

VIEWS ON LIBRARY ORIENTATION AT THE ESIKHAWINI  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

by

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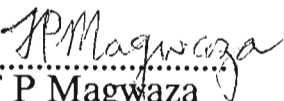
Submitted as a dissertation component (which counts for 25% of the degree) in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education (Social Theory)

University of Natal, Durban

December 1992

## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the whole of this dissertation is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete reference.

  
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F P Magwaza  
Durban  
June 1992

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study argues that one of the solutions to the problem of high matriculation failure rates in black schools is providing resources such as media centres and laboratories to make learning more realistic and interesting to pupils. However, unequal educational provision has meant that less money is allocated to black education in comparison with white, Indian and Coloured education. The study was initiated by the awareness of the lack of media centres in black schools and colleges of education. It focuses on the teaching of library orientation at Esikhawini College of Education, an institution that has features common to all KwaZulu colleges. The population consisted of a group of Secondary Teachers Diploma Second year (STD II) students who did not study library orientation as their ancillary subject. The study shows that most students at the college had not used media centres before coming to the college. It also shows that the time allocated to library orientation is too little; the course should be extended to two or even three years. As a result of these findings, the study recommends that media education be integrated into the curricula starting with the earliest levels of schooling, and that a national policy on the funding of media education be formulated.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My most sincere thanks are due to the following persons:

- Professor B F Nel and Mr Roger Deacon, my supervisors, for their guidance, advice and dedicated supervision.
- The Rector of Esikhawini College of Education for allowing me to use students at his institution in the study.
- The 1990 STD II students at Esikhawini College of Education for giving me their valuable time which made the study possible.
- Library orientation lecturers at Ntuzuma, Mpumalanga, Esikhawini and Umbumbulu Colleges of Education for their useful comments and observations on the teaching of the subject.
- Richard Devey of the Centre for Social and Development Studies, University of Natal, Durban for producing a computer printout of the responses.
- Alison Pretorius for her meticulous typing of the draft and the final copy of the dissertation.

## INTRODUCTION

The problem facing black education in South Africa has been the subject of several books and articles, such as the ones in Kallaway 1986; Hartshorne 1992; HSRC 1981. Accusations have been levelled mainly against the government as the agency that has not voted sufficient funds to black education to provide adequate facilities and favourable conditions under which education can take place. Factors such as large classes, inadequately qualified teachers and overcrowding in classrooms have contributed to the poor scholastic achievement of black pupils as measured by the matriculation results, for example passes as low as 57% for 1988, 41% for 1989 and 37% for 1990 (Hartshorne 1992, 81 and Cooper 1990, 829). In the face of such problems, immediate and long term solutions are being sought to "rescue" many thousands of pupils who are likely to find no places in tertiary education institutions or even in the already depressed economy as workers because they have not been properly prepared.

One of the solutions for improving the quality of learning at black schools is to provide resources such as libraries/media centres and laboratories. Such facilities may help make learning more realistic and interesting to pupils because of the practical orientation they offer. In the case of media centres, cultivation of reading is one of the aims to be achieved. It has been realised that a good reader performs better in his studies because of his ability to read with understanding. Such understanding is shown by his ability to express what he has read in his own words. However, in the case of black schools, very few have media centres in the strict sense of the word. Even those schools that have collections of book and non-book

materials cannot be said to have media centres. Black colleges of education like the schools have meagrely-stocked and scantily-equipped libraries that still concentrate primarily on the collection of book materials. However, students and pupils have to use whatever is available. It is believed that for the users of a media centre to benefit most from its resources, there is a need for instruction in its use, and an orientation programme to introduce them to what the centre has, how they can gain access to its contents and how they can use these to answer queries posed in their various subjects. With the awareness of the lack of properly-equipped media centres in KwaZulu schools and colleges of education, this study focuses on the teaching of library orientation at one of the KwaZulu colleges of education. An exemplary, Esikhawini College of Education, has been used to find out how students at that college view library orientation as a subject which is taught to all first year students once a week throughout the year.

## **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The study is aimed at establishing the extent to which students benefit from their exposure to library orientation.

## **LIMITATIONS OF THE FIELD OF STUDY**

The report reflects on the teaching of library orientation at Esikhawini College of education. However, the results obtained from this study are applicable to other colleges in KwaZulu because conditions at this college are fairly typical to those found in the other colleges in KwaZulu.

## PART 1 - THEORETICAL BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

### **1.1 EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA**

Education in South Africa is administered by a total of seventeen departments. Of these, ten are in charge of the education for blacks: the Department of Education and Training for those resident within what is designated as South Africa; a department of education for each of the independent states of Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei; and each of the self-governing or national states of Gazankulu, KaNgwane, KwaNdebele, KwaZulu, Lebowa and QwaQwa has a Department of Education and Culture (Walters 1991, 54). However, in the case of teacher education in KwaZulu the Department of Education and Culture administers this section on a day-to-day basis, but the teachers' examinations are set and certificates issued by the Department of Education and Training.

Teacher education in black schools as a section of the wider picture of black education is carried on within an atmosphere of deprivation and

with inadequate facilities. The figures that compare state per capita expenditure on school pupils by race, reveal wide discrepancies as shown in the figures for the years 1983 to 1990.

| Year    | African Expenditure | Prop. of white expend | Coloured Expenditure | Prop. of white expend | Indians Expenditure | Prop. of white expend | White Expenditure |
|---------|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
|         | R                   |                       | R                    |                       | R                   |                       | R                 |
| 1983/84 | 234,45              | 14%                   | 569,11               | 34%                   | 1088,00             | 66%                   | 1654,00           |
| 1988/89 | 764,73              | 25%                   | 1359,78              | 44%                   | 2227,01             | 72%                   | 3082,00           |
| 1989/90 | 930,00              | 25%                   | 1983,00              | 53%                   | 2659,00             | 71%                   | 3739,00           |

(South African Institute of Race Relations 1991, 3)

The concern that was expressed about the state of education in South Africa after the 1976 school riots and further outbreaks in 1980 led to the setting up of the Human Sciences Research Council Commission to investigate education, a commission usually known as the De Lange Commission after the name of the chairman of its main committee. One of the recommendations of the Commission was the formation of an education system that would meet the manpower needs of the country by providing equal educational opportunities for all in South Africa. Non-formal and formal educational structures were to be set up within a single education department in order to do away with inequalities (Chisholm 1984, 389).

Kallaway's reference to one of the aims of education as being the expanding of a child's critical faculties and his critical awareness emphasizes the need for learning with understanding as opposed to rote

learning. In addition to the acquisition of information, the learner acquires intellectual skills which will enable him to reason and think objectively (Kallaway 1976, 13). This type of learning relies heavily on a library, equipped with all the necessary media to facilitate learning. This is where the inadequate provision for education needs in the Black communities presents such a problem. The fact that there are insufficient funds for educational facilities at schools has meant that basic needs such as libraries and laboratories are regarded as being supplementary, and as such are thought easy to dispense with if schools have to contend with inadequate classrooms.

