

TRAINING TEACHER-LIBRARIANS TO ESTABLISH AND MANAGE SCHOOL LIBRARIES IN KWAZULU-NATAL: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to assess the establishing, managing and sustaining of public school libraries in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) in order to recommend ways to improve the appropriateness of training and development of teacher-librarians currently offered at the University of Zululand. Both interpretive and critical research paradigms were embraced, while a case study method and inductive reasoning were followed. The findings indicate that most public school libraries surveyed are neither fully functional nor properly resourced. They lack full-time teacher-librarians who are trained to manage and integrate their collections into the curriculum. Furthermore, the quality of library services differs markedly between rural and urban schools. It is recommended that the provincial Department of Education (DoE) school library services selectively award teacher-librarian bursaries to suitable candidates and then combine these awards with the provision of core collections of books and technologies, thereby linking the establishment of their school libraries to the practical outcomes in the two-year university-based training programme.

KEYWORDS

school libraries, school librarian education, information literacies, information and communications technology literacies, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

1 INTRODUCTION

Functional school libraries and trained teacher-librarians are considered essential investments in South African basic education (Equal Education 2010:1; KZNMETA 2013). Well-resourced school libraries provide collections of print, visual, audio-visual and electronic information sources (KZN DoE 2010:1), offering young learners a range

and depth of learning materials appropriate to their social, emotional and intellectual needs (Robertson 1992:5). Good libraries do not occur by chance (Robertson 1992:5), and only when they are managed and staffed by teacher-librarians who are professionally and appropriately trained in providing, organising, managing and using resources and information (Kinnell 1992:7) will teachers recognise their value (Hart 2002:2) and integrate these resources into their work with the national curriculum. Investment in well-resourced and functional school libraries can offer rich dividends, potentially adding 10 to 25 per cent to the average learner's outcomes (Equal Education 2010:1); it can also create a blended (Kerres & De Witt 2010:101) learner-centred environment that nurtures lifelong learners who can effectively join and compete in an increasingly information- and knowledge-based world (Motshekga 2012:1).

Only 7 per cent of South African public schools have access to functional libraries and it is estimated that more than R12 billion is needed to address this backlog (Equal Education 2010:2). A further concern is that teacher-librarians are not trained to integrate existing library collections into the curriculum (Dubazana & Karlsson 2006:10) if a learner-centred, resource-based methodology is to be implemented in the country's public schools to replace traditional teacher-centred approaches characterised by memory work and repetitive learning from textbooks (Hart & Zinn 2007:91). Improving school libraries can play an important part in addressing South Africa's education crisis where basic reading scores and maths and science literacy are among the continent's and the world's worst (De Jager, Nassimbeni & Underwood 2007:137). Annual national assessment results on early literacy (Grades 1–6) show improvements in literacy and numeracy, but also highlight a disturbing downward trend in performance in both languages and mathematics as children (Grade 9) progress in their studies (Seale 2012). The Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga, viewed the drop in performance as a reason why many children drop out of school or fail to attain university entrance results when she said, 'You have to get the fundamentals right and use that as the building blocks,' and identified teacher training as a key area of focus for her department to improve learner performance (Seale 2012).

Much has been written on the importance of school libraries in South Africa (Equal Education 2010; Hart 2002; Hart & Zinn 2007), and related guidelines, policies and strategies have been designed at national levels and provincial ones (Du Toit & Stilwell 2013; Equal Education 2010; KZNMETA 2013). Researchers have conducted case studies of school libraries both outside KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) (Paton-Ash 2012) and within the province (Dubazana & Karlsson 2006), while others (eg, Radebe 1997) have surveyed teacher-librarians to try to understand the factors affecting the development of school libraries in the country. However, few studies have scrutinised the establishment and management of school libraries as a way to analyse and improve the training and development of teacher-librarians.

To investigate the appropriateness of the existing training curriculum at the University of Zululand, and to understand better the conditions that schools and teacher-librarians

face within the basic education environment, the present study critically analysed three datasets of school libraries against provincial norms and standards and focus areas of excellence. Recommendations are proposed for changes in the training programme, to address as effectively as possible the range of conditions that teacher-librarians face in practice.

