

**Readiness of public libraries to deliver information literacy instruction to school children: a case study of a City of Cape Town public library**



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**Declaration**

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature: C. Notshokovu

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## **Abstract**

Information literacy (IL) is an integral part of lifelong learning. IL instruction is accepted internationally as the specific mission of school libraries. However, in South Africa, there are few schools that have functional school libraries, and so it is unrealistic to put the IL instruction responsibility on school libraries. Therefore, public libraries need to step in and close the IL gap. However, it is not clear how well equipped public libraries are for this role. To examine the problem above, the main objective of this study was to investigate the readiness of public libraries to offer IL support to school learners. The Big6 model guided data collection in this study in terms of the formulation of the interview questions for librarians, and the observations guide. Under the interpretive paradigm, this study employed a qualitative research approach with a case study design. The case is that of a public library referred to as the Library in this study. The Library is an example of one library in the City of Cape Town and the researcher was interested in providing an in-depth study of this library with regards to IL instruction support for school learners. One of the reasons it was chosen is because there are a number of schools in the area in which it is situated. The populations for the study were the public librarians working at the Library and schoolteachers from the surrounding primary and high schools. There was no sampling required for public librarians because their population was manageable. However, non-probability sampling was employed for schoolteachers, coupled with purposive sampling. The data from the public librarians were collected through semi-structured interviews and observations, while the data from the schoolteachers were collected through semi-structured interviews only. Data were analysed manually. Findings indicated that the majority of the librarians in the study have a combination of work experience and LIS qualifications (though some were obtained a long time ago), which contributes positively to their readiness to teach IL.

The findings of the study revealed that there is no sustained programme that is explicitly referred to as IL at the Library. However, librarians at the Library offer IL support to school learners and IL support for school learners is embedded in various library programmes, such as library orientation, digital literacy, storytelling, and the homework assistance, reading and holiday programmes. The findings also showed that the librarians in the study generally have a positive attitude towards teaching IL to school learners, although they acknowledged that they are not teachers by profession. Furthermore, it was revealed that while there was no collaboration between the Library and one of the primary schools in the study, the Library does collaborate with some of the teachers from the other schools. It is hoped that this study will

contribute to the body of literature, particularly that of information literacy education for school children in public libraries.

**Keywords:** Information literacy skills, information literacy education, lifelong learning, public libraries, public librarians, schoolteachers, school learners, South Africa, public library programmes, collaboration, Big6 model

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## **List of acronyms and abbreviations**

ACRL – Association of College and Research Libraries

ALA – American Library Association

CILIP – Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals

ICT – Information Communication Technology

IL – Information literacy

ILE – Information literacy education

LIS – Library and Information Studies

MLIS – Master of Library and Information Studies

WCED – Western Cape Education Department

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1. Introduction and background to the study**

Information literacy (IL) is an integral part of lifelong learning. Lifelong learning refers to:

learning that takes place in all contexts in life from a life-wide, life-deep and lifelong perspective. It includes learning behaviours and obtaining knowledge, understanding, attitudes, values and competences for personal growth, social and economic well-being, democratic citizenship, cultural identity and employability (South African Qualifications Authority, 2013:5).

Lifelong learning happens throughout life and does not come to an end with the completion of formal education (Gill, 2001). In this study, the readiness of public libraries to offer IL instruction support to school learners will be explored. It is essential to equip school learners with IL skills for them to be able to navigate school, tertiary education and beyond.

The American Library Association (ALA) (1989) defines IL as the ability to “recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information”. Therefore, an information-literate individual can:

determine the extent of information needed; access the needed information effectively and efficiently; evaluate information and its sources critically; incorporate selected information into one’s knowledge base; use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose; understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information, and access and use information ethically and legally (Association of College and Research Libraries [ACRL], 2000:2).

The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) (2018:3) links the concept of IL to the set of skills and abilities needed by someone to take on information-related tasks, such as, “how to discover, access, interpret, analyse, manage, create, communicate, store and share information”. In a democratic society, people should participate in their democracy, however “a participatory democracy depends on an ‘informed public’” (Nkondo, Hart & Nassimbeni, 2018:33). For the public to be informed, it must be able to accomplish the information-related tasks described in the IL definitions; it must be information literate. Thus,

IL is crucial for participating in a democracy (Nkondo, Hart & Nassimbeni, 2018) and for empowering democracy in countries (Yilmaz & Cevher, 2015:337).

As stated in the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (2003:s.3), having access to information is a human right. However, the provision of and access to information is not synonymous with being an informed and knowledgeable society (Nkondo, Hart & Nassimbeni, 2018:33), therefore, the ability to use information is crucial (Garrido & Wyber, 2017:78 in Nkondo, Hart & Nassimbeni, 2018:33). Hence, “information literacy skills are a precondition for the implementation and successful exercise of the right to information” (Britz & Lor, 2010:18).

IL can also help citizens participate in economic activities (Buschman, 2019 and Huysmans, 2016 in Matteson & Gersch, 2020:74) and enable them to make informed decisions for their businesses. For example, being able to find and compare prices for products to be purchased for a business and select the best-priced products, then determine the selling price, are good business practices that require IL skills. Hence, IL is also necessary to compete in the local or global economy (Doyle, 1994).

Having both access to information and the ability to assess, understand and use it to make decisions also benefits school learners not only by empowering them to be participatory citizens but also with the ability to do well at school (Nkondo, Hart & Nassimbeni, 2018). Sadly, in South Africa, the “information literacy levels of most teachers and learners are low” (Durodolu & Mojapelo, 2020:57), with the result that not all school leavers are equipped with the skills for academic achievement, for economic and political participation in our democracy, and for lifelong learning.

### **1.1.1. School libraries and information literacy education in South Africa**

IL is, on paper, at the core of school education in South Africa, as evidenced in the ‘National Curriculum Statement (NCS) Grades R-12’, which states that the curriculum for Grades R to 12 aims to produce learners that can “identify and solve problems and make decisions using critical and creative thinking ... collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information” (Department of Basic Education, 2021). This statement infers that the national curriculum aims to produce information-literate learners.

While information literacy education (ILE) has been widely recognised as the responsibility of school libraries (Zinn, Stilwell & Hoskins, 2016; Nkondo et al., 2014), it is not realistic to put the ILE responsibility entirely onto school libraries (Nkondo et al., 2014:4). This is so because the reality is that South Africa is faced with the problem of non-functional school libraries, as evident in Hart (2013:49):

Few [school libraries] exist: fewer than ten per cent of schools have functioning libraries with an annual budget and a staff member. The few comprise the historically advantaged, so-called ex-Model C suburban schools, which are able to supplement their government budgets by levying fees from their largely middle-class parent bodies.

In disadvantaged black communities, school libraries are scarce (Mojapelo & Fourie, 2014:125), “with so few school libraries and no official position in schools for a qualified school librarian...” (Hart & Zinn, 2015:31). In addition, people in positions of authority in schools are reluctant to see the necessity for school libraries (Durodolu & Mojapelo, 2020). However, it is not viable to expect all the schools in South Africa to be provided with their own library facilities immediately (Nkondo et al., 2014:47). Therefore, while there is a great need for ILE, in general, most schools in South Africa are simply not in the right position to offer enough IL support to their learners (Raju & Raju, 2010).

### **1.1.2. Public libraries and information literacy education**

The *IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto 2022* (Krass et al., 2022:1) states that:

[t]he public library, the local gateway to knowledge, provides a basic condition for lifelong learning, independent decision-making and cultural development of the individual and social groups. It underpins healthy knowledge societies through providing access to and enabling the creation and sharing of knowledge of all sorts, including scientific and local knowledge without commercial, technological or legal barriers.

The library is therefore a foundation for IL and lifelong learning. Lai (2011:81) states that the public library is tasked with a duty to support – “adult education and lifelong learning has the capability of narrowing the digital divide” through the provision of free access to computers

and the internet, and training to enhance the IL skills of users. The notion of free access to information is included in Gorman's (1995) 'Five new laws of librarianship'. In the same vein, *The Library and Information Services (LIS) Transformation Charter* (Nkondo et al., 2014:53) refers to the public library as a place that provides "...opportunities for education, culture, literacy and information provision to reach all citizens free of charge". Indeed, libraries can provide an array of educational programmes for developing literacy and IL (Nkondo, Hart & Nassimbeni, 2018) and should do so at no cost to the user. Libraries no longer just house collections, and the librarian's role is no longer only about distributing information to the users, but also teaching users about, for example, the use of library resources and technologies available in the library (Gill, 2001). This function calls for ILE in public libraries, as public libraries offer access to computers with internet and have both print and online information resources, which can only be used efficiently if one is information literate, but can also provide the means to become information literate. As mentioned earlier, public libraries should equip users with IL skills at no financial cost to the user. There is also an expectation that the public libraries in Africa will take the place of non-existent school libraries (Raju & Raju 2010:7).

The way learners see the public library also speaks to the role of public libraries in ILE. For example, in Denmark, it was found that high school learners regard the public library as a place for learning in three different ways: they consider it an information resource centre, a place for independent learning, and a place for support and guidance (Nielsen & Borlund, 2011). This reiterates that, as per Raju and Raju (2010), the educational role is not new to public libraries. Hart (2006:79) pointed out that, in South Africa, "public libraries might well have to take on a more active role in ILE than they might be expected to in countries with better developed school library structures." Mojapelo and Fourie (2014:125) also suggested that, in a case where school libraries are inadequate, public libraries could step in.

## **1.2. Problem statement**

Considering the importance of and need for ILE and the lack of school libraries in South Africa, public libraries can step in and close the IL gap by offering IL support to school learners. As mentioned earlier, IL is crucial for learners and the lack of it has implications for their personal, academic, civic and work life and, in turn, has implications for the future development of the country as a whole. However, while the provision of ILE can be seen to be the role of public libraries, it is not clear how well equipped our public libraries are for this role.

### **1.3. Research objective**

In light of the research problem, the objective of this study was to investigate the readiness of public libraries to offer IL support to school learners.

### **1.4. Research questions**

To realise the research objective, this study addressed the following research questions:

RQ1. Do public libraries have suitably skilled librarians to deliver IL instruction to school learners?

RQ2. How do public libraries support school learners with ILE in terms of programmes, methods and resources used?

RQ3. To what extent do public libraries collaborate with their neighbouring schools with regards to IL instruction?

### **1.5. Study site and delimitation**

The library in which the researcher chose to conduct this study (hereafter referred to as the Library) is situated in one of the townships situated on the outskirts of southern Cape Town, with a predominantly Black African population. Socioeconomic challenges, such as high unemployment, housing issues, and crime are prevalent. The area in which the Library is situated has a mix of formal and informal settlements. The Library is located near to primary and high schools that do not have their own functional libraries. Therefore, the Library provides resources and services to a wide community of people of all ages and interests coming from both formal and informal settlements, including pre-schoolers who go to the library with parents; community organisations; primary school, high school (including those who are in the process of writing their Grade 12 for the second time) and tertiary learners; and those who are in positions of employment, as well as those who are searching for jobs. Facilities in this library include print resources such as books, magazines and newspapers, online resources such as *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and PressReader, and 15 computers with internet access. Services offered in this library include book loans and renewals, block loans on request, free access to computers with internet, storytelling, library orientation and tutoring, and a range of educational and fun programmes that provide users with access to games and crafts. This study

was delimited to the Library, therefore, the results cannot be generalised to other libraries in Cape Town or beyond. However, other libraries may find similarities between themselves and the Library and may therefore be able to relate to the results of the study.

### **1.6. Motivation for the study**

This study was motivated by the low IL skills amongst school leavers in South Africa and the scarcity of studies addressing ILE in public libraries, as lamented by authors such as Hart (2006), Henkel and Stock (2016) and Matteson and Gersch (2019). The study will contribute to the body of literature addressing IL instruction for school learners in public libraries and especially so in South Africa.