## **1.2 MEDIA CENTRES AS EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES**

It is necessary that each educational institution should have a media centre, the modern day version of what used to be known as a library. The term "media centre" has been preferred because it refers to the various types of media housed there in order to support the curricular and extra-curricular activities of the institution. In the words of Shirley Davies, "school libraries today are undergoing a metamorphosis and including more and more non-book materials in their collections" (Davies 1988, 23), such as periodicals, newspapers, video cassette recordings, phonograph records, audio-tape recordings, transparencies, film strips and slides. Such media make learning more interesting, involve the learner fully, and some present information in the same formats used for entertainment and relaxation so that the learner will be encouraged to spend long periods learning. However, the metamorphosis of libraries into media centres does not have any

meaning in schools and colleges where even the old-fashioned library does not possess the basic book stock to support teaching and learning.

The need for media education at all education institutions is underlined by the pressures placed by the so-called knowledge explosion on media centres as depositories of information. The modern era is characterised by rapid and radical change. There is also a rapid production of information and a revolution in the development of communication networks (Davies 1974, 23). For the media centre the knowledge explosion has made it necessary that there should be better control of information and means of keeping up-to-date with advances in the fields of study in which one is interested. For the pupils it is important that they should develop skills of finding resources appropriate for the solution of their problems. This implies that they should know how to handle information presented in various sources, judge the appropriateness of such information, extract what is relevant, organise it and prepare it for use in the future or for presentation to others (Tabberer 1985, 1). Media education therefore cultivates information-handling skills referred to here. Such skills make pupils fully involved in their learning and not passive recipients of information fed to them by their teachers.

Media education and library instruction will be used interchangeably in this report because it deals mainly with institutions where media centres do not yet exist. Media education in the context of school learning means more than merely making media available. It should encourage their integration into the teaching and learning situation so that each pupil benefits from contact with them. In the minds of most people the

association of media, especially the concept of educational technology, with teaching or learning "aids" has led to the tendency to view media as mere adjuncts and secondary to other media used in teaching and not really necessary because the teacher has continued to hold prominence as the primary source of information. "Aids" were merely there to help him. However even the use of terms such as "materials", "resources", "media" and even the use of the word "learning" before these words has tended to stress their importance as materials to be considered in their own right (Beswick 1977, xi).

The importance of media for learning has been pointed out in several articles, most significantly by Van Zijl who refers to the media's use as means of providing additional learning experiences which would not be possible in the application of traditional learning methods and will thus supplement good teaching (Van Zijl 1989, 217). He is interested especially in the use of media in addressing problems faced by Black education in South Africa, for example, large classes, insufficiently qualified teachers and limited physical facilities. It is true that most syllabuses used in Black schools contain concepts which are foreign to students from Third World backgrounds. The use of audio-visual programmes would help to lend concreteness to such ideas so that they are incorporated into the pupils' world of experience and would discourage rote-learning which is the result of learning without understanding (Van Zijl 1989, 218). The emphasis on child-centered education as a means of developing self-reliance in the individual points to a need for the provision of resources to which the learner has direct access.

Many educational institutions have realised that knowing how to use the media centre is an essential part of the education process and an aid in preparing the pupil or student for the continuing process of self-education after formal education has been completed. (Davies 1974; Reeder 1984; Roberts 1982) The report by Overduin et al also refers to the concern expressed by university authorities at several universities about students' lack of skills in media use as contributing to their poor comprehension skills. (Overduin 1986) Self-education implies that the student is able to find information relevant to his needs, such as writing an essay, a laboratory report or a project. However, many students feel intimidated by the amount of information they have to plough through before they find answers to their problems. This is where library instruction programmes as components of learning at educational institutions come in. Whilst there might seem to be conflict around the issue whether, as Reeder argues, library instruction is about how to use a particular media centre or whether it is a means whereby information skills are offered to pupils and students as part of their overall education, library instruction should give skills that the learners will use throughout life and in any information-gathering situation, regardless of what type of media centre they are using (Reeder 1982, 11).

### **1.3 LIBRARY INSTRUCTION**

Several authors have written on library instruction programmes and what they should provide for the users of libraries. Breivik views library instruction as a means of creating in students an "ability to use libraries and their resources as means for personal and professional advancement" (Breivik 1982, viii) This is another reference to the life-long benefits to

be reaped from library instruction programmes. Roberts' view of library instruction does not differ much in the sense that she sees it as the use of building locations, facilities and materials to teach users how to make use of libraries to handle their information needs. She sees library instruction as a broad term encompassing library orientation and bibliographic instruction, the latter described as the cultivation of efficient and effective library use by exposing students to the research methodologies and search strategies of a particular discipline (Roberts 1982, 15).

There are several references to library orientation programmes designed to introduce newcomers to the media centres at tertiary institutions such as technikons, universities and colleges of education (Roberts 1982; Breivik 1982; Stevenson 1977; Reeder 1982). Such programmes include elements such as an informal tour led by media centre staff members, the use of audio visual media such as slides and video tapes and of printed materials such as maps, signs, handbooks and guides, and self-guided tours. No matter what method is used, the idea is that users should know the physical layout and services offered by the media centre of a particular institution (Roberts 1982, 31). In such cases library orientation will be offered during the first few weeks of the students' stay at such institutions as part of the programmes to familiarise them with the institutions.

The idea of the media centre as an agent to encourage independent learning makes it imperative that all pupils and students should know how to use its resources if their learning is to be effective. This is even more important in tertiary education institutions where independent

learning is expected of the students. However, library orientation in the context in which it is considered in this report includes more than mere introduction to the institutions' media centre resources. As a subject taught at Esikhawini College of Education, it is designated a "credit" subject, is allocated one period a week, and is compulsory for all Secondary Teachers' Diploma first year (STD I) students. As a credit subject no end of year examination is written on it, but marks allocated for it are built cumulatively throughout the year and eventually counted in the student's mark for promotion. It is also an ancillary subject, that is, an additional subject unlike the specialization subjects to be taught at secondary school level. The aims of the syllabus for library orientation are, amongst others, the following:

"To introduce students to the concept of a multi-media library; to train students in note-taking and reading guidance and to assist them to make effective use of a library". (Syllabus, Library Orientation, STD, Department of Education and Training 1990).

Two examples of statements of aims of user-education programmes are that they are meant to ensure that the user will be able to exploit media resources adequately to solve his or her information needs and that user education should enable the student to be independent in seeking information (Stevenson 1976, 7). Such aims are the same as those expressed for the library orientation course offered at a college of education such as Esikhawini.

The background against which students registered for the first year STD course have library orientation as one of their compulsory subjects will be

easier to understand if one considers the type of provision for media services in the Black communities, with special emphasis on the establishment of media services in schools administered by the KwaZulu Department of Education and Culture.

PART 2 - MEDIA CENTRES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND  
COLLEGES UNDER THE KWAZULU DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION AND CULTURE

**2.1 TYPES OF MEDIA COLLECTIONS**

The provision of school and college media centres in education institutions under the control of the KwaZulu Department of Education and Culture has to be seen against the background of library services for all sectors of the Black community in South Africa. In most of these communities there are so few media centres that the idea itself is a foreign concept in the minds of most members of the community. Very few schools have any media centre facilities at all.