2 SCHOOL LIBRARIES IN THE KZN CONTEXT

Establishing and managing school libraries in KZN is a daunting task: although the province has the largest proportion (23%) of total schools in South Africa (DoBE 2011), only 6 per cent of its public schools have stocked libraries (Equal Education 2010:22). The number and records of public schools constantly fluctuate, with 5 646 schools reported in 2003 (KZN DoE 2003), 5 877 in 2007 (NEIMS 2007 in Equal Education 2010:21) and 5 845 in 2010 (South Africa 2011). Another considerable challenge is that some 22 per cent (1 331) of KZN schools have multi-grade classes – mainly in rural and farm schools (KZN DoE 2010:7) – either because there are insufficient learners to justify separate classrooms or because there are insufficient classrooms.

The province's Education Library Information and Technology Services (ELITS) falls within the KZN Department of Education (DoE) and is mandated to be involved in all curricular and co-curricular activities within schools, provide them with quality library, information and technology resources, and ensure that these resources are effectively managed and utilised (KZN DoE 2010:1). The ELITS directorate has personnel both at its head office and within the individual districts. While staffing at head office appears sufficient to create good policy and strategies for the province, severe understaffing at district level results in poor implementation. For example, a ratio of one adviser per 235 schools (KZN DoE 2010:7) can never generate effective permeation of curricular activities nor can it ensure that the KZN DoE meet the provincial policy requirements and strategic goals.

Equal Education (2010:1) points out that, since 1997, six consecutive drafts for a national policy on school libraries have been proposed, yet to date none has been adopted or implemented. Currently the South African National Guidelines for School Library and Information Services are intended to offer 'useful guidance' to all role-players (Motshekga 2012:1). The legislative environment in KZN is progressive in that the DoE was the first in the country to develop a provincial policy – the School Library Policy of 2003 – which propagates three library models that a school can adopt, namely, centralised, that is, collections in a central stand-alone venue; classroom, that is, collections in individual classrooms; or cluster, that is, collections found in key locations; the KZN Reading Policy Guidelines of 2005, which expect each school to develop a Reading Programme to promote reading for information and pleasure (KZN

DoE 2010:6); and the KZN School Library Strategy 2009–2012, which is informed by the two above policies and linked to the KZN Departmental Master Strategic Plan (KZN DoE 2010:1). The KZN School Library Strategy 2009–2012 addresses three main programmes of the ELITS directorate, namely: the School Library Development Programme (SLDP); the Information Skills and ICT Programme; and the Reading Programme.

The aim of the KZN School Library Policy (KZN DoE 2003:8) is primarily to ensure the development and evaluation of reading and information literacy skills across the whole school, using an appropriate or contextualised learning approach. The policy further recommends that the teacher-librarian, or a trained manager of the school library collection, should work with all teachers to ensure the creation of a comprehensive and holistic information literacy policy for the school.

The KZN DoE (2010:4) considers an acceptable school library to be one that meets established norms and standards, but it is unrealistic to expect this to be achieved without proper funding. In 2003, ELITS proposed a budget based on learner enrolment for the purpose of providing schools with a starter collection. It then recommended that schools budget 10 per cent of their learning, teaching support material (LTSM) allocation for sustained funding and library development, or that they conduct fundraising activities.

Hart and Zinn (2007:93) quote a 2004 ELITS survey, which reported that 19 per cent of the responding 5 156 schools had a central library; 31 per cent had a storeroom or box library; 20 per cent had no library at all; and 7 per cent did not reply to the question. Half of the schools in the survey without any kind of library also reported that they had no spare room that might be converted into a library. In 2007, the National Education Infrastructure Management System (NEIMS) reported that 94 per cent of the 5 877 public schools in KZN had no stock or teacher librarian and only 359 (7%) had functional school libraries (Equal Education, 2010:32). The ELITS directorate anticipated in 2003 that all of the then 5 646 public schools in KZN would have received a core collection of library resource materials by 2010 (KZN DoE 2003:8), but only 2 794 (48%) schools with learner enrolments in the range 1–500 were provided a core collection by that date (KZN DoE 2010:7). Moreover, as Dubazana and Karlsson (2006:10) and Hart and Zinn (2007:94) point out, the mere purchase and delivery of resources to schools is not enough to ensure their effective management and use.