### **1.7. Overview of the methodology**

In this study, a qualitative research approach in an interpretive paradigm was employed. A case study design was used to gain a deeper understanding of the readiness of the Library to offer IL support to primary and high school learners. Interviews and observations were used to gather data from the public librarians at the Library and from schoolteachers from two primary schools and one high school near the library. Data were analysed manually and coded according to themes.

### **1.8. Outline of the report**

Chapter 1 contains the introduction and the background to the study, with the research objective, research questions, motivation for the study and the context of the case study provided, followed by a brief overview of the methodology used. Chapter 2 presents the literature review, covering themes related to the study objective. Chapter 3 discusses the methodology used in the study and addresses study limitations and ethical considerations. Chapter 4 presents the data and, lastly, Chapter 5 provides an interpretation of the data, recommendations and a conclusion.

### **1.9. Chapter summary**

This chapter introduced the study and presented the background to the research problem. It stated the research objective, which was to investigate the readiness of public libraries to offer IL support to school learners. Research questions, description of the study site and the

motivation for the study were also included in this chapter. It was demonstrated with evidence from the literature that IL is a necessity for individuals to thrive in many aspects of their lives, such as participating meaningfully in a democracy, in the knowledge economy, and in personal, social, work, business and academic life. It was further demonstrated with evidence that public libraries are in a good position to offer IL support to school learners, due to their close proximity with schools (particularly in urban areas), the resources and services they offer to the community, and the mandate given to them to offer free access to information to the community. Public libraries are the gateway to knowledge, and they play an important role in paving the way for lifelong learning, of which IL is an integral part. The literature on ILE in public libraries (including competencies and resources required for ILE), how public libraries collaborate with primary and high school teachers for IL support, and the model guiding parts of this study, are presented in the following chapter.

## **Chapter 2: Literature review**

### **2.1. Introduction**

The literature review is a critical evaluation of what others have said about the topic in question and includes theories and findings that address the topic (Babbie, 2017). In this chapter, literature is reviewed that addresses themes related to the study objectives: public librarians' IL understanding; their readiness to offer ILE in terms of duties, competencies, qualifications and professional development, and attitudes; IL programmes and methods of instruction used in public libraries; collaboration between public libraries and schools in support of ILE and ultimately of the school curriculum; and resources used for ILE in public libraries. It then discusses the Big6 model (Eisenberg & Berkowitz, 1992), which is used as a framework in this study. The reviewed literature includes scholarly works and public documents from South Africa, other African countries and abroad. The literature ranges from 1974 up to 2023.

### **2.2. Public librarians' understanding of IL**

As shown in the previous chapter, there are various definitions of IL, showing that the concept has evolved over the years since its conception in 1974 by Paul Zurkowski, who perceived an information-literate person as someone who is:

“trained in the application of information resources to their work. They have learned techniques and skills for utilizing the wide range of information tools as well as primary sources in moulding information solutions to their problems”  
(Zurkowski, 1974:6).

It is evident from the literature that librarians themselves understand and deliver ILE in different ways. For example, in a study that investigated how public librarians understand and deliver IL instruction in Queensland, Australia, Demasson, Partridge and Bruce (2019:485) emphasised that “the way they [public librarians] engage with the concept is integral to the way in which they deliver those [IL] programmes.” Public librarians in their study constituted IL in four distinct categories: intellectual process, technical skills, navigating the social world and gaining the desired results. The hallmark of ‘intellectual process’ is that one needs to be aware of and evaluate available information options and sources, and then carefully select the one that will best answer your question or solve your problem (Demasson, Partridge & Bruce, 2019). ‘Technical skills’ focuses on the actual technical skills needed for one to be able to use

information technology tools to access information (Demasson, Partridge & Bruce, 2019); those who do not have technical skills to use technology will be left out. ‘Navigating the social world’ relies on the premise that information is crucial for one’s everyday life and enables people to successfully navigate the social world which is dominated by information (Demasson, Partridge & Bruce, 2019). This category infers that people engage with information because they want to successfully function in the social world, for example, by reading a newspaper due to a desire to keep up with current affairs. ‘Gaining the desired result’ is all about finding what you need to satisfy your information need. The authors however warn that when the aim is to simply gain the desired results, ethical concerns may be ignored during the process (Demasson, Partridge & Bruce, 2019). Indeed, the ethical use of information is also crucial to IL (ACRL, 2000). These four distinct categories show that IL is complex. The way librarians understand IL informs the way they provide IL services (Demasson, Partridge & Bruce, 2019).

### **2.3. ILE readiness of public librarians**

Public librarians’ ILE readiness can be seen in terms of their duties, competencies, training and staff development, and their attitude towards teaching IL to school learners. These topics are discussed in this section of the literature review.

#### **2.3.1. Public librarian duties and competencies**

Public librarians have several duties, and these duties require certain competencies. Competencies are knowledge, skills and personal attributes required by one to perform their job efficiently and effectively (Raju, 2017:1). There are specific duties for qualified librarians and for librarians that are not in possession of a Library and Information Studies (LIS) qualification(s) (sometimes known as assistant librarians) (Gill, 2001:63). Duties for qualified public librarians include but are not limited to:

- analysing the resource and information needs of the community;
- formulating and implementing policies for service development; planning services to the public and participating in their delivery;
- retrieving and presenting information, assisting users in the use of library resources and information, and developing services to meet the needs of special

groups, e.g., children; creating and maintaining databases to meet the needs of the library and its users;

- designing library and information services and systems to meet the needs of the public; promoting library services;
- selecting, evaluating, managing and training staff; keeping up to date with current developments in librarianship and information services, including the relevant technologies (Gill, 2001:63).

The duties of librarians who are not in possession of a LIS qualification, on the other hand, include answering users' questions at the circulation desk, library resource circulation, shelving, shelf reading, processing library materials, record keeping of issues attended to, and filing (Gill, 2001:64).

Although the duties from Gill (2001) do not explicitly include teaching IL, some relate to the public library's role in ILE. For example, the duty of "assisting users in the use of library resources and information" (Gill, 2001:63) is related to teaching IL. The *IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto 2022* emphasises the importance of IL skills and states that they should be at the core of public library services (Krass et al., 2022:2). Nkondo, Hart and Nassimbeni (2018) also associate the duty of IL instruction with public librarians. IL skills are one of the required competencies for a LIS graduate (Raju, 2017).

The recent literature includes further duties of public librarians, which are driven by technological changes, as well as competencies required to perform those duties. For example, Ocholla and Shongwe (2013) analysed the LIS job market in South Africa from January 2009 to December 2012 and noted the influence of Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills on the LIS job market; ICT competencies are now essential for any LIS graduate. The authors also found that, in libraries, the specific knowledge and skills required included (among others) collection development, cataloguing and classification, integrated library systems, and teaching or training (Ocholla & Shongwe, 2013:4). Since teaching and training skills are included, it is understood that IL training would be one of the duties of public librarians.

The high demand for ICT and computer literacy skills in the LIS job requirements was found by Mthembu and Ocholla (2019) in their study that investigated the job requirements and challenges of LIS graduates in public libraries in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. However, as much as the authors found ICT and computer skills to be in demand, the employers of LIS

graduates that participated in the study voiced a lack of knowledge of computer and ICT skills among LIS graduates, and the LIS graduates also indicated a need for these skills (Mthembu & Ocholla, 2019). In addition to computer and ICT skills, cataloguing and classification, and conservation and preservation skills were also highly needed skills in public libraries (Mthembu & Ocholla, 2019:14).

More of what is required of librarians today is stated in studies that have specifically documented competencies for LIS graduates. For example, Raju (2017) compiled an index of competencies required for LIS graduates in South Africa, which is divided into discipline-specific, generic and personal competencies. While the index is directed to the modern librarian in higher education, some of these competencies are applicable to public librarians as they also operate in modern times and are highly affected by technological changes. Collection development and management, cataloguing and classification, management of library and information services, IL training, metadata creation and management, library ICTs and systems operations, information retrieval competencies, and communication skills are among the competencies that are found in Raju's (2017) competency index for LIS graduates. They are similar to the requirements of the public librarians shown earlier, meaning that public librarians too should be conversant in these competencies to perform their duties efficiently and effectively.

LIS competencies specifically for public librarians were investigated by Moen, Mandel and Karno (2020:17), with a focus on library directors, adult/reference services, youth services librarians, and library staff without LIS degrees. Their findings on competencies for youth librarians are most important for this study and include literacy development support (Moen, Mandel & Karno, 2020:17). Basic LIS skills such as being skilled in library operations across departments and customer experience were competencies associated with the library staff that are not in possession of LIS degrees (Moen, Mandel & Karno, 2020:22).

These studies indicate what library staff should know and be able to do, according to their job titles within the library. IL support and training is often a required competency.

### **2.3.2. Public librarians' qualifications and professional development**

Public librarians' readiness to deliver ILE is affected by many things. For example, the literature reveals that amongst other things, public librarians' efforts to deliver IL instruction

are hindered by a lack of pedagogical competencies (Julien & Hoffman, 2008; Lai, 2011). Pedagogical issues were also found in Kingori, Njiraine and Maina (2016:20), where the authors associated the lack of pedagogical competencies with the librarian's level of qualifications.

Kingori, Njiraine and Maina (2016:20) found that the majority (53.3%) of public library staff that offered IL programmes had a diploma-level qualification, while very few (13.3%) had a bachelor's degree, a small number (6.7%) had a master's degree, and about a quarter (26.7%) possessed certificates. Kingori, Njiraine and Maina (2016:20) associated these results with a need to attract library staff with not only bachelor's degree, but also higher-level qualifications up to PhD level, to offer ILE education. The new *Qualification Standard for Bachelor of Library and Information Science* in South Africa asserts that the professional LIS graduate with a bachelor's degree should possess the knowledge of equipping library users with IL skills (Council on Higher Education, 2020:9). Evidence of a lack of pedagogical competencies among some librarians was found by Julien and Hoffman (2008). However, the library in their study tried to prepare librarians for ILE by organising in-house training sessions, but the authors did not comment on the adequacy of the in-house training provided or the elements that were covered during the training (Julien & Hoffman, 2008).

Mthembu and Ocholla (2019) found that only Grade 12 was required in half of the job advertisements found in the four newspapers they scanned over a period of three years. They regarded this as concerning since Grade 12 is not a professional qualification and reflects that inappropriately skilled or non-professional people are being employed for professional positions in some libraries (Mthembu & Ocholla, 2019:7). The authors found that the majority of libraries in their study were dominated by library staff with only Grade 12 (Mthembu & Ocholla, 2019).

It is crucial that public libraries employ staff members with professional LIS qualifications as they have been formally equipped with skills that are essential for the role of librarian, such as IL skills. A professional LIS qualification which follows the new *Qualification Standard for Bachelor of Library and Information Science* in South Africa puts one in an advantageous position to teach IL.

Martzoukou and Elliott (2016) indicated that LIS schools have a significant role to play in preparing LIS graduates for the job by ensuring that they equip them with the required skillset.

The authors conducted a qualitative study that employed a multiple case study design with the use of document analysis and semi-structured interviews with public librarians and library management which, among other things, aimed to examine some Master of LIS (MLIS) programmes in the United States to determine whether they adequately equip librarians with digital learning, information technology and transferable skills. Their study revealed that librarians lacked transferable skills, particularly technology instruction, with which their MLIS programmes did not equip them (Martzoukou & Elliott, 2016:106). Martzoukou and Elliott (2016:112) further established that, to respond to that knowledge gap,

“public libraries and MLIS program coordinators need to work together to re-evaluate current MLIS programs in terms of digital literacy and transferable skills, so they can meet the current needs of users.”

However, the authors assert that technology instruction requires pedagogical skills. This is an important observation that can enhance the IL instruction of librarians as technological skills enable IL.