With reference to KwaZulu schools, from which Esikhawini draws most of its students, media services are not yet well-developed. The idea of media centres cannot as yet be applied to any of the collections of media materials that eventually come to be regarded as media centres. These collections appear in several forms and contain chiefly books and a few periodical titles. One type of collection can be found in some rooms which were previously used as a library but were later converted into classrooms due to lack of accommodation. Such a collection is not properly managed even by the teacher-librarian if there is one, because pupils who occupy that classroom help themselves to the books and their numbers decrease in no time at all. Another type of collection is one which contains a few hundred copies, most of them outdated and worn-out copies discarded from and donated by some local Coloured, White or Indian school, dumped in a room without much attempt at systematic

arrangement and also rarely ever used by the teachers and pupils. A third type of collection consists of carefully selected books, systematically arranged in a room set aside to serve as a media centre. The difference between the second and third types is that the second one might not be used often because its use has not been integrated into the school's activities and the person in charge has to teach many other subjects and will thus not devote enough time to the media centre. In the third type some attempt will be made to have media use periods for the classes, even if it is only the senior classes. However, not many school media centres fall into this last category. As far as the provision of resources is concerned, even college of education libraries in KwaZulu cannot as yet be referred to as media centres because of the meagre resources they contain.

## **2.2 CONTROL OF SCHOOL AND COLLEGE MEDIA SERVICES IN KWAZULU**

Media services in KwaZulu are administered by the KwaZulu Department of Education and Culture with the section known as the KwaZulu Library Services responsible for giving guidance on matters such as the selection, processing and use of library materials which include both book and non-book media. This section of the Department of Education was established in terms of the KwaZulu Library Act of 1980 which empowered the Minister of Education and Culture, amongst other things, to "establish school libraries in KwaZulu" (KwaZulu Library Act 1980, 1). Before this date there were school and college libraries in existence, but not much attention was paid to their development. In October 1984 the first inspector for KwaZulu School Library Services was

appointed and charged with the onerous task of establishing school libraries in the vast area administered by the Department and covering twenty-five circuits in all. The fact that such a wide area had to be serviced by one person has hampered the rapid development of the service. It has not been easy to give proper guidance to all the schools with operational media centres or schools which have expressed interest in the establishment of media centres. In April 1990, September 1990 and January 1991 three more people were appointed in an advisory capacity to the KwaZulu Library Services. The areas they have to cover are still vast.

### **2.3 HELP PROVIDED BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR**

Reference has to be made to the pioneering efforts by the Urban Foundation between the years 1978 and 1981 to establish media centres in some secondary schools in the Durban metropolitan area and as far afield as Groutville and the South Coast. What was provided here were books, furniture, book processing materials and initial employment of qualified librarians to process books until they were ready for use. Later on, the establishment of READ (Read, Educate and Develop) has further helped the development of school media centres, including primary school media centres. READ has helped to establish school media centres not only in Natal but all over South Africa. Even college media centres have benefited from READ's efforts. READ has not waited until a library room is available before providing a service, but has made beginnings with box libraries and classroom libraries to encourage the reading habit as soon as interest is shown in having library books.

Several other companies also donate funds for the buying of library books or for the building of a media centre.

## **2.4 MEDIA USE AT SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

Media use has been hampered by a number of factors. Apart from the lack of media centres, many schools do not have media use periods on their time-tables. Even if a library room were available, it may not be able to accommodate the typically large classes in Black schools. This then means that pupils can only borrow books from the media centre and are deprived of the opportunity to browse. A third factor that affects media use is that, because of the shortage of teaching staff, the principal finds it impossible to release one teacher to staff the media centre on a full-time basis. In cases where the teacher-librarian has fewer periods than his colleagues, he or she might be able to fit only the senior classes into his or her load. This decision would be taken to give them at least some idea of a media centre just before they finish secondary school. Other factors have accounted for insufficient media use by pupils at secondary schools. Large amounts of valuable media are lost each year through theft and vandalism because of lack of security in the schools. Besides, school riots and boycotts, especially since 1985, have led to the burning and looting of schools and the destruction of property, including media centre property.

Because of the problems already mentioned, very few schools have library instruction programmes fitted into the school curriculum. The pupils' infrequent contact with media centres (where they are available) during breaks and in the afternoons does not enable them to understand

fully how to put them into use. Bristow also refers to factors such as inadequate books to support and integrate with the curriculum or even encourage interest in reading as making pupils reach tertiary institutions with very little knowledge of media use. This is further aggravated by the lack of relevant training for teacher-librarians and lack of enthusiasm on the part of the principals (Bristow 1990, 97). Bristow further observes that the few Black pupils who reach university have limited study skills and find it difficult to distinguish between important and unimportant facts (Bristow 1990, 55).

Students who register at Esikhawini College also come from an environment where there has not been much exposure to libraries, let alone programmes to teach information skills. A statement by Overduin and de Wit confirms the idea that even in cases where media centres are available, media use programmes are not satisfactorily presented as the evidence of university authorities suggests that a large number of first year students know very little about the media centre and how to use information sources (Overduin et al 1986, 5).

PART 3 - THE TEACHING OF LIBRARY ORIENTATION AT  
ESIKHAWINI COLLEGE

**3.1 COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN KWAZULU**

The KwaZulu Department of Education and Culture has ten colleges that offer pre-service teacher education on a full-time basis. Three of these, namely Adams, Eshowe and Esikhawini, offer a Secondary Teachers' Diploma (STD); the rest offer a Primary Teachers' Diploma (PTD). The other seven colleges are Appelsbosch, Ezakheni, KwaGqikazi, Madadeni, Mpumalanga, Ntuzuma and Umbumbulu. Both diplomas cover three years of study. For both diplomas the minimum entrance requirement is a matriculation certificate. Nine of the colleges have boarding facilities for their students and one is a day college. Some of the ten colleges of education have similar characteristics, for example, three of them are situated within the Durban metropolitan area. These are Ntuzuma, Umbumbulu and Adams. The other four colleges, namely Esikhawini, Ezakheni, Mpumalanga and Madadeni are situated in townships, with Eshowe built near a well-developed town. The last two, Appelsbosch and KwaGqikazi, are in rural areas far away from towns (Salmon 1991, 1).

Esikhawini College as an institution that trains teachers meant to teach at secondary schools offers curricula mainly in general subjects such as history, geography and the languages. A few students study science subjects, namely mathematics, physical science and biology. All the students at the college are boarders. Because of limited space, especially

hostel accommodation, the college normally admits slightly more than 600 male and female students. However, there are plans to upgrade facilities at most colleges, including Esikhawini, to accommodate 1000 students at each college.

The STD curriculum at Esikhawini college consists of two specialization subjects, that is, school subjects which each student studies intensively over three years with a view to teaching these at secondary school. There are also "professional" subjects, namely Education and Teaching Science. The next group consists of the two languages English and Afrikaans studied as media of communication. The last group consists of subjects regarded as ancillary or additional subjects. These subjects are given only one period in STD I. The ancillary subjects are Music, Physical Education, Art, Library Orientation, Student Guidance, Bible and Philosophies of Life.

### **3.2 TEACHING LIBRARY ORIENTATION AT ESIKHAWINI COLLEGE**

The method most commonly used is the lecture method. Students are also given some practical work to do, such as finding titles from the shelves, using encyclopaedias and note-taking. Use is also made of group discussions. Not much use is made of audio-visual materials as little is available apart from slides, transparencies, pictures and maps. The subject is always offered in the library so that reference can be made to what is stored there and also to relate theory to practical situations.

Topics covered in the course include the following: introducing the media centre; the anatomy of the book; classification; the catalogue; reading guidance and the selection of books; and reference works and their effective use.

Evaluation of the work takes the form of written tests, assignments and some practical work the students do during the year, such as basic classification.