2.1 TRAINING OF TEACHER-LIBRARIANS IN KZN

South Africa has a rich tradition of Library and Information Science (LIS) education and training programmes, which date back to the late 1930s at institutions such as the universities of Pretoria and Cape Town, and later, in 1950s, at the University of South

Africa (Ocholla & Bothma 2007:150). Rapid growth followed with 15 LIS departments at universities and five more at technikons (now universities of technology) (Ocholla & Bothma 2007:150). During the 1990s, librarianship was a popular choice of profession in the more privileged public schools where dedicated teacher-librarian posts were available; but when the new education dispensation removed specialist posts, enrolments for training dropped (Hart & Zinn 2007:95). In KZN, there are LIS departments at the universities of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) and Zululand, and at the Durban University of Technology. Currently, UKZN offers the Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE): School Library Development and Management, but in terms of the Higher Education Qualifications Framework (HEQF), the qualification cannot be offered beyond 2014, so the institution took in its last enrolments in 2012 (Hoskins 2013). The University of Zululand offers a Diploma in Specialised Education: School Librarianship (AIDIP2), which is open to candidates with at least a three-year Teacher's Diploma or BEd degree who want to pursue librarianship careers in school libraries, media or resource centres. It consists of eight modules or 128 credits and is run part-time over two years (see Table 1). Contributions by non-governmental organisations, such as READ Education Trust and Booksmart, also provide resources and teacher training in disadvantaged and rural communities (Hart & Zinn 2007:96–97).

The sponsored training and professional development for school library staff in KZN by the ELITS directorate was initiated in 2003. After successfully hosting the International Association of School Librarianship (IASL) conference, ELITS secured funding for the first 120 school teachers to receive training in the ACE: School Library Development and Management at UKZN (Hart & Zinn 2007:94–95). The KZN DoE ELITS established a memorandum of understanding with the University of Zululand in 2010, this time for its bursary holders to enrol for the AIDIP2 programme. Enrolments numbered 117 in 2010, with 81 graduating in 2012. The 126 teachers who enrolled in 2011 formed the primary population of the present study, and 88 of these graduated in 2013. (Enrolments numbered 134 in 2012 and 117 in 2013.)

Ocholla and Bothma (2007:153) note that university-based LIS schools in South Africa typically offer general or theoretical education programmes. Training teacher-librarians, however, often requires a more practical approach to prepare students for the work of establishing and managing their own libraries. Although the AIDIP2 programme acknowledges this requirement by including relevant practical outcomes in Computer Literacy, Cataloguing and Classification and Setting up a School Library, there is a need to identify new practical outcomes for modules, such as Development and Management of School Libraries, Information Literacy, Collection Development and Media and User Studies (see Table 1), which are presently still theoretically orientated.

Table 1: Diploma in Specialised Education: School Librarianship (AIDIP2)

YEAR 1	
SEMESTER 1	SEMESTER 2
<p>AISD111 Computer Literacy for Information Studies I Introduction to Operating systems and Internet/e-mailing. Offered through a Learning Management System (LMS) and requires the learner to navigate all the e-resources provided.</p>	<p>AISD112 Computer Literacy for Information Studies II Introduction to Microsoft Word and Excel. Offered through a LMS; requires the learner to navigate all the e-resources provided.</p>
<p>AISD121 Development and Management of School Libraries The historical development of school libraries. The management of school libraries.</p>	<p>AISD122 Cataloguing and Classification Theory of cataloguing and classification and brief introduction to the practice of cataloguing and classification.</p>
YEAR 2	
<p>AISD211 Information literacy Aim: to equip students with a comprehensive understanding of Information Science and Information Literacy in an Information society. Students are introduced to manual and computerised skills in locating, accessing and processing information according to the information need.</p>	<p>AISD212 Media & User studies The course focuses on school library media resources, readership and children’s literature and school library user studies.</p>
<p>AISD221 Collection Development This module aims at teaching teachers the ability to build and maintain relevant collections for their libraries/media centres</p>	<p>AISD222 Setting up a school library This is a practical course that requires students to set up and develop a school library in their respective schools.</p>