Kingori, Njiraine and Maina (2016:20) and Lai (2011) point out that inadequately trained staff and/or a lack of training opportunities for staff members also limit librarians’ efforts to deliver ILE. Martzoukou and Elliott (2016:101) say that the different roles of librarians, which are influenced by ever-changing technology, require “the provision of continuing education on a more systematic level”. In agreement with this, Edewor (2020:317) states that, in the past, “many librarians did not receive instruction/training in new and emerging technologies or digital skills required for effective library and information service delivery during their formal education.” Therefore, those librarians need additional training so that they can keep up to date with the current technologies that affect library services and their roles, and all the public libraries should prioritise staff development (Martzoukou & Elliott, 2016).

Padayachee and Nsibirwa (2020) conducted a study that aimed to find out from the branch librarians, what library programmes are being offered by eThekweni Municipal Libraries “to address and foster social cohesion in the communities it serves” (Padayachee & Nsibirwa, 2020:31), in which a question that intended to establish the qualifications and experiences of library and information services staff was asked of the participants. Padayachee and Nsibirwa (2020:42) found that almost all the librarians in their study had formal LIS qualifications in the form of a degree and they also found that the age and work experience of librarians at

eThekwini Municipal Libraries varied. In light of the varying age and experience of the librarians, the authors stated that “where age, experience and cultural differences exist, there is an ongoing need for an organisation to find ways to unify their workforce to the benefit of the organisation and the services offered” (Padayachee & Nsibirwa, 2020:42). In a discussion about work experience and qualifications of librarians, Lyakurwa and Luambano (2019:43) were of the view that skills (gained through work experience) and the formal knowledge of librarianship (obtained through LIS qualification) position librarians well to teach IL. The findings of Padayachee and Nsibirwa (2020) demonstrate that suitably qualified and well-trained librarians are the ones that are fit for service delivery in libraries and for meeting the needs of library users.

The need for training for LIS graduates to keep up with the changes in the LIS field was also noted by Ocholla and Shongwe (2013) and they recommended enrolment in IT-related courses. The need for training for librarians is echoed by other authors (Mthembu & Ocholla, 2019). Moen, Mandel and Karno (2020:22) said that, due to technological advancements, librarians have lots of continuous education opportunities now as compared to the past: they can use opportunities available via “webinars, online university courses, Twitter edchats, professional social networking sites, and Massive Open Online Courses”. It is advisable that librarians take advantage of these opportunities to upskill themselves at their own will and not only rely on the training organised by their libraries. Doing so will ensure that public librarians are better prepared for offering IL training to their users.

### **2.3.3. Attitudes of public librarians towards teaching IL**

While public librarian duties and qualifications are being discussed, it is also important to look at the librarians’ attitudes with regards to IL instruction. Locally, Hart (2006) examined IL education in public libraries in South Africa by investigating the readiness of public librarians in Mpumalanga province to take on “enhanced responsibility” in the IL education of school learners. Most of the librarians included in her study did not regard IL education as part of their job, due to their incomplete conception of IL (Hart, 2006). The study found that the provision of IL education in Mpumalanga might depend on “the interest or even whim of individual staff members” (Hart, 2006:60).

Julien and Hoffman (2008), on the other hand, found that public librarians in Canada welcomed the IL instruction duty and regarded IL training as their essential role and themselves as agents

of empowerment. Relatedly, the results in Lai (2011), in a study conducted in Canada indicate that most librarians acknowledged IL training as the essential service of the public library and understood that it is their responsibility to equip users with IL skills through both formal and informal guidance and instruction.

#### **2.4. IL programmes, methods and resources of instruction in public libraries for ILE**

IL programmes are about equipping individuals with the skills required “to develop lifelong learning skills and competencies inclusive of the ability to select, access, evaluate, use and communicate information effectively...” (Harrison & Deans, 2021:178). These programmes are crucial in supporting the teaching and learning of school learners, given the unfavourable situation of school libraries in South Africa, as shown in Hart (2013) and in Hart and Zinn, (2015), and the fact that teachers and learners in South Africa possess low IL skills (Durodolu & Mojapelo, 2020). The need for these programmes is demonstrated by Nielsen and Borlund (2011), as they found that high school learners in their study conducted in Denmark did not understand IL and lifelong learning concepts.

A study conducted by Oyediran-Tidings et al. (2021:404) that investigated “high school learners’ access to educational information through ICT tools in the Fort Beaufort Education District in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa”, in which data were collected from Grade 12 high school learners and teachers, reiterated the need for IL programmes for school learners in public libraries. Their findings revealed, among other things, that access to the computers was reserved for learners who were doing the subject Computer Applications Technology (CAT) only, and that the majority of learners did not have access to computers and the internet, which inhibited their access to educational information (Oyediran-Tidings et al., 2021:404). Their findings further revealed that there was a lack of IL training and, consequently, learners were not guided on how to use and access educational information (Oyediran-Tidings et al., 2021:404). This indicates a lack of IL skills among school learners. There is a need for public libraries to offer IL programmes to school learners as substitutes for school libraries (Dube, 2018) and as mentioned earlier, Raju and Raju (2010:7) urged public libraries in Africa to step in and close the gap of inadequate school libraries.

In examining existing IL education programmes in Mpumalanga public libraries, Hart (2006) found library orientation to be the most common IL activity offered. Library orientation, also known as library tours, is about familiarising library users with the resources and services

offered in a library. A few respondents in the Mpumalanga study, however, mentioned that they include OPAC/catalogue searching in their IL programmes (Hart, 2006), which is important in ILE as users should be equipped with the skills to locate and access information in a catalogue. The results also revealed that only a few librarians “sometimes work with the same class in a sustained way over more than one session” (Hart, 2006:58). It is concerning that only a few offered ILE in a sustained manner because the once-off offering of IL education to users in public libraries is not enough. Academic librarians understand that the repetition of IL instruction is necessary for students to increase their IL skills, as demonstrated by Egan, Witt and Chartier (2017). Learners in public libraries can also benefit from continued IL education.

Julien and Hoffman (2008:37) found that the three largest public libraries in their study in Canada offered IL programmes regularly in a formal manner, which included searching on the library catalogue, internet searching and basic computer skills (including the use of computer equipment and how to send an email). Julien and Hoffman (2008) also found that issues of advertising IL training programmes, a lack of funding and infrastructural problems limit librarians in their efforts to offer IL programmes.

Similar results of training library users in basic computer skills, and searching on the library catalogue and on the internet, were also found by Lai (2011:84) and these further included cyber security sessions. Methods used for the sessions mentioned by Lai (2011) included formal lectures, one-on-one training and group coaching on request. However, Lai found challenges such as the lack of funding and the lack of full-time staff members to conduct IL training in some of the libraries in their study.

Despite the challenges, it is good to see that the IL programmes in the aforementioned studies included computer skills, searching on the library catalogue and on the internet, and email management because IT-related skills and ICT skills are essential for making effective use of electronic information resources. Odede and Nsibirwa (2018) conducted a study that aimed to discover the relationship between IL skills and the use of electronic information resources, with data collected from postgraduate students. The authors found that competency in IL determined the use of electronic information resources – participants in their study indicated that they make use of electronic information resources because of their ability to search for and locate multiple sources of information from online databases and critically evaluate it. Findings of their study further revealed that the ability to adopt emerging technologies also affects students’ decisions

to make use of electronic resources (Odede & Nsibirwa, 2018). As mentioned earlier, new technologies affect the way users search for and access information, therefore users need continuous ILE. Hence, Ndimbovu and Nsibirwa (2022) state that computer literacy and ICT skills prepare school learners for tertiary online education, which has become widely used since the Covid-19 pandemic.

Another example of how users access information these days is demonstrated in Ajuwon et al. (2017) as they report on a consumer health IL programme in public libraries in four countries in Africa (Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda and Zimbabwe). It is revealed in their study that one of the community libraries in the study, Oyo community library based in Nigeria, trained 120 high school learners “as peer educators on the use of mobile phones to access health information on the internet...” (Ajuwon et al., 2017:363). These learners were trained in groups in a six-hour hands-on session where they were introduced to health information and searched for consumer health information resources on various websites (Ajuwon, et al., 2017:363). In essence, the librarians at Oyo community library equipped the school learners with the ability to search for and find needed information on various websites using mobile technology. This exercise reflects what Nkondo, Hart and Nassimbeni (2018:36) stated in the *National Policy for Library and Information Services in South Africa* that IL programmes “need to move beyond text so that users learn to engage with them [non-text resources] meaningfully, both inside the library walls and via mobile technologies”. Moving beyond text is vital now where almost everyone is expected to make use of mobile technologies for accessing information and, for some, for online learning.

Musemburi and Nhendo (2016) conducted a study that utilised a survey design to investigate, amongst other things, the availability of user education and IL programmes in public libraries to ensure the effective and efficient use of legal information in Zimbabwe. The authors found an absence of formal user education or IL instruction programmes in all the nine public libraries in their study, and found that only two public libraries provided users with assistance with internet use and accessing online resources (Musemburi & Nhendo, 2016:6).

Lyakurwa and Luambano (2019) carried out a mixed methods study among librarians and users to investigate the state of IL and user education programmes in two public libraries in Tanzania (National Central Library [NCL] and Kibaha Public Library). Interviews and observations were conducted. The researchers found that most library staff at NCL offered user education and IL programmes, such as OPAC training and training on how to borrow and return library books

(Lyakurwa & Luambano, 2019:44). However, unlike in Lai (2011), the IL and user education training at NCL was only offered on a once-off basis to new users, which does not afford the trainers enough time to cover all the necessary IL content (Lyakurwa & Luambano, 2019). IL education was not offered at Kibaha Public Library due to a lack of teaching facilities (Lyakurwa & Luambano, 2019).

Muchaonyerwa, Odularu-Olatoye and Gunuza (2021) conducted a study that aimed to examine the equity of access to LIS services and education support at Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality, King William's Town in the Eastern Cape, South Africa, with one of the objectives being to discover how public libraries in the Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality support education and lifelong learning. The study revealed that most of the public librarians who participated in the study offered storytelling and library orientation programmes; they believed that these programmes contributed to social cohesion. As shown earlier, library orientation programmes are regarded as part of IL programmes and storytelling enhances literacy skills, which are important for IL.

From the literature reviewed here, it is evident that public librarians make use of various resources to teach IL, for example, books (Lyakurwa & Luambano, 2019), computers and human resources (Lai, 2011), mobile phones (Ajuwon et al., 2017), among others. However, the challenge of a lack of human resources for delivering IL instruction in public libraries is apparent from the literature (Lai, 2011). Julien and Hoffman (2008) revealed that financial resources, infrastructural problems and a lack of time limits librarians in their IL programme efforts. Matteson and Gersch (2020:72) also state that little time for interaction between librarians and users makes it harder to provide IL.

## **2.5. Collaboration between public libraries and schools for ILE**

This section discusses the literature that covers the collaboration between public libraries and schools, and the collaboration between public libraries and school libraries.

Collaboration encompasses shared creation or shared discovery (Schrage, 1995 as cited in Latham et al., 2016:194) and at “the heart of collaboration is a need to produce something, or solve a problem within a set of constraints” (Latham et al., 2016:194). In the case of collaboration between public libraries and schools in the current study, the problem to be solved

is the lack of IL skills shown by school learners and the constraint is that schools are not in a position conducive to offering IL support to school learners.

Collaboration in libraries is defined by Montiel-Overall (2005:32) as:

a trusting, working relationship between two or more equal participants involved in shared thinking, shared planning, and shared creation of innovative integrated instruction. Through a shared vision and shared objectives, student learning opportunities are created that integrate subject content and library curriculum by co-planning, co-implementing, and co-evaluating students' progress throughout the instructional process in order to improve student learning in all areas of instruction.