The question one may ask is whether library orientation is integrated into the college curriculum. There is no formal statement of integration. Library orientation is just one of the many subjects taught at the college. As part of evaluation, several assignments have to be written on all the subjects by students and extensive use is made of materials available in the college media centre. Lecturers teaching these subjects are encouraged to ascertain first if relevant materials are available in the college media centre. From this writer's observation not many lecturers do this. There is a general feeling of apathy on the side of the academic staff towards the media centre.

Another fact worth noting is that library orientation is taught by people who are attached to the college media centre in the sense that they are also responsible for the processing of library materials and working in the media centre after hours. Therefore in the minds of the other academic staff, library orientation and what has to do with the media centre is the sole responsibility of the media centre staff.

## PART 4 - EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

The basic problem under study is the teaching of library orientation at Esikhawini college of education. Library orientation is meant not only to introduce students to what the college library contains and how to use its resources for maximum benefit, but also to equip the users with skills that they can use in other libraries and media centres. It is also assumed that the skills acquired during the course will enable the students to perform well in their "other" studies. Ultimately, it is hoped that the students will become independent learners as a result of their exposure to library orientation.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS OF DATA**

This section will discuss procedures employed in the collection of data. This will include the identification of the population, the selection of respondents, administration of the research instrument and the analysis of data obtained from the questionnaire.

#### **4.1 POPULATION**

Permission was obtained from the Rector of Esikhawini College of Education to make use of students of this institution in the study. The population consisted of a group of STD II students not doing Librarianship as one of their ancillary subjects, that is, subjects in addition to the so-called specialization or major subjects. Students that formed the population studied Physical Education, Music and Student Guidance. The decision to exclude Librarianship students was made because they study

this subject more extensively than at STD I level, namely seven periods a week compared to one period a week in STD I. Such an ancillary subject, in spite of the title it is given, is done over a two-year period and is endorsed on the student's certificate. It was felt that Librarianship students would have acquired more insight into the subject and would thus have developed better media use skills. For that reason, therefore, they would not be suitable to investigate the problem.

## **4.2 SELECTION OF RESPONDENTS**

A total of 166 students formed the population. The aim was to have a 25% sample. Numbers were assigned to the names of all students and then written on pieces of paper. After picking 50 names at random, the numbers were matched against the names of students. Of the 50 respondents selected, 44 ultimately filled in the questionnaire. The respondents answered the questions under the supervision of one of the lecturers.

## **4.3 ANALYSIS OF DATA**

### **4.3.1 Types of questions used**

Both open-ended and closed questions were used in the questionnaire. In the case of closed questions, the point of interest was mainly the measurement of frequencies of responses. In a number of cases closed questions were followed immediately by open-ended questions for the sake of elaborating and giving more information on the closed questions.

Examples of such combinations are questions 7 and 8 and questions 9 and 10. (See Questionnaire)

#### **4.3.2 Procedure followed in the analysis**

Responses to questions in some cases stated a number of reasons even if only one was required. This tended to increase the number of responses to a single question and create problems for categorizing. This was overcome by combining responses in which the ideas expressed were the same and then presenting them as one idea. In the analysis responses to an open question that was a follow-up to the previous closed question were treated in conjunction with the responses to that of the previous question.

#### **4.4 Discussion of data**

##### **4.4.1 Age**

The largest number of cases, 54.5%, fell in the 22 - 26 age group, followed by the 17 - 21 age group at 34.1%. If one were to assume that quite a number of students come to a tertiary institution such as a college of education immediately after passing matric, which they do at about 18 years of age, one would expect to have more students in the 17 -21 age group. However, this is not the case. Since most of the respondents fell in the age group older than this one, an assumption can be made that some time had elapsed between the students' completing matric and coming to the college. During this time, some could have attended other tertiary institutions, others could have been employed temporarily and the rest

could have spent some time at home. With the lack of libraries in Black communities (as has been mentioned already) it is not very likely that those who had not been to any tertiary education institutions could have been exposed to any kind of library. Those who had been to such institutions as universities, technikons and technical colleges are likely to have become acquainted with the media centre at such institutions and could have gained from the exposure. However, this possibility and how much gain could have been made from the contact was not investigated in the study.

| Age Category   | Number | Percentage |
|----------------|--------|------------|
| 17 to 21 years | 15     | 34.1       |
| 22 to 26 years | 24     | 54.5       |
| 27 to 31 years | 3      | 6.8        |
| Above 36 years | 1      | 2.3        |
| No response    | 1      | 2.3        |
| Total          | 44     | 100        |

Table 1 Distribution according to age

#### 4.4.2 Sex

There were 26 male and 18 female respondents.

| Category Label | Number | Percentage |
|----------------|--------|------------|
| Male           | 26     | 59         |
| Female         | 18     | 41         |
| Total          | 44     | 100        |

Table 2 Distribution according to sex

#### 4.4.3 Specialization subject

Each student at Esikhawini College is expected to study the academic content and the teaching method of two subjects taught at secondary school. The subject combinations stood as follows:

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| Mathematics and Biology or Physical Science | 12 respondents |
| History and Afrikaans                       | 9 respondents  |
| History and English                         | 8 respondents  |
| Geography and English                       | 3 respondents  |
| Geography and Zulu                          | 4 respondents  |
| Biblical Studies and Zulu                   | 4 respondents  |

Three of the respondents did not indicate their choices. If subjects are considered in isolation, History is the subject studied by 41.5% of the cases, followed by Mathematics at 29.3% and then English at 26.8%.

| Category Label   | Count | % of responses |
|------------------|-------|----------------|
| Mathematics      | 12    | 29.3           |
| Biology          | 7     | 17.1           |
| History          | 17    | 41.5           |
| Afrikaans        | 9     | 22             |
| English          | 11    | 26.8           |
| Geography        | 7     | 17.1           |
| Zulu             | 10    | 24.4           |
| Physical Science | 5     | 12.2           |
| Biblical Studies | 4     | 9.8            |
| Total            | 82    | 100            |

Table 3 Specialization subjects

#### 4.4.4 Use of Libraries before coming to Esikhawini College and purposes for which libraries were used

This question was aimed at establishing how many students had used libraries before enrolling at Esikhawini college. Only 10 respondents reported having used libraries before coming to the college and 29 respondents had not had any contact with libraries before. It was not specified whether this contact was with public libraries, school libraries or any other type of library. The high incidence of responses in the latter category confirms the statement made earlier that most students only have their first experience of library use when they come to tertiary institutions. In reasons given for no previous contact with libraries, 68.9% of the cases stated that there were no libraries at schools where they attended. Even the reason given by 6.9% respondents that their schools had library buildings with no books still points to the lack of exposure to books and libraries. Similarly, the statement that "teachers brought their own books into the

classrooms" reported by 13.8% of the cases merely emphasizes lack of extra reading material that is accessible to the students. Such books are likely to have been used only for limited periods to study particular sections of those teachers' subjects. Those respondents who said they had used libraries before coming to the college gave reasons such as the writing of assignments, acquisition and increase of knowledge and the promotion of reading for enjoyment. The picture one gets from the responses in this category is that respondents had not had much exposure to libraries.

| Category Label         | Count | % of responses |
|------------------------|-------|----------------|
| Knowledge acquisition  | 3     | 30             |
| Writing of assignments | 3     | 30             |
| To promote reading     | 2     | 20             |
| Had used it before     | 2     | 20             |
| Total                  | 10    | 100            |