3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Most of KZN’s public schools do not have functional school libraries that meet the provincial ELITS norms and standards. There are few designated posts for teacher-librarians and many studying at postgraduate level still have learning gaps in basic literacy, which need to be addressed in the University of Zululand’s practical training and development programme. The present study aimed to assess the establishing, managing and sustaining of public school libraries in KZN in order to recommend ways to improve the appropriateness of the university’s AIDIP2 programme.

The research questions originating from this problem statement included:

1. Assess the compliance of KZN public schools with the KZN DoE school library policy and its norms and standards, including:
 - adequacy and relevance of the collections;
 - organisation, management and accessibility of collections;
 - physical facilities and use of the collections.

2. Use the findings to make recommendations and identify changes in approaches within the AIDIP2 programme at the University of Zululand that might fill gaps between the training of teachers for their library work and the realities on the ground.

4 METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

The methodology for the study embraced both the interpretive and critical research paradigms, while a case study method and inductive reasoning were followed. Orlikowski and Baroudi (1991:5) explain that interpretive studies (constructivism) attempt to understand occurrences through accessing the meanings that participants assign to them, thus constructive (interpretive) studies reject the possibility of an ‘objective’ or ‘factual’ account of events and situations, seeking instead a relativistic, although shared, understanding of occurrences. Orlikowski and Baroudi (1991:5) note that generalisation from the setting or sample to a population is not pursued, rather, the aim is to understand the deeper structure of a phenomenon or manifestation, which it is believed can then be used to inform other situations. According to Orlikowski and Baroudi (1991:5–6), critical studies aim to critique the existing state of affairs, through the exposure of what are believed to be deep-seated, structural contradictions within social environments, and thereby alter these estranging and limiting social environments.

The data was gathered from three different sources and triangulated across the three sets. Both qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods were used. The qualitative data was subjected to content analysis while descriptive statistics were used to represent the quantitative data.

The first set of data consisted of assignments that were submitted in the module AISD222 (Setting up a School Library) by second-year students in 2012, detailing their personal accounts of setting up and running a school library. The second set of data was obtained from fieldwork conducted at a specific school with a teacher-librarian who graduated from the AIDIP2 programme in 2012. The third set of data was gathered from the 2012 ELITS publication, *Towards Academic Excellence: Case Study of School Libraries*.

The sample frame of the first set of data comprised 87 out of 102 teacher-librarian students registered for the module AISD222 in 2012 who submitted their assignments and reported on their school libraries. The study was explained to them, to ensure that all were fully aware of the intended use of the submitted assignments. Random sampling extracted 22 assignments (25% of the sample frame) for analysis. Purposive sampling was used to choose the school where fieldwork was conducted to obtain the second set of data. The ELITS publication used to obtain the third dataset showcased 23 schools that made use of various models of school library services, ranging from classroom or corner libraries to fully-fledged standalone libraries (ELITS 2012). Of the

23 case studies, a non-probability sample, according to the different school types (rural, township, peri-urban and urban), purposefully extracted 11 (48% of the sample frame) for analysis (see Table 3).

The critical analysis and review of the data provided information about the condition of school libraries and the application of the ELITS norms and standards, thereby enabling assessment of the appropriateness of training and development of teacher-librarians currently offered at the University of Zululand, and recommendations for adjustment in the future.

5 DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

All three sets of data were analysed according to the ELITS standards and the norms associated with them. The minimum standards are (KZN DoEC 2003:10):

1. adequate and relevant collection for all users, which is properly arranged, managed and made accessible to all;
2. adequate space for housing the collection;
3. an effective school library programme to ensure effective utilisation of library material.

The three research questions emerging from these standards were: what are the adequacy and relevance of collections; the organisation, management and access to collections; and the physical facilities and utilisation of collections.