In a discussion about collaboration between public libraries and schools, Fitzgibbons (2000:2) argues that “cooperative relationships between the two separate institutional settings are essential ingredients in achieving educational reform leading to improved student learning.” Fitzgibbons (2000) infers that school and public library collaboration could benefit the education system. Martzoukou and Elliott (2016) point out that public libraries should be prepared to collaborate and build partnerships with schools. Indeed, “for public libraries to effectively educate the citizens on IL, ... a partnership with other institutions besides public libraries becomes crucial” (Musemburi & Nhendo, 2016:7). In the *National Policy for Library and Information Services in South Africa*, Nkondo, Hart and Nassimbeni (2018) also emphasise that partnerships between public libraries and schools are crucial. Harding (2008:281) agrees that public libraries should be able to form partnerships with schools for the development of IL skills and the provision of IL training.

Public library partnerships with the community (schools are part of the community) are evident in Lai (2011), where it was found that public library administrators and staff made efforts to ensure that the IL programmes they offered reached the community at large. In that regard, the library included in Lai's study built partnerships with community, career and senior centres, as well as universities, to provide free IL training opportunities outside the library. The nature of the partnership shown in Lai (2011) ensures that no one in the community is excluded.

Hart and Nassimbeni (2013) used the metaphor of an ‘ecosystem’ when they studied partnerships between public libraries and schools. The ecosystem approach “serves as an image for the ‘bigger picture’ strategic thinking that recognises that the good of the whole comes from

the health of its parts and the relationships among them” (Hart & Nassimbeni, 2013:13). The relationships in the concept of ecosystem “suggest a perspective that locates school and public libraries in a system capable of meeting the needs of their users by taking account of the sector as a whole” (Hart & Nassimbeni 2013:14). This approach is crucial and would meet the IL needs of school learners from public schools, as so few have functional libraries. Interestingly, in Hart and Nassimbeni (2013:17), a public library in their study had successfully formed partnerships with all the pre-primary schools in their area. However, only one primary school participated in the public library’s schools programme, and that school already had its own librarian and a small school library (Hart & Nassimbeni, 2013).

Pietikäinen, Kortelainen and Siklander (2017) conducted a study that investigated public library and schoolteachers’ partnerships in Finland, which aimed at increasing the understanding of IL competencies, and the ways in which public libraries in conjunction with class teachers can support the development of these skills among high school learners. The authors believe that “when learning IL, both the resources in the library and schools, and the expertise of their staff are important to support [learners’] work” (Pietikäinen, Kortelainen & Siklander, 2017:6). However, success requires collaboration between the schoolteachers and public librarians (Pietikäinen, Kortelainen & Siklander, 2017), which could be attained through building relationships and communicating with each other, among other things (Montiel-Overall, 2010).

Pietikäinen, Kortelainen and Siklander (2017) used the Big6 model as well as Kuhlthau’s (2004) model of the information search process in conjunction with two other problem-based models for specifying the phases of the learning process of school learners, and also to demonstrate how technology is applied in those phases. The findings of the study revealed that learners relied more on public librarians and teachers in the early phases of problem solving, such as task definition, planning of information searching strategies, and information seeking, and that they gained confidence towards the end of the process when the role of librarians disappeared, while the role of teachers continued until the final phases of problem solving, such as when learners were in their writing stage (Pietikäinen, Kortelainen & Siklander, 2017). The authors concluded that the teacher-librarian relationship in their study was one of ‘cooperation’ rather than ‘collaboration’, and that there were limitations found in the teacher-librarian relationship, such as available time for planning and teaching (Pietikäinen, Kortelainen & Siklander, 2017).

Another challenge for public library and school ILE collaboration is the number of learners in a class because enough individual attention cannot be given if there are too many learners in a class (Pietikäinen, Kortelainen & Siklander, 2017). The presence of challenges when schools and public libraries work together is not unique to the aforementioned study of Pietikäinen, Kortelainen and Siklander. Hart (2004), for example, noted the challenge of a lack of communication between schoolteachers and librarians. Due to inadequate communication, libraries often do not know in a timely manner about learners' school projects (Raju & Raju, 2010:8).

Latham et al. (2016) explored the perceptions and experiences of school and public librarians and science high school teachers regarding collaboration to support science learning, particularly with 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills instruction (which includes IL skills). Similar to Pietikäinen, Kortelainen and Siklander (2017), Latham et al. (2016) found that there was an existing relationship between the librarians and science teachers in their study, although it had not yet reached the stage of collaboration. In addition, they reported that public librarians employ many strategies to develop relationships with teachers, which include but are not limited to "attending teachers' meetings, reaching out by visiting teachers, ...hosting student groups in the library, providing programming for students and teachers..." (Latham et al., 2016:196).

Greef (2016) conducted a study in Finland that investigated the reasons for Finnish learners' ongoing success in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) tests. PISA refers to international tests that take place every three years to measure the reading, mathematical and scientific literacy competency of 15-year-olds (Greef, 2016). Amongst other reasons, the author found that excellent cooperation between public libraries and schools influenced the learners' success on the tests. Through this collaboration, it was found that public libraries equipped learners with suitable IL skills throughout their school years, such as teaching Grade 2 learners how to take care of library material and teaching Grade 7 learners about copyright and advanced searching on databases (Greef, 2016). Public libraries are appreciated in Finland as institutions that promote reading, culture, and social cohesion (Greef, 2016).

It is interesting that public libraries in Finland contributed positively towards the results of Finnish learners in the PISA tests. This is inspiring for the South African context. In South Africa, primary school learners also participate in international comparative tests, such as the

Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), for assessment in reading literacy (Howie et al., 2017). South African Grade 4 learners obtained the lowest results in reading literacy from PIRLS 2016 (320 points out of the international average of 500). This is an indication that our learners need more literacy support.

Without a doubt, public libraries are promoting reading among school learners and the evidence of that is available in the literature. For example, Matolong (2020) conducted a study that evaluated the role of digital technology in strengthening the culture of reading in public libraries in South Africa using the Mzansi Libraries On-Line project as a case study, in which the author found that access to digital technology provided in public libraries has improved the culture of reading at public libraries. However, judging by the results of South African learners in the PIRLS, public libraries need to play a more extensive role in preparing learners for literacy assessments and improving their reading in general. This could be done through collaborations with the schools, just like in Finland. However, this would mean that libraries would need more support in attaining the resources required for such initiatives.

Tikkinen and Korkeamäki (2023) conducted a study in Finland that explored how school and public library staff kept on working together to enhance reading engagement after they attended a programme called Joy of Reading (JofR). The authors had three categories to describe partnerships: collaborative, coordinative and cooperative (Tikkinen & Korkeamäki, 2023:738). They found features of collaboration between the school and the public library were present and were “integrated into formal policies, local curricula and collaboration plans”. Furthermore, there were lasting working relationships between teachers and librarians, a positive attitude towards working together, and activities such as library visits by schools, which were all associated with collaboration. It was also found that teachers and librarians had a common vision of enhancing reading motivation and they had the support of their leaders (library heads and school principals) (Tikkinen & Korkeamäki, 2023:739). Coordination and cooperation were also found to exist, characterised by shared responsibilities. For example, the librarians delivered lessons to school learners and teachers ensured that order was maintained (Tikkinen & Korkeamäki, 2023).

However, due to a lack of joint planning, implementation and evaluation, and a lack of time to complete these tasks, it was found that the relationship had more features of coordination and cooperation than collaboration (Tikkinen & Korkeamäki, 2023). In addition, a disconnection between the content included by librarians and what was taught in class was found, which

shows the necessity for public librarians to be included in curriculum development discussions so that they are able to align the content they include in IL sessions with the schools' curriculum accordingly. The *LIS Transformation Charter* (Nkondo et al., 2014:35) states that “librarians working with school children need the knowledge and skills to match the curriculum requirements with the materials and programmes offered to learners.”

Another study that investigated collaboration between public libraries and schools is that of Omar et al. (2023), which intended to determine the support offered to school libraries by public libraries, identify the collaborative programmes that existed between public and school libraries to reach lifelong learning targets, and understand the effectiveness of library collaborative programmes conducted in promoting lifelong learning opportunities in Zanzibar. Omar et al. (2023) found that the majority of the participants in their study thought that public libraries provided weak support to school libraries, with only around a quarter indicating that they received strong support from public libraries (Omar et al., 2023:7). By a Likert scale of 1 to 5, the level of collaboration between public and school libraries for promoting lifelong learning (through resource sharing, school library visits by public library staff, and public library visits by school learners and school library staff) was rated by the participants (Omar et al., 2023). These were rated very low and low (1 and 2) by the majority of participants, indicating the existence of minimal collaboration for lifelong learning between school and public libraries (Omar et al., 2023). IL training and school and public library meetings were among the collaborative programmes and were mostly rated low and very low. This means that the collaboration between the public libraries and schools, in that study, needed to be improved, including the offering of IL training to the learners and school library staff where necessary, so they are able to transfer the skills to school learners, which will put learners in a better position for lifelong learning.

## **2.6. Using the Big6 model in the library**

There are many models of IL which include but are not limited to the Big6 model (Eisenberg & Berkowitz, 1992), the SCONUL Seven Pillars of Information Literacy model (SCONUL, 2011) and the Association of College and Research Libraries' (ACRL) Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education (ACRL, 2016). This study employed the Big6 model as a framework for informing some of the data collection and analysis for the study.

The Big6 model, developed by Mike Eisenberg and Bob Berkowitz (Eisenberg, Murray & Bartow, 2016), is used in this study because it is a process model for information problem solving that can be used by learners from kindergarten to the 12<sup>th</sup> grade through higher education and beyond to solve academic and personal life problems (Eisenberg, 2003:20). The model has six stages, with two substages in each of the six stages (Eisenberg, Murray & Bartow, 2016), which “provide students with a comprehensive set of powerful skills to conquer the information age” (Eisenberg, 2003:20).

The Big6 offers a wide range of skills that can be used as the basis for curriculum development or as a guide for solving an information problem successfully (Eisenberg, 2003:20). For example, the Big6 model serves as a guide for instructors (such as librarians) for the skills that learners need to be taught so that they can solve problems they come across in their learning journey (Eisenberg, 2003). For learners, the model acts as a guide for when they are doing schoolwork, “as well as a model to fall back on when they are stuck” (Eisenberg, 2003:20). This happens through successful application of the IL skills in each of the Big6 stages, which can be done in a non-linear form as the Big6 allows one to move back and forth in the process (Eisenberg, Murray & Bartow, 2016:3).

The six stages of the Big6 model are as follows:

**Stage 1 Task Definition** requires learners to (1) define the exact information problem and (2) identify the information needed (Eisenberg, 2003). At this stage, learners presented with the information problem “must have a clear hypothesis, a specific question, and a clear understanding of what is needed in order to answer that question” (Wolf, Brush & Saye, 2003).

**Stage 2 Information Seeking Strategies** requires learners to (1) determine all possible sources of information and (2) select the best sources (Eisenberg, 2003). However, as mentioned earlier, selecting the best source does not just happen; it is crucial that students evaluate all the possible sources and then select the best ones.

**Stage 3 Location and Access** is about (1) locating the sources and (2) finding information within sources (Eisenberg, 2003:21).

**Stage 4 Use of Information** requires learners to (1) engage and (2) take relevant information (Eisenberg, 2003:21). For example, this is where learners have to read, listen to or view the information (Eisenberg, 2003:21) and they may also take notes, highlight the important information, and summarise (Wolf, Brush & Saye, 2003:3).

In **Stage 5 Synthesis**, learners should (1) organise information from multiple sources and (2) present information (Eisenberg, 2003:21). At this stage, learners “make a decision, create a product, or formulate an answer” (Wolf, Brush & Saye, 2003:4).

**Stage 6 Evaluation** requires learners to (1) judge the result (effectiveness) and (2) judge the process (efficiency) (Eisenberg, 2003:21).