Table 4 Use of media centres before coming to Esikhawini College

| Category Label                  | Count | % of responses |
|---------------------------------|-------|----------------|
| Library buildings with no books | 2     | 6.9            |
| No library at school            | 20    | 68.9           |
| Department texts insufficient   | 1     | 3.5            |
| Teachers brought own books      | 4     | 13.8           |
| Not allowed to use libraries    | 2     | 6.9            |
| Total                           | 29    | 100            |

Table 5 Had not used media centres before coming to Esikhawini College

#### 4.4.5 Time allocated for library orientation and reasons for responses

On the question whether the time allocated for library orientation lectures, that is, one period a week for STD I students, is enough or not, 24 out of 44 respondents stated that it is not. 50% of this group of respondents clearly stated that it should be expanded. The emphasis in this question was on how the respondents view the amount of time allocated for this subject and whether this presents the subject as being worthwhile as a means of preparing them for better library use. A statement that "many books have to be used for assignments" underlines the need for more frequent library use by the students, but this does not necessarily refer to library orientation periods. During these periods students do not actually work on their assignments, but are taught skills of library use such as using reference works and catalogues. For writing assignments and consulting books and other materials kept in the library, the students have to use library hours that are not integrated into the college time-table. A few respondents stated that one period a week for library orientation is enough. One reason given is that if there are too many periods, students might get bored. Another reason is that skills taught during library orientation lectures can be practiced outside the library. This response reveals an awareness that the skills are applicable to various subjects; these are not limited only to what has to be done during library orientation lectures. Even though a reference to boredom comes from only a few respondents, it does pose a question as to the methods in which the lectures are presented.

| Category Label                     | Count | % of responses |
|------------------------------------|-------|----------------|
| To avoid boredom                   | 6     | 37.5           |
| Skills practiced in other subjects | 10    | 62.5           |
| Total                              | 16    | 100            |

Table 6 Sufficient time is allocated for library orientation

| Category Label                           | Count | % of responses |
|--|-------|----------------|
| Many books used for assignments          | 9     | 37.5           |
| No motivation possible if time too short | 3     | 12.5           |
| Time should be expanded                  | 12    | 50             |
| Total                                    | 24    | 100            |

Table 7 Insufficient time allocated for library orientation

#### 4.4.6 Best place for library orientation lectures and reasons

On the question whether library orientation lectures should be offered in the library or lecture halls/classrooms or both, the majority of the respondents (90.7%) stated that it should be in the library. Of this group 89.7% gave the reason that the library is the most suitable place because there the students can observe theory being put into practice. This idea is similar to the statement from another group of respondents that the library makes possible the practical application of abstract ideas presented in the lecture. Another reason given is that in the library the atmosphere is conducive for the lectures because there are many books, possibly to serve as practical examples. In these responses there is reference to the practical

nature of the subject. There is also the perception that the use of the various media available in the library will enable students to gain concrete experiences of library materials in use. On the other hand, 9.3% of the cases responded that library orientation should be offered in the lecture hall or classroom. One reason given by half of this group is that students might be too lazy to go to the library to attend lectures. Another reason is that if this course were offered in the lecture hall or classroom where students normally attend lectures for all their other courses, then they are not likely to absent themselves from class.

| Category Label                           | Count | % of responses |
|--|-------|----------------|
| To put theory into practice              | 35    | 89.7           |
| Relate new knowledge with abstract ideas | 2     | 5.15           |
| Atmosphere in library conducive          | 2     | 5.15           |
| Total                                    | 39    | 100            |

Table 8 Library as best place for library orientation lectures

| Category Label                   | Count | % of responses |
|----------------------------------|-------|----------------|
| Students might be lazy to attend | 2     | 50             |
| No dodging if classroom is used  | 2     | 50             |
| Total                            | 4     | 100            |

Table 9 Lecture hall/classroom as best place for library orientation lectures.

#### 4.4.7 Who should teach library orientation and why

On the question whether it should be the teacher-librarian or any other lecturer on the staff who should teach library orientation, 43 of the 44 respondents stated that it should be the teacher-librarian. The reason given by most respondents in this group was that the teacher-librarian is an expert in the subject. This response shows the respondents' awareness and appreciation of the skills of the teacher-librarian. Other responses range from statements such as that he or she can inspire and motivate students with interest in the subject to the facts that he or she is familiar with the media centre and that other lecturers are not interested in this course. This last response shows other lecturers' lack of support for library orientation. With this type of attitude it is not known how much they care about how the library can support their teaching. The one respondent who differed with the 43 respondents stated that any lecturer on the staff can teach library orientation because a trained teacher can teach any subject. To him/her specialist knowledge of the subject did not count. That so many respondents wished to have the teacher-librarian presenting library orientation shows that they have confidence in the specialist skills and knowledge which he or she is presumed to have. The fact that teacher-librarians are the only ones who teach the course has created in students' mind the impression that they are experts in this field.

| Category Label                            | Count | % of responses |
|---|-------|----------------|
| Teacher-librarian is a specialist         | 39    | 90.69          |
| Teacher-librarian can inspire students    | 2     | 4.65           |
| He is familiar with library               | 1     | 2.33           |
| Other lecturers not interested in subject | 1     | 2.33           |
| Total                                     | 43    | 100            |

Table 10 Teacher-librarian should teach library orientation

| Category Label                          | Count | % of responses |
|---|-------|----------------|
| A trained teacher can teach any subject | 1     | 100            |
| Total                                   | 1     | 100            |

Table 11 Other lecturers should teach library orientation

#### 4.4.8 Length of library orientation courses

This question focussed on the desirable length of library orientation courses for them to be effective and, by implication, to cultivate the skills that will enable the students at the college to be independent learners. 17 people or 38.6% of the respondents stated that one year was enough. From this group 41.2% gave the reason that one year was enough for library orientation to give basic information. This response is related to that of 5.9% respondents in the same category who stated that students who study library orientation already have basic information. However, this seems to contrast with the earlier revelation that very few of the students had had any contact with libraries when they come to tertiary institutions, and

cannot be expected to know much about what Libraries can offer to the users. Another group in this category stated that one year is enough because library orientation is an ancillary subject. This statement underlines the attitude that an ancillary course is one of those additional courses that should not have much time devoted to them, as opposed to specialization subjects which are studied over three years and in which the student has to be proficient enough to teach these at secondary school. Two other reasons why one year of study is enough are that it is not a difficult course, and that not much work is done in this course. These last two reasons also reflect on the amount of work or content that has to be studied in library orientation as compared to other subjects.

The majority of the respondents, that is, 21 stated that library orientation courses should cover a two-year period. Of these cases, 52.4% gave the reason that two years will enable students to be better equipped with knowledge of library use. Another reason given was that two years is suitable in order to create interest in and love for the library. Others were of the opinion that there are many things to be learned in this subject and that students have to be taught gradually. The rest of the respondents, 6, chose three years as a reasonable period for library orientation courses. The reasons given were that it would enable students to develop long-lasting interest in the library, that a three-year period would give them skills to use the library even when they have left the college, and finally that three years is long enough to enable them to have a clear idea of library use.