Since 2002, ELITS has also given library excellence awards, with five focus areas for identifying school libraries worthy of recognition (ELITS 2012:i). These include the standards as well as the development of the teacher-librarian and envisioned library service for the future:

1. relevance of the school library collection;
2. organisation and management of the collection;
3. utilisation of the library resources;
4. development of the teacher-librarian;
5. future development plans for the library service.

The findings are reported below followed by a discussion on these, while the conclusions and recommendations focus on the development needs of the teacher-librarian and how best to adapt the AIDIP2 programme to the challenges identified in the study.

5.1 ADEQUACY AND RELEVANCE OF COLLECTIONS

Collections have a greater chance of contributing to the learning process (Kinnel 1992:37) if they are relevant. The adequacy and relevance of the sampled schools' collections was analysed through the examination of quantitative data, such as the size of the collection and learner enrolment, and qualitative data including the variety of learning resources. ELITS distinguishes between fairly-resourced collections having mainly print and few electronic resources, and well-resourced collections covering a wide range of resources including print, visual, audio-visual, electronic and connection to the internet (Dubazana 2012:ii). The norm of three resources per learner is recommended within the ELITS library policy (KZN DoEC 2003:10) although ten resources per learner have been proposed as more conducive to supporting a resource-based curriculum (Dubazana 2013a).

Most (92%) teacher-librarians in the first source of data (the student assignments) did not report collection sizes; those who did, reported inadequate collections for the number of learners enrolled at the schools. Only three out of 22 schools (14%) reported fairly- to well-resourced collections including print materials, DVDs, CDs, cassettes and access to computers. The large majority of the sample (86%) reported only print resources in their collections. Evidence of inadequate collections of low relevance emerged in 27 per cent of the sample, from reports of limited collections and pictures of sparsely populated book shelves; of collections comprising only textbooks and subject books; and in one case no weeding of the collection. All reported the presence of an accession register; and 23 per cent stated that ELITS had provided their school with a core collection. Library funding was mentioned as a challenge in schools in the primary dataset, with almost one-third (27%) reporting limited stock. In terms of ongoing funding, only one-fifth (21%) reported that the recommended 10 per cent of the LTSM budget allocation was being given to the library and that principals and School Governing Bodies (SGBs) needed to be reminded to budget and allocate these funds to sustain and grow their library collection.

The second source of data held further information regarding the core collections provided by ELITS. Mandeni Primary School has a learner enrolment of 290 pupils, which according to the proposed ELITS budget entitles them to R70 000 worth of materials. ELITS provided a collection of 490 books worth R50 027, costing an average of R102 each. The school therefore needed to acquire another 380 books at an estimated cost of R39 000 for its collection to be considered adequate according to the ELITS norm. A book on the Royal Society's Ambulance Services in the United Kingdom stood out as a book out of context in terms of relevance, bought at a cost of R186. The teacher-librarian reported similar challenges, including: the failure of the principal and SGB to allocate 10 per cent of the LTSM allocation to fund the library; lack of involvement or support from parents for the development of their children's literacy needs; and the lack

of a full-time teacher librarian. The LTSM allocation for Mandeni Primary’s annual budget provides information on how much money is allocated to its various line items (see Table 2).

Table 2: Total and LTSM budget allocation of Mandeni Primary for the year 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014

Total allocation		R411 944.00
LTSM (a)	60% of total allocation	R247 166.40
Textbooks	40% of (a)	R98 866.56
Other LTSM	30% of (a)	R74 149.92
Learner stationery	30% of (a)	R71 801.28
Fee status: No Fee Section 21 status: Sec 21 Functions allocated: a, b & d		

Although the LTSM allocation includes a variety of learning resources, such as textbooks, library books, charts, models, computer hardware and software, televisions, video recorders and tapes, home economics equipment, science laboratory equipment, musical instruments, learner desks and chairs (KZN DoE 2013), their procurement required the school to select resources out of a general catalogue and then process the order through the district’s central requisition system. This process caused delays, and meant that the teachers did not always get the resources they wanted in time to use them productively. The school also encountered problems accessing the full budget allocation for other LTSMs, which include specific classroom equipment to promote effective and quality education in public ordinary schools (KZN DoE 2013), and the school received only one laptop and projector from a total of R74 149.92.