The Big6 model is suitable for the information age where technology is greatly used for information access and use. How learners can make use of technology while searching for information and applying the Big6 model is shown in Figure 1. While the content in Figure 1 was written a long time ago, it illustrates the applicability of the model.

Big6 Stage	Use of Technology
1. Task Definition	Students use e-mail, listservs, newsgroups, chat, videoconferencing, and other online communication methods to clarify assignments and brainstorm use software to generate timelines, organizational charts, etc. to plan and organize complex problems.
2. Information Seeking Strategies	Students identify and assess computerized resources as they develop information seeking strategies toward their problem.
3. Location and Access	Students use online catalogs, searchable periodical indexes, electronic encyclopedias, Web search engines, and other online searching tools to locate useful information.
4. Use of Information	Students connect to and access online or locally stored electronic information sources, view, download, and decompress files, and use copy-and-paste features to extract relevant information.
5. Synthesis	Students organize and communicate their results using word processing, database management, spreadsheet and graphics software, and distribute their projects via e-mail, Web publishing, or other media.
6. Evaluation	Students evaluate the impact of the technology they used, including its effectiveness and efficiency

Figure 1: Technology in a Big6 context (Eisenberg, 2003:22)

Figure 1 highlights that the Big6 model is relevant in teaching learners IL and ICT skills that are crucial nowadays.

The Big6 model was used by Pietikäinen, Kortelainen and Siklander (2017) to link to the information problem solving of high school learners. Pietikäinen, Kortelainen and Siklander (2017) assert that the Big6 model is based on the constructivist approach to learning, and is relevant in problem-based learning. The constructivist approach considers an individual's experiences as playing a role in learning (Ertmer & Newby, 1993). The authors compared and linked the Big6 model and Kuhlthau's (2004) information seeking process model and described the phases of the learning process of the learners. They found that learners go through a five-phase model in their process of solving a problem. The phases are: task definition, planning of information searching strategies, information seeking, use of information, and presentation (Pietikäinen, Kortelainen & Siklander, 2017). In the authors' five-phase model, the way in which technology is applied in solving a problem in those phases is demonstrated (Pietikäinen, Kortelainen & Siklander, 2017).

The Big6 model was also used in a study conducted by Dipetso and Moahi (2019) in Botswana, where the authors used the model to examine the IL skills of high school learners. In their study, the learners were required to follow the stages of the Big6 to write an essay on a topic with which they were already familiar (Dipetso & Moahi, 2019). The findings revealed that learners demonstrated limited knowledge of IL skills (Dipetso & Moahi, 2019), one example being related to the task definition stage where learners did not investigate the question properly and some even misunderstood the question (Dipetso & Moahi, 2019). The researchers also found that some learners over-relied on one source of information, indicating low skills of information seeking strategies. Furthermore, some learners struggled in locating and accessing information within information, as well as in the 'use of information' stage, and they could not manage their information (Dipetso & Moahi, 2019). Consequently, they were not able to "synthesize the information and to organize their ideas effectively and logically" (Dipetso & Moahi, 2019:116).

In this study, the Big6 model guided data collection in terms of the formulation of the interview questions for librarians and the observations guide – both included the stages of the Big6 – and analysis, which identified Big6 skills from the data. The researcher wanted to find out to what extent the IL programmes offered in the participating library incorporate elements of the Big6

model. This knowledge, along with other information gathered, could help with understanding the readiness of the Library to offer IL support to school learners.

## **2.7. Chapter summary**

The literature reviewed in this paper revealed that IL training is offered in some libraries, and it is also offered in ways that embrace technology. However, ILE is not always offered in public libraries due to challenges that include but are not limited to limited financial resources and a lack of library technological resources to teach IL, and the limited pedagogical skills of librarians – which calls for further education and training. The literature review demonstrated that public library staff have different views and understandings of IL. Some public librarians perceive IL training as an essential offering of the public library and regard it as their role, while other librarians view it as an imposed role and do not have a positive attitude towards teaching IL. Nevertheless, some libraries offer a variety of IL programmes to school learners and librarians are open to taking part in training programmes so they can improve their own IL and IL training skills to better meet the information needs of their users. The literature review illustrated different programmes and methods for IL instruction, including those related to library orientation, library catalogue searching, basic computer skills, digital literacy. The literature further revealed that some public libraries collaborate with schools for IL instruction, while others do not due to certain challenges. It is also evident that the Big6 model can be used to frame IL training for library users, including school learners.

## **Chapter 3: Research methodology**

### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter details the methodology used for this study. Research methodology provides a logical explanation of the research methods and techniques used in a study (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005).

### **3.2. Research paradigm**

According to Babbie (2017:31), a paradigm is a “model or framework for observation and understanding which shapes both what we see and how we understand it”. A paradigm guides a researcher to select a particular method suitable for data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Durrheim, 2014:40). This study stood firmly in the interpretive paradigm. Interpretivists aim to gain an in-depth understanding of multiple realities (Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). Terre Blanche, Kelly and Durrheim (2014:273) provide a rich explanation of the interpretive paradigm as they state that it:

involves taking people’s subjective experiences seriously as the essence of what is real for them (ontology), making sense of people’s experiences by interacting with them and listening carefully to what they tell us (epistemology), and making use of qualitative research techniques to collect and analyse information (methodology).

Within this paradigm, the researcher aimed to gain an in-depth understanding of IL practices that support school learners in public libraries and to find out the public librarians’ experiences and understandings of the IL concept in order to ascertain the readiness of public libraries to offer ILE support to school learners.

### **3.3. Research approach**

A qualitative research approach is used in this study. According to Strydom and Bezuidenhout (2014:173), “qualitative research deals with the underlying qualities of subjective experiences and the meanings associated with phenomena.” Thus, qualitative researchers are interested in gaining an in-depth understanding of human experience and meanings associated with a particular phenomenon, which cannot be quantified (Strydom & Bezuidenhout, 2014:174).

Qualitative researchers “collect data in the form of written or spoken language or in the form of observations that are recorded in language and analyse the data by identifying and categorising the themes” (Durrheim, 2014:47). A qualitative approach was suitable for this study as the researcher intended to explore and understand the readiness of public libraries to offer IL support to school learners, and not to test the relationship between variables or generalise as quantitative researchers do (as per Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

### **3.4. Research design**

Durrheim (2014:34) defines research design as a “strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution or implementation of the research”. This research used case study design. A case study is when a “researcher explores in depth a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals” (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:14).

One of the benefits of a case study is that “it is a very useful design when exploring an area where little is known or where you want to have a holistic understanding of the situation, phenomenon, episode, site group or community” (Kumar, 2019:196). The main use of a case study is to gain an in-depth understanding of a case “in its natural setting, recognising its complexity and its context... with a holistic focus to preserve and understand the wholeness and unity of the case” (Punch, 2014:120). Case study design has been criticised for a lack of generalisability. Denzin (1983) in Punch (2014:122) however states that not all research projects intend to generalise, whether they are case studies or not.

A case study was suitable for this study because the researcher wanted to gain an in-depth understanding of one case. The case being investigated is that of the Library as described in the first chapter. The study does not intend to generalise its findings to other libraries, but it wants to enhance understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

### **3.5. Research methods**

Research methods are tools used by researchers for data collection and they act as “techniques for learning about social reality allow[ing] us to gather data from individuals, groups, and texts in any medium” (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011:5). This study made use of interviews and observations. The researcher drew inspiration from studies that have used the same methods

for research in a public library setting, such as that of Hart (2004), Lai (2011), Dube (2018) and Lyakurwa and Luambano (2019).

### **3.5.1. Observations**

According to Kelly (2014:307), “observation takes place while things are actually happening, and that gets you even closer to the action.” The literature shows that there is participant and non-participant observation (Punch, 2014). In participant observation, the researcher gets involved and engaged in the activity that is being observed. This type of observation is the technique mostly used in ethnography (Punch, 2014). On the other side, non-participant observation is the opposite of participant observation in the sense that the researcher is not directly involved with the people or behaviour that is being observed and does not influence it.

Creswell and Creswell (2018:187) state that “qualitative observers may also engage in roles varying from a nonparticipant to a complete participant.” Those roles are: complete observer, observer as participant, participant as observer and complete participant (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Nieuwenhuis, 2020). For example, the researcher may take the role of being a complete observer in which there is a great distance between the researcher and the participants, in a sense that a researcher does not participate in the observed situation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Nieuwenhuis, 2020). This type of observation is regarded as less intrusive (Nieuwenhuis, 2020). However, the disadvantage of the complete observer role is that “the researcher does not become immersed in the situation and does not really understand what she or he observes” (Nieuwenhuis, 2020:106). The observer-as-participant role is when the researcher “gets into the situation but focuses mainly on his or her role as the observer in the situation... the researcher remains uninvolved and does not influence the dynamics of the setting” (Nieuwenhuis, 2020). This allows the researcher to record information instantly (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). On the other side, the researcher may take the role of participant as observer, in which a researcher participates in the observed situation. This role affords the researcher an opportunity to immerse themselves in the situation “to gain an insider perspective” (Nieuwenhuis, 2020:106) and through the participant-as-observer role, the researcher may notice unusual aspects (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:188). Creswell and Creswell (2018:188) warn that when taking the role of participant as observer, a “researcher may not have good attending and observing skills”. Nevertheless, Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005:195) advise that “it remains the duty of the researcher to watch activities and experiences of the group closely with a view to writing them down.” The complete participant, on the other end, is when

the researcher is fully immersed in the situation they are studying up to the extent that the observed individuals may not notice that they are being observed, and this raises ethical concerns (Nieuwenhuis, 2020:106; Babbie, 2017:300).

In this study, the researcher started off as a non-participant observer. At the beginning of the series of observations for the study, the researcher did not take part in the activities of the participants and only recorded what was happening without getting involved. After a while, around mid-way through data collection, the researcher took a position of participant as observer (elaborated on in data collection section on 3.9), in which the researcher participated in some of the activities that she was observing, but remained cognisant of her role as researcher, putting it at the forefront and writing down the activities of the participants, as Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005:195) advised. Observations enabled the researcher to validate the interview data gathered from the participants.

Observation in this study was used to gain more understanding of how librarians in the selected library deliver IL instruction to school learners, what methods and resources they use, the duration of their IL engagements with school learners, and the arrangement and conduciveness of the place they use for ILE. Observations afforded the researcher an opportunity to witness how learners are taught IL first hand as opposed to receiving the information second hand via interviews (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005).

### **3.5.2. Interviews**

According to Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005), there are three types of interviews in qualitative research, namely, structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews. In structured interviews, the researcher strictly “asks a predetermined set of questions, using the same wording and order of questions as specified in the interview schedule” (Kumar, 2019:221). This type of interview does not afford the researcher the freedom to adjust questions during the interview (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005:165). Semi-structured interviews make use of a prepared set of questions but allow the conversation to flow, affording the researcher and the participant the freedom to say what is of interest to them (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011), therefore the interview schedule is not followed precisely. Semi-structured interviews provide room for the interviewer to ask follow-up questions or probe (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). Unstructured interviews are less formal, with no set of predetermined questions to follow, and this type of interview allows the

respondent to speak freely about the phenomenon being researched (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005). However, this type of interview requires a high level of skill (Kumar, 2019).

This study employed semi-structured interviews because the researcher wanted the freedom to ask follow-up questions where necessary and allow the conversation to flow (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011) within a planned structure.

### **3.6. Population of the study**

Population is defined by Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005:52) as the “study objects and consists of individuals, groups, organisations, human products and events”. Pascoe (2014:132) highlights that “all the people or social artefacts in the population should share at least one specific characteristic that relates to the question.” The population for this study was the librarians at the Library and schoolteachers from the three schools (two primary schools and one high school) near to the Library. Librarians were included in this study to ascertain their readiness to deliver IL instruction to school learners and, in conjunction with schoolteachers, determine to what extent they collaborate with their neighbouring schools with regards to IL instruction.