From all the responses stated above, it is clear that most of the students feel that one year is too short a period to enable the students to grasp the elements of the subject fully. Even though only 6 respondents would prefer

to have library orientation offered over a three-year period, this is an indication of the need for constant contact with this subject throughout the three years they spend at the college. However, one can ask if this type of attitude is not an indication of lack of independence on the part of the students and excessive reliance on what the teacher-librarians can pass on to them.

| Category Label                           | Count | % of responses |
|--|-------|----------------|
| One year enough for basic information    | 7     | 41.2           |
| Students already have basic information  | 1     | 5.9            |
| Library orientation an ancillary subject | 4     | 23.5           |
| Library orientation not difficult        | 3     | 17.6           |
| Some students not interested in subject  | 2     | 11.8           |
| Total                                    | 17    | 100            |

Table 12 One year as desirable length of library orientation course

| Category Label                           | Count | % of responses |
|--|-------|----------------|
| To equip students with library knowledge | 11    | 52.4           |
| To increase interest in library          | 3     | 14.3           |
| Many things learnt in this subject       | 2     | 9.5            |
| Students to be taught gradually          | 5     | 23.8           |
| Total                                    | 21    | 100            |

Table 13 Two years as desirable length of library orientation lectures

| Category Label                              | Count | % of responses |
|---|-------|----------------|
| To develop long-lasting interest in library | 3     | 50             |
| To give skills for future library use       | 2     | 33.3           |
| To give clear idea of library use           | 1     | 16.7           |
| Total                                       | 6     | 100            |

Table 14 Three years as desirable length of library orientation lectures

#### 4.4.9 Evaluation of students in library orientation

40 respondents stated that students should be evaluated in library orientation as opposed to 4 who said that they should not be evaluated. It would have been more beneficial for the study if respondents had been asked to specify the manner of evaluation preferable to them; hence a limitation to interpretation.

#### 4.4.10 Skills gained from library orientation lectures

This question intended finding out if students gained any skills from library orientation lectures. The skill of using the library was reported by 39% of the respondents; the ability to find relevant books was reported by 34.1% of the respondents; and searching for information and improved writing skills also featured in the responses.

| Category Label            | Count | % of responses |
|---------------------------|-------|----------------|
| Using the library         | 16    | 39             |
| Finding relevant books    | 14    | 34.1           |
| Searching for information | 5     | 12.2           |
| Improved writing skills   | 4     | 9.8            |
| Improved vocabulary       | 2     | 4.9            |
| Total                     | 41    | 100            |

Table 15 Skills gained from library orientation lectures

#### 4.4.11 Use of library orientation skills in other subjects

This question intended finding out if the skills which the students acquired in their library orientation lectures are adaptable in the sense that they can be used when students deal with other courses. 93.2% of the respondents stated that they have applied these skills in other areas of study as opposed to 6.8% who said they did not use these skills in other subjects. The large number of respondents who had found library orientation skills useful for the study of other subjects is an indication that the students do benefit from library orientation and that it is an essential subject for them. It is also possible that because students are forced to make extensive use of the media centre in completing all their courses, they could acquire the skills that would reinforce what they had already obtained from library orientation.

4.4.12 Library orientation to facilitate better performance in studies

Respondents were also asked to state whether library orientation lectures had enabled them to perform better in their studies. 39 respondents confirmed that it had, as opposed to 5 who said that it had not. This large number of respondents underlines the benefits obtained by the students from library orientation lectures. 43.6% stated that it enabled them to supplement their knowledge; 19.5% stated that it enabled them to obtain resources from the library; and 4.8% pointed out that it enabled them to obtain main ideas from books. Other responses in this category were that students were able to take a shorter time to study than before and that they acquired the ability to improve their vocabulary.

| Category Label                   | Count | % of responses |
|----------------------------------|-------|----------------|
| To supplement knowledge          | 17    | 43.6           |
| To obtain resources form library | 8     | 20.5           |
| To obtain ideas from books       | 9     | 23.1           |
| Studying takes a shorter time    | 3     | 7.7            |
| Ability to improve vocabulary    | 2     | 5.1            |
| Total                            | 39    | 100            |

Table 16 Library orientation facilitates better performance in studies

#### 4.4.13 Application of library orientation skills to other parts of students' studies and areas of application

The question of whether students ever applied skills acquired from library orientation lectures to other parts of their studies is closely related to the question discussed in 3.11. The only difference is that in this section (3.13) respondents were required to refer to areas of application of skills. In this section 34 of the 44 respondents stated that they did apply these skills to other areas of their studies. The reference to areas of studies to which skills were applied yielded responses such as the acquisition of information from reference sources and books (44%); acquisition of writing skills (20.5%); improvement of reading (8.8%); and skills such as handling books and help with practical subjects such as biology.

To be considered in this section as well is the integration of library orientation into the academic curriculum of the college. Perhaps one would argue that library orientation is integrated because it is a subject that is evaluated and has marks counting towards the students' promotion. In spite of this fact it seems to be taught in isolation, as an entity on its own and its inclusion as a particular subject depends on the whims of an individual lecturer. This fact makes it even more meaningful for the students to have a programme of library instruction presented to them formally in a lecture and through practical demonstration in the media centre.

| Category Label   | Count | % of responses |
|--|-------|----------------|
| Acquiring information from books and reference sources | 15    | 44.1           |
| Acquisition of writing skills                          | 8     | 23.5           |
| Improvement of reading                                 | 3     | 8.8            |
| Skill of handling books                                | 3     | 8.8            |
| Help with practical subjects, eg. biology              | 5     | 14.7           |
| Total  | 34    | 100            |

Table 17 Areas of application of library orientation skills

#### 4.4.14 Usefulness of skills acquired in library orientation lectures even after college studies

This question was framed to find out if students thought that skills which they acquired in library orientation would be useful to them after they had left the college. 88.1% of the cases stated that what they had gained from library orientation at college would still be relevant for them later in life. From this group 47.4% stated that they would use these skills in seeking information when they further their studies or to improve their teaching and 9.5% said they would use these skills to help pupils use libraries. Other responses mentioned knowing how books are arranged in media centres, gaining self-confidence in using media and reading at home.

The respondents who answered that the skills referred to in the question were applicable only while they were still at college stated that they would need media use skills for writing assignments and finding books easily. Some said that because "librarianship" is not taught at most schools, these skills will no longer be useful to them when they have left the college. The

reference to librarianship not being taught at most schools refers again to the dire shortage of media centres at black schools and the sense of frustration and helplessness which the respondents feel about a situation which they are not able to remedy.

| Category Label                             | Count | % of responses |
|--|-------|----------------|
| Information to further studies             | 18    | 47.4           |
| Improve teaching                           | 7     | 18.4           |
| Help pupils use libraries                  | 4     | 10.5           |
| Knowing arrangements of books in libraries | 3     | 7.9            |
| Gaining confidence in using libraries      | 3     | 7.9            |
| Stimulate reading at home                  | 3     | 7.9            |
| Total                                      | 38    | 100            |

Table 18 Library orientation skills useful after college studies

| Category Label                      | Count | % of responses |
|-------------------------------------|-------|----------------|
| Writing assignments at college      | 3     | 50             |
| Finding books easily                | 1     | 16.7           |
| Librarianship not taught at schools | 2     | 33.3           |
| Total                               | 6     | 100            |

Table 19 Library orientation skills not useful after college studies

#### 4.4.15 Library orientation as compulsory subject for STD I students

38 Respondents stated that library orientation should be compulsory for all STD I students. From this group 52.6% gave the reason that students need

background knowledge about media centres because most of them come from schools without media centres. An idea related to this came from 5.3% of the respondents who said that making the subject compulsory would force students to use the media centre. A third group stated that making library orientation compulsory cultivates in students the desire and love for reading and study. Another group referred to the need for students to enrich their knowledge. One would view these as the need to update one's store of information and to keep up with the dynamic nature of knowledge.