Within the third set of data (case studies derived from the ELITS publication), the first quantifiable theme analysed was the reported size of each library’s book collection. Table 3 shows the huge discrepancy in book collection and book stock totals of the schools considered fair to well-resourced by ELITS, as well as inequality in the adequacy of collections and physical facilities among urban and rural areas. One-fifth (18%) of the schools did not meet the minimum norms of three learning resources per learner, and all these were in rural areas. One-third (36%) met the minimum norm, whereas almost half (46%) of the sample had more than adequate-sized collections, mostly in urban (40%) and township (40%) schools.

Table 3: Adequacy of collections and facilities in third set of data

Primary school	Category	Library space	User totals	Collection size	No. of materials per user
Bhekindlela High	Rural	Classroom	304	850	3
Calendon Primary	Urban	100 m ²	510	13 000	26

Primary school	Category	Library space	User totals	Collection size	No. of materials per user
Ekuseni Primary	Rural	63 m2	825	2 500	3
Empathe Primary	Township	42 m2	1 018	2 500	3
Hillcrest Primary	Urban	520 m2	1 181	13 195	11
Hlabana Primary	Township	74 m2	741	16 448	22
Ndabonuhle Primary	Rural	3 rooms	1 181	7 700	7
Sgodiphola Primary	Rural	40 m2	1 035	1 800	2
Thobigunya High	Rural	Two rooms	743	1 000	1
Ubuhlebesundumbili Primary	Township	60 m2	1 300	5 848	5
Waterloo Primary	Peri-urban	not stated	1 400	3 743	3
TOTAL			10 238	44 436	4

5.2 ORGANISATION, MANAGEMENT AND ACCESS TO COLLECTIONS

About half (55%) of the school libraries in the first set of data (the student assignments) were described as using the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) system. Other classification schemes quoted were the junior colour code, which is an adaptation of the DDC, and a timetable classification according to subjects taught. Title, author and subject catalogues were mentioned for most schools but little evidence of user education was reported. One school library was noted as using the software LIBWIN, but the rest used manual card or shelf catalogues. The stated norm in the ELITS policy is for centralised libraries to have a dedicated fulltime teacher-librarian, but most schools lack such staff, and library monitors generally assisted in the day-to-day running of the libraries, such as cleaning, issuing and retrieving books. Poor English language levels emerged as a serious challenge in most (91%) of the content analysed in this sample. A list of instructions to lenders, for instance, included sentences, such as: ‘Do not write the book’ and ‘Do not lost the book’. The security of collections was an ongoing concern: most schools protected their collections with security doors and burglar guards, and some employed security guards and had burglar alarms installed.

Mandeni Primary School (second dataset) had received a core collection from ELITS during the study. The part-time teacher-librarian was expected to catalogue the collection manually from an inventory list that included the book’s title, ISBN number and a bar code.

All schools in the third dataset provided by the ELITS case studies used the DDC system. Two schools (18%) did not report a catalogue at all, while others did not specify the type of classification system used other than indicating box or card. Nearly two-thirds (64%) had digital catalogues including LIBWIN (71%), Papyrus Library Administrator System

(14%) and Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) (14%). Only two schools reported training pupils and teachers on using the DCC and catalogues to facilitate access to their collections. Apart from two former Model C school libraries, which had allocated SGB funds to pay their librarians, most (82%) lacked dedicated full-time teacher-librarians.