### **3.7. Sampling method**

Pascoe (2014:134) infers that a population is often too large, and resources and time constraints may not allow the researcher to reach and analyse the entire population, thus a more manageable number to study is needed. A more manageable number of units taken from the population is a sample, which is defined by Pascoe (2014:135) as “a subset of a population that is considered to be a representative of the population”. Probability sampling and non-probability sampling are two different methods used to draw a sample (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005). In non-probability sampling, a researcher cannot determine the possibility that any member of the population will be included in the sample, whereas the chances of the members to be included in the sample can be determined in probability sampling (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005; Pascoe, 2014). Probability sampling is mostly used in quantitative studies, and non-probability sampling is mostly used in qualitative studies (Pascoe, 2014:137).

For this study, the population of librarians numbered five and was therefore manageable and there was no need to sample. For schoolteachers, judgemental sampling, also known as

purposive sampling (a non-probability sampling method), was used. When using this technique, a researcher purposefully selects elements from the population to be part of the study because they have certain characteristics that are important for the research (Pascoe, 2014:143). For each primary school, the foundation phase, intermediate phase and senior phase head was sampled (six in total). For the high school, grade head teachers from Grade 8 to Grade 12 were sampled (five in total). Due to their position in their schools, these 11 teachers were deemed to know more than other teachers within their school about how the Library supports their school with ILE.

### **3.8. Ethical considerations**

This research involved human subjects. When dealing with people it is important that the ethics of research are considered so that no harm is done to them in the course of the research. Informed consent was taken into consideration in this research. This means that users were fully informed about the purpose of the research before agreeing to participate, that their participation was voluntary, and that they could withdraw from the study without consequences (Bless, Higson-Smith & Sithole, 2013). In addition, they were assured that anonymity and confidentiality would be maintained. This means that the identity of participants is not revealed, and that responses are not linked to anyone's identity (Bless, Higson-Smith & Sithole, 2013). Due to the need to protect the identity of the participating librarians, this report does not name the Library or its location.

The researcher is aware of the complexity of ethical issues with regards to children in research. While school learners were in the library during observations at the Library, only the librarians were the subject of the study. No data were collected from learners; therefore, no consent was required for children who were in the library on the days of observation since their behaviour was not being observed.

This study applied for and was granted ethical clearance by the Ethics Review Committee of the Department of Knowledge and Information Stewardship on behalf of the Humanities Faculty at the University of Cape Town (see Appendix A). This study also applied for and received permission from the City of Cape Town (see Appendix B) to collect data from the librarians at the Library. Permission to collect data from the schoolteachers was also applied for and received from the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) (see Appendix C).

### **3.9.Data collection**

In this study, data from public librarians were collected through observations and one-on-one semi-structured interviews. Data from schoolteachers were collected through one-on-one semi-structured interviews only (the teachers were not observable in the library as they did not participate in ILE). The literature informed the formulation of the observation guide (Appendix H) and interview questions for librarians (Appendix F) and, specifically to respond to RQ3, the Big6 model was also used.

Initially, the researcher intended to interview all five librarians at the Library, but subsequently only interviewed three because during the process of applying for ethics clearance from the City of Cape Town, the authorities only gave permission for the researcher to interview three of the five librarians. The City specified which three librarians could be interviewed. With regards to data collection from schoolteachers, initially, the researcher intended to do focus group interviews. However, teachers could not agree on a time to meet for a discussion and, as a result, the researcher ended up doing one-on-one interviews. One-on-one interviews with schoolteachers then took place from 07 September to 30 September 2022. Dates depended on the teachers' availability, and they took place at the schools in which the participants teach. The interviews with primary school teachers took 15 to 20 minutes. Interviews with high school teachers were 30 to 35 minutes long, while interviews with librarians took place at the Library on 22 December 2022 and were 30 to 45 minutes long. The date and duration of each interview, rounded off in minutes, is shown in Table 1 (in the next page).

*Table 1: Interview dates and duration of interviews with the librarians and schoolteachers*

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Duration in minutes</b>
PS1T1	07/09/2022	15
PS1T2	07/09/2022	15
PS1T3	07/09/2022	15
PS2T1	08/09/2022	20
PS2T2	08/09/2022	15
PS2T3	08/09/2022	15
HST1	27/09/2022	30
HST2	27/09/2022	18
HST3	27/09/2022	30
HST4	29/09/2022	35
HST5	30/09/2022	22
L1	22/12/2022	30
L2	22/12/2022	45
L3	22/12/2022	38
Key: PS = Primary school T = Teacher HS = High school L = Librarian		

Observations took place at the Library from 09 February 2023 to 24 April 2023 and ranged from 30 minutes to four hours 25 minutes in length. Initially, the researcher strategically intended to do observations after school, as school learners make use of the library mostly after school, however, there were days when the library staff invited the researcher to come for observations in the morning because the library was being visited by large groups of learners from the schools nearby for orientation. The exact dates and duration of the observations are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Observation dates and duration

<b>Observation</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Duration of the observation</b>
Observation 1	09/02/2023	30 minutes
Observation 2	10/02/2023	1 hour 30 minutes
Observation 3	16/02/2023	3 hours
Observation 4	13/03/2023	3 hours
Observation 5	17/04/2023	2 hours
Observation 6	18/04/2023	2 hours
Observation 7	19/04/2023	2 hours
Observation 8	20/04/2023	4 hours 25 minutes
Observation 9	21/04/2023	3 hours
Observation 10	24/04/2023	2 hours 10 minutes

As mentioned earlier, in this study, the researcher started as a complete observer. However, as a professional librarian, at times the researcher gladly assisted in the Library when it was fully packed during the observations. The assistance of the researcher was needed and appreciated as some of the library staff were aware that the researcher is a qualified librarian. Therefore, this afforded the researcher an opportunity to be a participant observer. However, the researcher was careful and did not abandon the observation role, watching the activities with the participants with the intention of documenting them in writing (as per Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005). While observation was primarily about IL instruction by librarians, the researcher also observed other things that fit into the study, such as the collaborative nature of the librarian-teacher relationship. For example, the researcher observed that one of the teachers who was interviewed for the study visited the library with their learners and that their library visit was scheduled in advance (the schedule was on the staff notice board).

### **3.10. Data analysis**

Data analysis is about making sense of the data that were collected and in qualitative research, data analysis involves first organising data, then coding it according to themes (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). All data collected in this study were analysed following this process. The interview data and the data obtained through observations were transcribed so that the

researcher could get to know it better. The research questions guided the researcher on which data to include or exclude in the coding process, as per Bezuidenhout and Cronje (2014:237). In addition, the research objective, literature and the Big6 model also guided the researcher during the data collection process in deciding which data were useful for this study. Thus, the researcher carefully looked for data that ‘fit’ the themes of, for example, IL training and experiences of librarians, IL programmes, methods used to deliver ILE, and resources used when teaching IL, but was also open to any data that fell outside of the themes but might be relevant. In the next chapter, data are represented in the form of a discussion.

### **3.11. Reliability and validity**

According to Koonin (2014:254), “reliability is linked to the findings of the research” and it is about the credibility and consistency of the research results. Validity on the other hand is about determining the accuracy of the research findings from the viewpoint of both the researcher and the participant, or the reader of the work (Creswell & Miller, 2000 as cited in Creswell & Creswell, 2018:199). Reliability and validity are mostly used in quantitative research in which quantitative researchers aim to produce results that can be quantified and generalised (Koonin, 2014). However, as qualitative researchers are not interested in using numbers as evidence and instead aim to promote the understanding of a particular phenomenon within a specific context, they use a criterion known as trustworthiness to determine the reliability and validity of research findings (Koonin, 2014). Trustworthiness is divided into credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985 in Du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). Credibility is about how accurately the researcher has interpreted the data obtained from the participants (Koonin, 2014). Transferability refers to the “ability of the findings to be applied to a similar situation and delivering similar results” (Koonin, 2014:258). While dependability is about “whether we would obtain the same results if we could observe the same thing twice” (Trochim & Donnelly, 2007:149 in Kumar, 2019:277). On the other side, conformability is linked to how well the researcher interpreted the data collected from the participants and how the findings of the research represent the narratives of the participants (Koonin, 2014).

To increase the trustworthiness of the findings of this study, the researcher collected data from the participants using interviews and observations, and converged the collected data (triangulation) (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). At the end of the study, the researcher took time to verify data with the available participants to determine whether they feel that the data are accurate and a true reflection of what they said during data collection. Moreover, the researcher

reported data as accurately and truthfully as possible and attempted to be as unbiased as possible.

### **3.12. Study limitations**

The researcher intended to do focus group interviews with schoolteachers, however, the teachers could not agree on the same date and time for a focus group, which is one of the challenges of setting up a focus group (Nieuwenhuis, 2020). As a result, the researcher ended up doing one-on-one interviews throughout. The researcher believes that focus group interviews would have been beneficial to the study for gathering more data on the views of teachers on their collaboration with the librarians for IL instruction. For example, the group interaction in a focus group would have been “productive in widening the range of responses, activating forgotten details of experience and releasing inhibitions that may otherwise discourage participants from disclosing information” (Nieuwenhuis, 2020:111). Also, a focus group would allow participants “to build on each other’s ideas and comments to provide an in-depth view not attainable from individual interviews” (Nieuwenhuis, 2020:111). However, the focus group also has disadvantages that could potentially make it difficult to facilitate for new researchers. For example, “the information collected may be biased through group processes such as domination of the discussions by the more outspoken individuals, groupthink, and the difficulty of assessing viewpoints of the less assertive participants” (Nieuwenhuis, 2020:112). Therefore, one-on-one interviews worked well in the end in terms of enabling the researcher to ask open-ended questions and make use of probes to get clarity from the participants on vague responses (as per Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005:167).

Another limitation was that the researcher intended to interview all five librarians at the selected library, however, the authorities only allowed the researcher to interview three. The researcher believes that the librarians that could not be included in the study also had a potential to contribute meaningful data to the study as they also deal with school learners. However, with the help of the observations, the researcher was able to see all the library staff in action; other librarians were aware of the observation taking place in the library and did not object to being observed.

Waiting for the right time to do the observations was another limitation. For example, the researcher could not perform observations straight after doing the interviews in December 2022 as the learners were on school holiday and not necessarily utilising the library mostly for school

activities as is the case when schools are open. The researcher mitigated this by getting advice from the librarians at the Library for the right time to do observations, and the researcher's willingness to go to the Library immediately when informed of the opportunity to do observations helped in overcoming the challenge of waiting for the right time.

Load shedding was another limitation. The Library had to close during load shedding (and the researcher had to stop the observation an hour earlier than the scheduled time to end observation – which is the closing time of the Library if load shedding coincided with closing time) and this sometimes affected planned observations. The researcher then had to reschedule to make up for the lost hours.

### **3.13. Chapter summary**

This chapter discussed the methodology employed in this case study. The interpretive paradigm that guided the researcher in selecting an approach, design and methods for data collection, analysis, and interpretation of these findings was discussed in this chapter. This chapter also discussed the process of ethical consideration that was followed by the researcher prior to data collection. The process that was followed in data analysis and the study limitations were also discussed.

## **Chapter 4: Presentation of the data**

### **4.1. Introduction**

The main objective of this study was to investigate the readiness of public libraries to offer IL support to school learners. The data were collected from three public librarians from the Library and from 11 schoolteachers (six primary school teachers and five high school teachers) from the three schools (two primary schools and one high school) near the Library. The data from librarians were collected through one-on-one interviews and observations, while data from schoolteachers were collected through one-on-one interviews only.

In this chapter, first data collected through interviews with and observations of public librarians are presented and then data from interviews with schoolteachers. Data are presented according to themes and in alignment with the questions that were asked during interviews, and selected quotes from interviews are shown. To ensure anonymity and in an attempt to maintain confidentiality, participants are referred to according to the abbreviations assigned to them according to their place of work, alongside a number that was assigned randomly. Thus, librarians are L1, L2 and L3; primary school 1 teachers are PS1T1, PS1T2 and PS1T3; primary school 2 teachers are PS2T1, PS2T2 and PS2T3; and high school teachers are HST1, HST2, HST3, HST4 and HST5.