On the other hand, 6 respondents stated that library orientation should not be compulsory for STD I students. The reasons given are that some students do not like this course; that students should not be forced into the media centre if they don't want to; and that some students do not use it. This last response is a surprising one if one views the nature of learning at a tertiary institution such as the college, where emphasis should be placed on independent learning. There is even a statement that the media centre is not used by STD I students only. For the purposes of the question under consideration here, the assumption behind the last reason is that if library orientation is made compulsory for STD I students then it might as well be compulsory for STD II and III students because they also have to use the library during the course of their studies at the college. This last response links up with one from a group of students who felt that library orientation should be offered over three years, that is, throughout the students' period of study at the college.

| Category Label   | Count | % of responses |
|--|-------|----------------|
| Students from schools with no libraries, so background knowledge necessary | 20    | 52.6           |
| To cultivate love for study and reading                                    | 9     | 23.7           |
| To enrich students' knowledge  | 7     | 18.4           |
| To motivate students to use the library                                    | 2     | 5.3            |
| Total  | 38    | 100            |

Table 20 Library orientation should be compulsory for all STD I students

| Category Label                           | Count | % of responses |
|--|-------|----------------|
| Some students don't like the course      | 1     | 16.7           |
| Some students don't use the library      | 2     | 33.3           |
| Not only STD I's use the library         | 2     | 33.3           |
| Students should be forced to use library | 1     | 16.7           |
| Total                                    | 6     | 100            |

Table 21 Library orientation should not be compulsory for STD I students

#### 4.4.16 Teacher-librarian's duty to provide information for students

There were 19 cases who felt that it is indeed the teacher-librarian's duty to provide information for students. One group, 57.9%, gave the reason that the teacher-librarian has experience in information-handling and providing. Another group of 26.3% respondents said that it will be difficult for students to find information on their own. A third group of 15.8% respondents stated that there is very little time for students to use the media centre.

On the other hand 24 respondents stated that it should not be the teacher-

librarian's duty to provide information for the students. In this group, 54.1% stated that students should look up information for themselves. The second largest group of 16.7% stated that students should be encouraged to do independent study. There were also statements that students need to practise the skills of media use and acquaint themselves with the media centre. The last statement, given by 4.2% of the cases, was that knowledge is dynamic. This is an observation by respondents that there is a need for students to have up-to-date information in the face of constant changes in the fields of knowledge.

| Category Label  | Count | % of responses |
|---|-------|----------------|
| He has experience in library use                        | 11    | 57.9           |
| Difficult for students to find information of their own | 5     | 26.3           |
| Very little time for students to use library            | 3     | 15.8           |
| Total   | 19    | 100            |

Table 22 It is the teacher-librarian's duty to provide information for students

| Category Label                                    | Count | % of responses |
|---|-------|----------------|
| Students to look up information for themselves    | 13    | 54.1           |
| Students to be encouraged to do independent study | 4     | 16.7           |
| Students need to practice skills of library use   | 6     | 25             |
| Knowledge is dynamic                              | 1     | 4.2            |
| Total   | 19    | 100            |

Table 23 It is not the teacher-librarian's duty to provide information for students

4.4.17      Respondents' ability to use the media centre's resources  
without the librarian's help

The majority of respondents, 35 out of 44, stated that they were able to use the library's resources without any help from the teacher-librarian.

## PART 5 - CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study is an investigation of how students at Esikhawini College of Education view library orientation. This question is tied largely with media centre use, because library orientation is meant to cultivate in students skills of better media use. Hence, previous experiences in media centres have also been considered in the study.

As a confirmation of an earlier assumption one of the most prominent conclusions drawn from the study is that most respondents' have had a lack of previous contact with media centres. Such lack of acquaintance with books and other media does not cultivate the habit of reading and also makes it difficult for the students to develop skills of self-directed learning and the eagerness to obtain information on their own. In interviews with a number of lecturers who teach library orientation, it was revealed that the methods of teaching used by lecturers could encourage more regular use of the media centre by the students. This the lecturers can do by setting assignments and projects that will show evidence of use of various media. From lecturers' statements there does not seem to be much support for what they teach; more can still be done by the lecturers of other subjects to ensure that skills taught in library orientation are applied more fully in the study of other subjects.

The question of the best person to teach library orientation is an important one for the integration of the course into the college curriculum. The fact is that most respondents feel that it should be the

teacher-librarian who presents the course and not "the other" subject lecturers. One of the reasons given is that the other lecturers are not interested in the course. Stevenson's opinion on who should teach library orientation reveals doubt about the general academic staff's ability to do this proficiently. He states that there are not many academics who have extensive awareness of sources of information and have the practical experience in using these to be good enough to teach others how to locate and use these sources. He adds that problems encountered by users of media centres are not related to any particular subject. They involve a whole array of bibliographical aids and search strategies used, and the librarians are able to see the overall picture of the organisation of knowledge because of their acquaintance with the latest information on librarianship (Stevenson 1976, 6). However, the syllabus of each specialisation subject (school subject) taught at the college has a component that deals with the subject's integration into the media centre. This, the lecturers are able to handle. Therefore, if they have enough interest in making their subject rely on media use, they should be able to inspire their students to see the value of media use. The idea of integration therefore allows each lecturer a chance to place in the teaching of his subject emphasis on media use. If more lecturers took an active interest in the media centre, students would realise that other lecturers beside the teacher-librarian can handle library orientation to some extent.

The time allocated for library orientation in the college curriculum is also worth considering in determining how students view it. Most feel that one period a week is too little. This view is also shared by most lecturers interviewed. Lecturers further wish to have more periods for the course in order to provide more time for practical work by students especially the

use of resources for writing assignments and projects. For lecturers media use skills could be further improved by having this introductory course started at high school or even at primary school in order to expose pupils to media from an early age. This is especially important because most black homes do not have reading materials and children do not develop interest in reading at a time when they are still impressionable. Though library orientation lecturers are aware that this is not the type of course that is meant to train students to be able to run school media centres efficiently, they feel the course should delve deeper and should provide adequate skills for students to offer media user guidance programmes at the schools where they will teach, even if a full-time teacher-librarian is available in the schools.

In terms of who should study library orientation, a number of respondents stated that it should be compulsory for more than STD I students, that is, it should be done for two or even the three years which students spend at the college. This refers to the "good" which they believe the course can do for them regardless of their level of study. However, if the course were to be offered over three years, planning would have to be done to structure it into the college curriculum. On the other hand some respondents referred to the course as being merely an introductory course that should be done only during the first year of study. Those responses do not give library orientation the seriousness associated with other subjects, for example specialisation subjects. Remarks from the lecturers interviewed also express this careless attitude associated with the course and that to some students it is merely an additional course that can be dispensed with. That

is why they would like to see its syllabus revised so that it is given more prominence. However, the manner in which it is presented to the students may account for the way in which it is perceived.