5.3 PHYSICAL FACILITIES AND UTILISATION OF COLLECTIONS

Centralised libraries were mostly reported within the assignments that constituted the first dataset, and their physical facilities varied from new standalone brick buildings to mobile homes, storerooms, converted classrooms and staffrooms. One teacher-librarian reported that corner libraries within classrooms did not work because of lack of support from other teachers. Some library facilities were in dual-purpose venues, for example a staff room, therefore not always available during staff meetings, while others were not large enough to accommodate a whole class at once; both of these obstacles were mentioned as impediments to library use. Most (77%) of the schools lent resources to learners and teachers while one also included administrative staff. The number of resources that learners and teachers could borrow varied between one and five items (average two items) for a period of two to seven days (average five days). One school reported lending resources only during breaks, while another reported that the inability of learners to replace damaged or lost materials had led their library to stop lending materials altogether. The lack of full-time teacher-librarians within the sample libraries was reflected in widely differing opening times and therefore utilisation, ranging from four to 40 hours a week, with an average opening time of 21 hours per week. Library timetables reported within this dataset also indicated limited library access, one showing just 30 minutes of weekly access per class. One school reported as a challenge the lack of co-operation between the teacher-librarian and other teachers. Illiteracy and inadequate support among learners' parents were also seen as impeding their children's literacy development.

The school in the second dataset (Mandeni Primary) had a centralised library situated in a converted Grade R classroom. The utilisation of the minimal resources was limited prior to receiving its core collection. Each of the school's classes had 30 minutes a week dedicated to visiting the library, however, lending of the resources was not allowed because of the initial size of the collection. It was agreed by the teacher-librarian that new rules for the utilisation of the core collection needed to be implemented.

The centralised library model was also found in all the schools of the third dataset in the ELITS publication; classroom libraries were also reported but all were stocked from the central library. The facilities of rural and urban school libraries differed markedly, the latter having far larger library areas (see Table 3). Only 36 per cent of the sample mentioned their criteria for lending resources to learners: the number of resources that

learners and teachers could borrow varied from one to four items (average two items) and the loan period ranged from four to 14 days (average 10 days).

6 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The key to developing a relevant collection is to understand learners' social, emotional and intellectual needs (Robertson 1992:5). Procuring a relevant school library collection requires well thought out purchases from ELITS. The current involvement of teacher-librarians and teachers in choosing collections (Dubazana 2013) should be extended to learners and their parents so that the whole school community takes ownership and pride in the collection.

The size of the core collections provided by ELITS needs to grow beyond the minimum norm prescribed in their policy, and access to online collections needs to be explored for relevant 'just in time' information. Twenty-first century users essentially want to access information by technology, by suitable transport or in suitable places, in this case classrooms (Sturges 2006). Providing internet access to a cloud-based national LMS that allows teachers and learners to access electronic library resources in each class through appropriate technologies such as i-boxes (a computer combined with a projector) would allow an improved blended learning approach that combines traditional face-to-face facilitation with a well-structured curriculum of visual-verbal multi-media resources, all of which are needed to fill some of the literacy learning gaps in both learners and teachers. Technology and media have the ability to act as conduits of information (Siemens 2004), especially when literacy (language) barriers exist, while the utilisation of free open access materials could assist resource-based education. The training modules Collection Development, Media and User Studies, and Computer Literacy should include practical components to address these concepts for trainee teacher-librarians (see Table 1).

The three sources of data in the study indicate the existence of title, author and subject catalogues in most libraries; little evidence was reported of their use for accessing information and developing information-seeking behaviour among learners. Libraries using automated software, for example LIBWIN, could use it not as an asset list but as an information retrieval tool, through which learners search and develop information literacy skills. ELITS recommends LIBWIN over an online system because it is more affordable (Dubazana 2013). The study recommends that ELITS processing centres, where books and other media are catalogued and processed (Hart & Zinn 2007:94), provide schools with 'ready for shelf' core collections with manual card catalogues (author, title and subject) together with e-bibliographic records for electronic catalogue users (Ocholla 2013). Bar codes together with the correct software application and bar code scanners, can be used for easier issues and returns, as well as provide valuable circulation data to analyse the utilisation of collections. The training in automated

systems and tools should be included within the modules Collection Development, Cataloguing and Classification, and Computer Literacy.

The school libraries analysed in the present study varied greatly in terms of size, services and resources, indicating serious disparities between rural and urban school library services in KZN. Urban libraries have larger space, professional staff and ICTs with internet access. Provision of electricity, telecommunication, ICTs and facility infrastructure are possible only when security of schools is addressed. The correlation between rural areas, poverty and crime and other ethical issues together with practical ways to secure libraries and their resources need to be explored within the modules Development and Management of School Libraries, and Setting up a School Library.