### **4.2. Interviews with librarians and public library observations**

This section presents data collected through interviews with and observations of the public librarians. The data presented here cover public librarians' qualifications and work experience; public librarians' understanding of IL; methods and forms of IL instruction available in the Library; information resources technologies used for teaching IL at the Library; the IL standard or model used to deliver ILE; librarians' IL training; librarians' attitude towards teaching IL to school learners; and their collaboration with schoolteachers.

#### **4.2.1. Public librarians' qualifications and work experience**

At the start of each interview, librarians were asked whether they have any post-school qualifications and were also asked specifically if they have LIS qualifications, as well as to state when they obtained their latest LIS qualification. Two librarians have a LIS qualification: one has a Bachelor's degree in Library and Information Science obtained in the early 2000s

and the other has a Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS) degree with honours obtained in the last five years. The librarian without a LIS qualification has Grade 12 as their highest qualification. The librarians' years of experience in public libraries range from three to 25 years.

#### **4.2.2. Public librarians' understanding of IL**

The librarians were asked to share what they understand by the term 'information literacy'. L1 and L3 indicated that they understand IL as collecting information from various sources and giving the relevant information that is required by the user to the user regularly, as well as showing them how books are arranged in the library. L2 understands IL as teaching the user to understand their information need and act on it. L2 provided an example of showing learners how to find and access information in books by making use of the table of contents and commented that they feel that they "become a teacher at that time".

#### **4.2.3. Methods and forms of IL instruction available at the Library**

The librarians were asked what methods, if any, they use to teach IL. Examples of methods such as library tours, one-on-one sessions and group teaching were given to them. Their responses revealed both the forms of IL programmes offered at the Library and the resources used for delivering those programmes. The librarians in the study stated that they use library tours, which are usually planned with schools, for orientation mostly. During observation, the researcher witnessed these tours when large groups of primary school learners were brought to the library by their schoolteachers for orientation. The librarians (including the ones that were not interviewed for the study) giving learners library tours informed them about library resources and services, taught them how to sign up for a library card, and explained to them how to find information in various library resources, including information searching on the internet using the library computers. The researcher also witnessed a library tour for two classes of high school learners (Grades 8 and 11) that were brought to the library by their schools. Their library tour was like the primary school tour albeit that the focus for high school learners was on physical books because their teachers had indicated that the learners specifically needed books to read to improve their English. According to the researcher's observations, the duration of library orientation for each group of learners was between 50 and 60 minutes.

Both interviews and observations showed that, besides library orientation, librarians at the Library teach IL to small groups of learners and on a one-on-one basis at a teachable moment. For example, when learners go to the library to do their assignments or homework, librarians assist them with understanding their problem and information need, locating relevant information sources and finding information within the information sources, which are either print information resources or information from the internet. According to the researcher's observation, the duration of one-on-one interaction between the librarians and learners at the Library was between one and 10 minutes and up to 20 minutes when librarians had to take learners to the shelves for locating the needed books. The interviews further revealed that ILE is also embedded in holiday programmes in which learners are first given library orientation and then assisted with reading and spelling. There were no data that explicitly point to formal stand-alone IL sessions or classes. Both interviews and observations revealed that the rest of the ILE engagements between the librarians and school learners depended on a learner's need at the time.

#### **4.2.4. Information resources and technologies used for teaching IL at the Library**

The researcher sought to find out which information resources and technologies, if any, librarians in the study use to teach IL. All of the librarians in the study stated that they use library books, learners' school textbooks, newspapers, magazines, Libby (the library application for e-books) and the 15 computers in the library with internet access (for example, for the use of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and Google). In addition, the observations showed that librarians also use learners' workbooks to teach IL. For example, librarians must read and explain to the learners what the homework or assignment requires so that they can assist learners to find and access the relevant information.

#### **4.2.5. IL standard or model used to deliver ILE at the Library**

To find out if the participants include elements of the Big6 in their IL engagements with school learners, it was important to ask whether the IL instruction offered by public librarians to the school learners is based on any IL standard or model. During the interviews, some examples of IL models were given to the participants, but all three librarians stated that their IL instruction is not based on any IL standard. However, they stated that they received guidance on how to teach IL. Information about the training that was received by librarians from the Library is shown in section 4.2.6.

The librarians were also asked whether their IL instruction incorporates aspects of other key literacies related to IL, such as computer literacy or media literacy, and if so, how. All three librarians indicated that they include digital literacy. L2 explained in some detail that when learners have obtained their library cards, they let them create a SmartCape account (an account that enables users to make use of computers with internet in the public library for free) and guide them step by step in the process of creating their accounts. L2 added that they teach learners about computer equipment and basic computer skills such as typing so they can type their assignments on their own if they want to. L2 further stated that they also teach learners how to search for information on internet search engines such as Google, and on PressReader (an application for digital magazines and newspapers), as well as teaching them how to use Libby (the application for borrowing e-books).

The librarians were also asked to what extent their interaction with school learners includes task definition, information seeking strategies, location and access, use of information, synthesis, and evaluation (the stages of the Big6 model).

When responding to this question, L1 did not explicitly mention the element of task definition; however, other parts of the interview revealed that they go through **information seeking strategies** often by teaching learners to identify the best sources to satisfy their information need. They mostly encourage learners to use physical books. In a case where the needed information is not available in books, they advise learners to use computers and search for information in different sources such as *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and Libby, as well as in a book with cut-and-paste articles obtained from newspapers (referred to as pamphlet cuttings), which the librarians keep up to date for when learners need up-to-date information not available in books.

L1 did not mention using any of the other Big6 stages. To get more information about synthesis, the researcher asked a follow-up question, that is, “Do you teach them [learners] how to organise and present their information? For example, teach them to structure their essay?” L1 responded:

As librarians, we give the information; we are information workers. So, we don't go there because it is their teachers' 'baby' to check that. We assume that when they come into the library, they know how to structure their essays.

L1 further stated that they **evaluate** the final product by ensuring that the learners get what they want, which entails asking the learners if the information is correct and whether they are satisfied with it. They do not however incorporate the Big6 element of evaluation (where learners judge the result) into their ILE.

L2 did not explicitly mention that they teach **task definition**, however, said in the interview that they first ensure that learners understand their information need before directing them to any information resources. The researcher confirmed that, during the observation when L2 was assisting primary school learners with homework, they first asked them if they understood what was required of them, and then explained further to them. L2 also includes **information seeking strategies** often in their engagement with school learners, for example, by explaining to them about the information resources available in the library, such as books and computers with internet connection. Furthermore, L2 also includes **location and access of information** in books and computers, for example, by teaching learners how to use a table of contents to access the needed information in a book and how to search for and find information on Google. Moreover, L2 includes **use of information**: they teach the learners not to copy and paste information because that is plagiarism. Thus, they encourage learners to engage with the information, extract the relevant information and paraphrase.

L3 indicated that they include **task definition** often in their engagements with school learners. They stated that some learners do not understand their information needs, therefore, librarians help them understand what the task requires and their subsequent information need. L3 also includes **information seeking strategies** often. They commented:

If a book is not available, they [learners] search for information in the computer.

I assist learners to search for information and ask them to read [it].

The researcher observed that L3 also includes **location and access of information**. During the observation, the researcher noted that L3 does not just give learners the relevant books, but rather shows them how to find the information in a book by making use of the table of contents, much like L2. In addition, L3 guides learners with searching for information on the computer in relation to the question given to them by their teachers. L3 did not explicitly mention the element of **use of information** when responding to the question. However, their response to other interview questions revealed that they teach the element of **use of information** to school learners. For example, they mentioned that in reading and storytelling sessions they teach

learners to read with understanding and that they also encourage learners to extract only the relevant information.

The other elements of Big6, which are synthesis and evaluation, were not evident. The researcher observed that once learners understand their information need, what they need to do, and then find the needed information, they continue to work independently in the library or they take the needed information and go home to complete their work. Therefore, for this reason, the researcher did not witness the last two stages of the Big6.

#### **4.2.6. Public librarians' information literacy training**

The librarians were asked whether they had ever received any training (formal or informal) or guidance to teach IL. L2 did not receive IL training at work, while L1 and L3 received one day's IL training about three years ago. L1 explained that the training they received focused on collecting and finding information for users in print resources.

L3 responded to the above question as follows:

It was not much of a training. It was a one-day workshop for IL. When we left the workshop, we suggested that one day is not enough because there is a lot to cover [in IL].

L3 explained that, in the one-day IL workshop, they were taught only the basics of IL and that they have to improvise using their own experience to make their training work for them and their users. The librarians with LIS qualifications did not refer to what they learnt in their studies. They associated the question with training received from work only.

#### **4.2.7. Public librarians' attitudes towards teaching information literacy to school learners**

The librarians were asked to indicate if they think that teaching IL to school learners is their duty. There were varied responses. L1 commented that teaching is not their duty since they are not teachers; their role is to give information to the learners while the teaching role is for the teachers. Upon hearing L3's response, the researcher followed up by clarifying to the participant that the 'teaching' referred to in the question was for teaching IL only. L1 commented:

Not to teach, our role is to give information only. Remember, we don't have the skills to teach. Not all of us. I may have the skill but here at the library we've got different designations. We've got professional librarians who can do that, and we've got those who are not professional which are assistant librarians; some they can do, some cannot do. So, that is why I say that teaching side is not ours. Ours is to help them get information.

In contrast, L2 firmly stated that teaching IL is their duty. L3 said that, although they are not teachers but information providers, to some extent, teaching IL to learners is their duty, in terms of guiding learners and providing them with the information. They added that they might as well be called teachers because they teach learners to read with understanding during reading and storytelling sessions. During the interview, L3 further commented that it is very fulfilling when they successfully assist someone and when they hear positive feedback, such as that learners passed the assignment with which they (the librarian) had assisted.

#### **4.2.8. Public librarians' collaboration with schoolteachers**

The librarians were asked to indicate how often they interact with schoolteachers from the neighbouring schools. All three librarians stated that they interact with the schoolteachers from the neighbouring schools often. L1 explained that they interact with schoolteachers continuously because schools are their target market and, when they want to do things that deal with reading, they have to engage with schools. L2 highlighted that one of the primary schools involves them in their curriculum planning and informs them in advance of their learners' upcoming assignments and projects. L3 shared the same sentiments and stated that, at the beginning of the year, they approach schools and ask heads of departments to send them their syllabi for the year for them to understand the information that will be needed, so they can prepare in advance. L3 added that they also ask schoolteachers to advise on a suitable time of the year for the debate and reading competition organised by the Library.

The observations confirmed that there is a relationship between the Library and the neighbouring schools. For example, the researcher noted that there was a document pinned on the wall at the Library with library visit dates scheduled for PS2, which confirmed that PS2 includes the Library in their planning.

To obtain more information about collaborating with schools, the librarians were asked whether they ever visited schools and invited schoolteachers for IL instruction. L1 indicated that they visit schools on a quarterly basis and highlighted the membership drive (signing up for library cards) as the reason for their visit. It was not clear to the researcher that the visit was for IL. With regards to inviting schoolteachers for IL instruction, L1 reported that they did not do so.

The librarians were also asked how, if at all, they collaborate with the schoolteachers to assist learners with IL. There was no evidence of this collaboration from interviews as L2 and L3 only referred to preparation of the information needed by the school in advance. L1 commented that they do not collaborate with schools on ILE; they provide orientation to school learners instead.

However, the data from observations revealed that, to some extent, librarians do collaborate with schoolteachers for IL support for school learners, for example, by communicating and arranging with schoolteachers a library orientation for learners which includes IL instruction. Also, some schoolteachers accompany their learners to the Library for this organised library orientation.