Another issue worth considering is the reference to the benefits students gain from library orientation courses. These range from the ability to perform better in their studies to the ease with which they can locate materials in the media centre. Although most respondents feel that these benefits will be relevant to them even when they have left the college, a small percentage state that they will not use such skills after their college studies. They gave as reasons facts such as that there are no media centres in black schools and that Librarianship is not even offered as a subject at these schools. The attitude of such respondents disregards the use of media as sources of information for all aspects of life including relaxation, leisure activities and coping with life-skills such as careers. However the lack of media centres in black communities could account for such responses which reflect a sense of hopelessness and a feeling of worthlessness of the skills they might be acquiring from library orientation. The introduction in 1992 of media user guidance as a compulsory non-examination subject in Std 6 at all black schools in South Africa is most likely to change the bleak picture painted here. This subject will be gradually extended to all the classes in the secondary school as well as primary school. It is surprising that it was not introduced at primary school in the first place. Massive planning has to be done for the successful implementation of the syllabuses for the subject in terms of providing fully equipped media centres to make teaching as concrete as

possible. This development also makes it necessary for teachers who offer the subject to receive training in the academic content and method of the subject to be able to teach it efficiently.

On the whole the students see library orientation as a valuable course, but they would like to see it presented more often. Most feel confident that they can use the college media centre's resources without any help from the librarian. The extent to which they can do this in other media centres cannot be accurately measured because the media centres they use are not well-equipped.

## **5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

As stated earlier, the link between reading and improvement in learning makes it imperative that media centres should be provided for all education institutions from pre-primary to tertiary level. For black communities this is especially important so that the culture of reading is encouraged from an early age. The government should thus allocate adequate funds to finance the establishment of properly equipped media centres.

The advent of a non-racial South Africa has made it imperative to formulate a national policy on media centres in South Africa. A discussion document issued by READ prior to a workshop on "A suggested national policy for school and community libraries in South Africa" refers to the role and function of media centres in meeting the needs of different communities. The document also indicates the need to examine the relationship of school and community media centres to the

national library structures. It also refers to issues such as legislation, autonomy, maintenance of standards and the role of the state and the private sector (READ 1991, 4-5). The ideas expressed in this document underline the importance of clear guidelines on what form school and community media centres should take, what objectives they should strive to meet and what standards should be set to ensure uniformity in the provision of services to the various communities in South Africa and avoid disparities that exist so far.

The question of media use in schools involves government's willingness to accept innovation and devote some of their resources to financing these expensive communication media. A number of issues have to be decided if the use of media is going to be successfully implemented in the schools. One of these is considering the country's possibility to supply equipment to schools, universities, technikons, technical colleges and other training centres in sufficient numbers for the programme to reach all levels of schooling and benefit all communities. Another consideration is that the government, possibly with the help of industry, should have available finance, production capability and the appropriate educational leadership to provide media such as films, filmstrips, slides, TV programmes, video tapes, computer programmes, etc., necessary for education. However, there also needs to be a national policy concerning the use of media in education. Such a national policy would be the government's statement of intent with regard to media and its commitment to the provision of infrastructure for the application of technology in education. A national policy of this kind would also facilitate the enactment of legislation for pre- and post-service teacher training in the use of media. This also implies that teacher training centres such as universities, colleges of

education and technikons should have fully trained personnel to offer courses in the new technologies of instruction. Finally, there is a need to renovate classrooms, lecture halls and media centres to fit screens, light control facilities, electrical and other devices to make the use of the new technology efficient and effective (Moldstad 1983, 7). However, even if all the above-mentioned steps have been taken and the equipment has been provided, no effective use will be made of the media if it is left to the initiative of the individual school or even the individual teacher to integrate media use in teaching. Media education should form part of the school's curriculum and the integration of the various media in teaching should appear in the syllabi of the subjects or courses taught in the institutions.

With emphasis in education now on media use as a means of opening learners' minds to a wider range of forms in which information is presented, it is necessary that proper planning is made to introduce media education from the primary school level. To ensure that all pupils benefit from the programme, media use should be integrated into the school and college of education curricula. However, any media programme can only be successful if adequate facilities are made available for its implementation. Such facilities should include not only the media such as film strips, audio cassettes and video cassettes but also the equipment to gain access to them such as film projectors, audio cassette recorders, video cassette recorders and the like.

More pressing for colleges of education and their role of preparing future educators is the fact that the quality of teacher education has a bearing on the type of pupils these teachers will turn out. If they themselves have

received intensive training in media use, they will come out of the colleges armed with the relevant skills to implement media education as qualified teachers. Colleges of education curricula should demand more regular use of the media centre as a learning laboratory and thus encourage more independent work from the students. Such constant exposure to the media centre would provide more opportunities for putting into practice what the students learn during library orientation lectures.

In addition, if library orientation is to be more meaningful to students, it should do more than merely introduce them to the basics of media centre use. More elements should be added to the syllabus of the subject to make it as challenging as the other subjects taught. The additional topics could thus justify its being allocated more periods on the time table. As a result it might cease being perceived as an additional subject that students can dispense with. Finally, even school pupils will benefit from the opportunity offered by media to enable them to learn with understanding. With the use of media improving the quality of black education, students at colleges of education will leave these institutions fully equipped to base their teaching on media use.

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## QUESTIONNAIRE

The survey for which this questionnaire was constructed is interested in finding out how students view library orientation. You are requested to answer all questions as honestly as possible. The information will be treated confidentially.

## QUESTIONNAIRE

### INSTRUCTIONS

- A. Please make an X opposite your response.  
B. Answer all the questions as honestly as possible.

1. How old are you?  
17 - 21 years   
22 - 26 years   
27 - 31 years   
32 - 36 years   
Above 36 years
2. Are you male?   
female?
3. What are your specialization subjects? Please fill in.  
.....  
.....
4. Had you ever used a school library before you came to Esikhawini College?  
Yes   
No
5. Do you think the time allocated for library orientation is enough?  
Yes   
No
6. Give a reason for your answer in Question 5.  
.....  
.....  
.....
7. In your opinion, where is the best place where library orientation should be offered?  
In the library   
In the lecture hall/classroom

*Do you have a library in yr school*

8. Give a reason for your answer in Question 7.

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

*Do you think there need a library in your school*

9. Who do you think should teach library orientation?

Teacher-Librarians

Any other lecturers on the staff

*what do you think is the need of a library?*

10. Give a reason for your answer in Question 9.

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

*How who will use the library*

11. How long should library orientation courses be?

1 year

2 years

3 years

No response

*For what are they going to use a library for?*

12. Give a reason for your answer in Question 11.

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

13. Do you think students should be evaluated in library orientation?

Yes

No

No response

14. What skills, if any, did you gain from library orientation lecturers?

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

15. Have the assignments given to you by your lecturers in other courses required you to use skills acquired in library orientation?

Yes

No

Not sure

16. Has library orientation enabled you to perform better in your studies?  
 Yes   
 No   
 Not sure

17. If the answer is Yes, explain how?  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

18. Do you ever apply skills acquired during library orientation Lectures to other parts of your studies?  
 Yes   
 No   
 Don't know

19. If your answer is yes, what parts are those?  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

20. In your opinion, are the skills you acquired from your library orientation lectures useful only when you are still at college?  
 Yes   
 No   
 Don't know

21. Give a reason for your answer in Question 20.  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

22. Should library orientation be compulsory for all STD I students?  
 Yes   
 No   
 Don't know

23. Give a reason for your answer in Question 22.  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

24. Should it be the librarian's duty to provide information to students?  
Yes   
No   
No response

25. Give a reason for your response in Question 24.  
.....  
.....  
.....

26. Are you able to use the library's resources without any help from the librarian?  
Yes   
No