The under-staffing at school and district levels is a severe impediment for ELITS attempts to fulfil its mandate. The fact that most public schools have no designated teacher-librarian posts is a serious challenge that needs urgent attention (KZN DoE 2010:7), as in practice the teacher-librarian normally performs library duties in addition and secondary to other teaching duties. This understaffing, together with insufficient library space, impedes the library's utilisation and does not allow learners and teachers to access information on demand. Only a small number of libraries reported rendering additional reading programmes or activities to encourage learners to use the library services; my study strongly recommends the use of media and technologies to achieve this end. Teacher-librarians need to improve their literacy skills to offer a relevant information service.

7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

KZN is the province in South Africa facing the greatest challenges to deliver school libraries to its large number of schools, especially those that are predominantly rural. The combined effort of all stakeholders will be needed for a turnaround strategy to be implemented, so that school libraries can fulfil their role in the basic education environment. Only the adequate training and appointment of dedicated teacher-librarians will allow such resources to be properly managed and used in a way that promotes curriculum development, information and communication literacy, the love of reading and a richer education in South African schools.

Training and development of teacher-librarians through the part-time AIDIP2 programme requires as practical an approach as possible to address the challenges of teacher-librarians in establishing and managing functional libraries. At present this could be achieved in the AIDIP2 programme by re-sequencing some modules and linking some first and second semester modules, allowing both the theoretical and practical outcomes of linked modules to be expanded and covered in more detail. Here are three examples of what is possible:

1. Linking the practical outcomes of the module AISD222 (Setting up a School Library) to AISD121 (Development and Management of School Libraries) would encourage teacher-librarians to start establishing their library, if one does not already exist, in the first semester of their first year of enrolment rather than in the second semester of their final year of enrolment (see Table 1).
2. Re-sequencing or switching the positions of modules within the AIDIP2 programme, for example switching the second year (1st semester) module AISD211 (Information Literacy) with the first year (2nd semester) module AISD122 (Cataloguing and Classification) and the second year (2nd semester) module AISD212 (Media and User Studies) with the second year (1st semester) AISD221 (Collection Development) and then linking the practical outcomes of Cataloguing and Classification with Collection Development so that cataloguing and classification training could be offered over a year instead of the current inadequate period of just six months (Ocholla 2013) (see Table 1).
3. Improving the practical outcomes of modules AISD111 (Computer Literacy for Information Studies I), AISD112 (Computer Literacy for Information Studies II), AISD121 (Development and Management of School Libraries), AISD122 (Cataloguing and Classification), AISD211 (Information Literacy), AISD212 (Media and User Studies), AISD221 (Collection Development) and AISD222 (Setting up a School Library) would help teacher-librarians more effectively to acquire the necessary practical skills to establish and manage a school library. These modules could include how to market their libraries, how to lobby for funds and donations and how to involve the community (Ocholla 2013).

Additional resources and support programmes are needed to address the lack of language literacy and numeracy of many teacher-librarians and increased visual verbal learning resources should be offered if a purely text-based curriculum does not suit individuals' learning styles. A practical intervention implemented within the AIDIP2 programme was the laptop initiative, through which R1 500 of each student's book-shop account could be used to subsidise the purchase of an entry-level laptop costing R3 716. If this initiative were fully subsidised to give teacher-librarians a laptop within their first year of study, they could practise and improve their computer literacy and other automated library services, such as cataloguing, while registered within the programme.

The large number of bursary holders enrolled within the AIDIP2 programme negatively affects its ability to effectively transfer all practical skills to the teacher-librarians, mainly due to the lack of time and resources needed to provide individual attention to each of the candidates. It is recommended that ELITS selectively award teacher-librarian bursaries to suitable candidates – who together with their school stakeholders and SGBs are dedicated to establish and manage their school libraries – and then combine these bursaries with the provision of core collections of books and technologies, thereby linking the establishment of their school libraries to the practical outcomes in the two-year university-based training programme.

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