencies to develop adequate programmes to encourage their patron's frequent visits.

Before we start, let me tell you a little bit about this interview.

The purpose of this interview is to find out from you what IMPORTANT role this school library plays in the promotion of the culture of reading.

Date:	Name of School:	Your Gender:	Your Age:	Your Highest Qualification:	When did you obtain your qualification	Grade you are Teaching:	No of years at current school	Name and previous school	Number of years:

1. Are you a Librarian or a Library assistant? _____ and how many years have you worked at this school? _____
2. How long have you been a Librarian/ Library assistant? _____
3. Do you like working in the library?
 Yes
 No
 Please explain why _____

4. What in your view is the role of the school library? _____

5. What is the library doing to promote the culture of reading? _____

6. Do you have a reading period included in the teaching timetable? _____

7. What proportion of the school budget is allocated to the library per year? _____

8. Do you have a library committee? _____

If yes, what is its function? _____

If no, explain why? _____

9. Is the library in your school adequately promoted?

Yes

10. To what extent do you think the library is promoted to the learners? _____

11. What are the challenges that the school library is facing in developing a reading culture in the school? _____

12. What strategies can be adopted to overcome such challenges? _____

13. How does the school library contribute to the development of the reading culture in the school? _____

14. What programmes does your library run to promote the reading culture?

15. Do you, as a Librarian, attend short courses, workshops, and conferences to keep up-to-date with the current trends? _____ Please elaborate. _____

16. Does the school have a link with other libraries?

Yes
 No

If yes which ones _____

17. How many periods are allocated to the librarian for library skills per day?

18. Does the collection meet the needs of the school curriculum?

No

19. What do you see as the role of the librarian in the school setting? _____

20. How do you connect what you do in the library with the classroom curriculum? _____

21. Who selects library materials? _____

22. Are there other sources of funding for the library? _____

23. Please make any further comments/suggestions on the improvement of your school library and the promotion of the culture of reading in your school library.

Thank you for your participation and time.

Student's details: Nancy Mudau

Interview Schedule for Teachers

The purpose of this questionnaire is to seek your assistance in gathering data on the topic of the Promotion of the culture of reading among primary pupils of private schools in Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg. Your input will enable the researcher to gather data leading to the completion of a Master of Information studies degree at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. **Please be assured that your opinions will be treated confidentially.**

Instructions for completing the questionnaire

- a) Unless otherwise instructed, please tick { ✓ } or fill where necessary the answer applicable to you.

- b) Use spaces provided to write your answers using print or handwriting where applicable.

Gender

Question 1. Identify your gender by ticking the correct box

<input type="checkbox"/>	Male
<input type="checkbox"/>	Female

Question 2. Age Group

<input type="checkbox"/>	20-25
<input type="checkbox"/>	26-35
<input type="checkbox"/>	36-50
<input type="checkbox"/>	50-65

Question 3. Educational Qualification

<input type="checkbox"/>	Diploma
<input type="checkbox"/>	Degree
<input type="checkbox"/>	Post Graduate

Question 4. Citizenship

Are you a citizen of South Africa?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

Please explain.....
.....

Question 5.

Who is your current employer?.....

Question 6.

What is your subject specialisation?.....

Question 7.

What in your view is the role of the school library?
.....
.....
.....

Question 8.

How long have you been a teacher?.....

Are you a qualified teacher librarian?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
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No

Question 9.

How does the school library contribute to the development of the reading culture in the school? or What is the library doing to promote the culture of reading (Please explain)?

Question 10.

What are the challenges that the school libraries face in developing a reading culture in the school?

Question 11.

What strategies can be adopted to overcome such challenges?

Question 12.

Is the library in your school promoted adequately?

Yes
 No

If no, please explain why.

.....
.....

Question 13.

Why do you use the school library? (please tick all that apply)

- 13.1 When it is part of the teaching lesson
- 13.2 To read newspaper/ magazine
- 13.3 To use books to prepare for lessons
- 13.4 To borrow Novels
- 13.5 To attend events e.g book clubs
- 13.6 Other (please specify)

.....
.....
.....
.....

Question 14.

Do you use other libraries e.g. Msunduzi Public Library?

Yes
 No

If yes please explain

why:.....
.....

Question 15.

Please share what you like about your school library.....

Question 16.

How would you rate your school library in terms of materials quality?

- 16.1 Excellent { }
- 16.2 Good { }
- 16.3 Fair { }
- 16.4 Poor { }

17. What do you think are the challenges that hinder the effective use of your school Library?

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.....
.....

18. Are you satisfied with the services of your school library? (Please explain)

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19. Please make any further comments/ suggestions regarding the promotion of the culture of reading.

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The researcher wishes to thank you for your input and hereby acknowledges that your assistance was highly appreciated.

Appendix 5: Editing Letter

Athol Leach (Proofreading and Editing)



31 Park Rd
Fisherhaven
Hermanus 7200

Email: [REDACTED]

17 January 2025

To Whom It May Concern

This letter serves to confirm that I have edited the following MIS dissertation by Tshimangadzo Nancy Mudau titled:

“Promoting the culture of reading among primary pupils of private schools in Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg”

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

Please note that while I have checked the in-text references for consistency in terms of format, I have not checked the veracity of the sources themselves.

The tracked document is on file.

Sincerely

[REDACTED]

Athol Leach
(MIS, Natal)