The researcher was given an opportunity to accompany the librarians to a planning meeting of librarians and high school teachers, in which the high school teachers voiced the needs of their learners with which they believed the Library could assist. Those needs included reading English and informing learners about the importance of the library and its resources and services. After that meeting, learners visited the Library for library orientation which, as previously discussed, included some of the elements of the Big6 such as task definition, information seeking strategies, location and access, and information use, thus forming part of IL instruction. Learners were also informed about various books written in English appropriate for their age and they then selected the ones they were interested in.

In the interviews, librarians were asked to rate the collaboration between the Library and the schools on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest level of collaboration, and they were given an opportunity to elaborate on their answers. Their responses are shown in Table 3.

*Table 3: Public librarians' rating of the collaboration between the Library and the schools in the study*

<b>Participant</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Reason/elaboration</b>
L1	PS1	3	Because we do not work with teachers a lot at this school but their learners are also our library users and they even come to the library for the reading club that is facilitated by an external facilitator organisation.
	PS2	5	Because we work with them well.
	HS	4	We also work with them.
L2	PS1	2	We do not work with them very much because they fall on the other side that has its own library. But we do assist their learners when they come to the library.
	PS2	5	Because we work with them very much and they include us in their curriculum.
	HS	4	When they are invited to the library they are willing to come.
L3	PS1	2	We do not work with the teachers from [PS1] a lot.
	PS2	5	We work with them a lot and they include us in their planning.
	HS	4	Because they come with their learners to the library so they can participate in our activities when we invite them.

The data in Table 3 show that the librarians in the study rated their collaboration with PS1 low-medium (2 to 3) as they said they do not work with the teachers from PS1 a lot. Despite that, the researcher observed that learners from PS1 make use of the Library. On the other side, the librarians' collaboration with PS2 was rated high (5) by all the librarians in the study and they stated that they work with the teachers from PS2 very much. Observations also showed that some of the teachers from PS2 visited the Library with their learners for library orientation. Table 3 also shows that the librarians in the study rated their collaboration with the high school teachers high (4) and stated that they work with them and that they take their learners to the Library when the learners are invited.

#### **4.2.9. Challenges to teaching IL**

To ascertain whether librarians are faced with any challenges in teaching IL to school learners, the researcher asked whether the librarians think they have enough resources to support the teaching of IL to school learners, and they were given an opportunity to state any other challenges they have in this area. All the librarians in the study indicated that they think they have enough resources to teach IL. However, they also indicated that they sometimes face a shortage of books, such as the school textbooks, more especially when many learners come to the library at the same time to get information on the same topic. The other challenge mentioned is that some learners are not able to read with understanding and don't have an interest in physical books and are only interested in using computers. L2 added that some learners lack enthusiasm for reading physical books and also referred to personal devices as the challenge, stating that some learners visit the library only to use their own devices, connect to the WiFi and watch YouTube.

Another challenge observed by the researcher is that there is a limited number of chairs in the children's area. For example, on the day where 150 learners visited the Library for library orientation, the area was not big enough for all 150 learners to sit comfortably during library orientation. Also, the number of computers for IL training in the library is limited – there are only 15. Consequently, a large number of learners have to share one computer when they are shown how to search for information on the computer and others have to crowd around them, which can limit their view of the computer screen and thus their optimal learning.

### **4.3. Interviews with schoolteachers**

This section presents data collected from schoolteachers in particular in relation to the third research question of the study.

#### **4.3.1. Individual use of the public library by primary and high school teachers**

The researcher asked the schoolteachers about their individual use and membership of the public library to find out about their familiarity with the public library. Only one primary school teacher is a member and a user of a public library, and they use it to improve their own general knowledge. Five primary school teachers stated that they are not public library members, though one of these teachers goes to the library in Term 1 when taking learners for story reading. Two high school teachers in the study are public library members, and they use it sometimes to help their own children with homework. Another high school teacher in the study went to the public library with their school learners. Despite the fact that most of the teachers in the study are not using the library in their personal capacity, there seemed to be a positive attitude towards it (as will be shown).

#### **4.3.2. Library support for teaching and learning activities of the schools and teacher-librarian communication**

All the teachers were asked if the Library provides support for the teaching and learning activities of their school, and if so, how.

##### *Responses from primary school teachers*

Interviews revealed that teachers from PS1 were not aware that the Library was located near their school; consequently, they thought that the Library did not explicitly support the teaching and learning activities of their school and so they did not communicate with the Library at all. However, they acknowledged that there is a possibility that their learners do make use of that library in their own capacity. In contrast, the teachers from PS2 were fully aware of the Library and believe that it supports the teaching and learning activities of their school.

Two teachers from this school, however, believe that the support provided by the Library is not constant. For example, PS2T1 mentioned that the Library provides support to their school only at the beginning of the year for reading aloud and for the debate programmes (reading aloud is

when the librarians read to the learners at the Library). However, PS2T1 added that they do not remember the Library doing an awareness drive at their school to properly market itself and its importance. PS2T1 further explained that, besides visiting schools during South African Library Week (SALW), which takes place in March, librarians do not go to their school, unless some teachers approach them and tell them about their needs. Then, on an agreed date, a grade will visit the Library, but the engagement ends there. The participant expressed that the SALW visit is not enough.

PS2T2 however mentioned that they take their learners to the Library for reading story books and that the learners who go to the Library do well in comprehension in Grade 3. Despite that, PS2T2 highlighted that this activity takes place in Term 1 and not again, and confirmed that librarians visit the school only once a year.

Also, the PS2 teachers revealed that there is no formal communication between them and the librarians for the learners' upcoming tasks with which the Library might assist, except for the communication that takes place at the beginning of the year, for the arranging of library orientation.

On the other hand, PS2T3 firmly stated that the Library provides support for the teaching and learning activities of their school and that, due to the library support, their learners in the foundation phase can read, and they start reading a book from the cover and can identify the title and author. PS2T3 further added:

They help, even in research they assist. We work together for Grade 4 to Grade 8 literature, like getting information about the life history of an author or biography. From Grade 4 they know how to search for information, a variety of literature, poems and folktales. They use computers in the library.

It was important for this study to ask if the teachers refer learners to the Library for their schoolwork. All the teachers from both PS1 and PS2 stated that they generally refer their learners to a public library for their schoolwork, but not necessarily to the Library. For example, according to PS2T2, they would refer them to a library for research projects and for English and isiXhosa formal assessment activities where learners must find books like novels to complete the activity.

### *Responses from high school teachers*

The high school teachers also had varied responses to the question of library support for the teaching and learning activities of their schools. HST1 said that, in the past, the Library provided support for teaching and learning activities at their school. They reflected on those days and stated that they used to go to the Library and inform librarians about learners' assignments and ask if they had resources. Librarians would provide appropriate resources when they could or organise them from other libraries (interlibrary loans) when they did not have the resources in the library.

HST2 was unsure if the Library provides support or not for the teaching and learning activities of their school. They stated that they do not remember talking about the Library in their school meetings, which is an indicator to them that there might not be any relationship between their school and the Library. On the other hand, HST3 believes that the Library provides lots of support for their school's teaching and learning activities and mentioned that some of their learners would say that they are going to the Library after school. HST3 added that the Library once invited all their Grade 10 learners for library orientation, where they were informed about library resources and services.

In the same vein, HST4 and HST5 believed that the Library supports the teaching and learning activities of their school. HST4 mentioned that they are in a partnership with the Library and the organisation that is located next to the Library, which provides tutoring to their learners. If learners need information or books, the organisation refers them to the Library. HST4 added that during times of examinations, their learners go to the Library to revise. The teacher stated that as a Grade head they undertook an initiative to encourage learners to go to the Library, know its importance and sign up for library cards. It seems that it is only HST4 who is communicating with the librarians about learners' upcoming tasks.

The data show that HST1, HST3 and HST4 refer learners to the Library to do research on their school tasks. In contrast, HST2 stated that the subjects they teach do not require the use of the Library as the learners have textbooks for that subject. However, HST2 recalled that in the past they had referred learners to the Library for a certain school task.

### *Responses from primary and high school teachers*

To find out more about the schoolteachers' opinions about IL support from the Library, they were asked how they think the Library should or could support teachers to develop the IL skills of learners. PS1T1 said the Library can teach their learners how to find information in a book and on the computer. PS1T2 said the Library should orientate teachers about the Library. Thereafter, as teachers, they can collaborate with the librarians for ILE. PS1T3 shared the same sentiments as PS1T2 and stated that they would like the Library staff to equip them with IL skills over IL sessions so that, as teachers, they would be able to transfer the skills to their learners and encourage them to make use of the Library. Furthermore, PS1T2 mentioned that they have a computer lab in their school but some of their teachers are not fully computer literate. IL sessions offered by librarians could help bridge that gap.

PS2T1, PS2T2 and PS2T3 also highlighted that they would like the librarians to equip them (teachers) with IL skills through workshops. PS2T3 mentioned that workshops could take place once a year or quarterly and be in alignment with the school curriculum. PS2T1 further mentioned that the majority of schools do not have libraries, with some having only library stock without a librarian. Therefore, librarians could step in to develop such libraries and equip teachers with IL skills, and in return, teachers would be able to teach their learners IL skills. Similarly, the high school teachers in the study would like librarians to offer them IL workshop programmes, and they would like to have a formal relationship with the librarians across all grades. HST2 commented:

Librarians need to workshop us [about IL], especially the language teachers. They should not do a once-off thing. [It should be a] three- to six-month programme because you cannot learn such things in one day. Teachers need to be encouraged to participate.

#### **4.3.3. Collaboration between teachers and the Library for IL instruction**

The researcher asked teachers how the Library collaborates with their schools for IL instruction, if at all.

### *Responses from primary school teachers*

Since the interviewed teachers from PS1 were not aware of the Library, they all stated that there is no collaboration between them and the Library. From the second primary school, PS2T2 said their school works well with the Library, particularly for reading, which the researcher observed incorporated IL instruction: when learners from PS2 were taken to the Library by their schoolteachers for a library tour, their tour included reading and some aspects of the Big6 model (as mentioned in section 4.2.8). For example, during the library tour, the librarians read a story to the learners and actively engaged them by asking them questions about the story that encouraged critical thinking.

PS2T3 also believes that the Library works well with their school for IL instruction, stating that the Library teaches their learners how to search for information on computers. They added that the Library has promoted chess at their school, which improves the mathematical skills of learners, builds confidence and gives players national exposure. PS2T3, however, was unsure about how the Library collaborates with their school for IL instruction.

Teachers were asked to rate the collaboration between their school and the Library on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest. They were asked to elaborate on their answers. Their responses are shown in Table 4.

*Table 4: Primary school teachers' rating of the collaboration between their schools and the Library*

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Reason/elaboration</b>
PS1T1	1	There is no collaboration.
PS1T2	1	There's no collaboration.
PS1T3	2.5	Our learners do say that they go to the internet café that is nearby the Library and they pass the Library when they go, so maybe they do go in there and get the information. If there could be an awareness, if the Library could bring the library forms to the school for lenders to fill in or else [allow] the school [to] borrow the needed books for a period of time, [that would be a good thing].
PS2T1	2	I would rate them 2 because there is a huge gap and therefore a lot that needs to be done.
PS2T2	5	We have never encountered any problems when we visit the Library. For example, we have large numbers of learners but when we go to the Library, they even divide the groups and attend to them in groups, and they save our time. They are welcoming.
PS2T3	5	Their support is effective and aligned with our curriculum, most especially in reading and debate. We learn from them even in reading (both isiXhosa and English). Their reading competition makes us realise things we were ignoring or taking for granted. So, we learn from them and implement that in class. We learn other important things related to spelling from them.

With reference to the comment made by PS2T2 above, the researcher's observation confirmed that librarians divide learners into groups for a brief computer session and that librarians were most welcoming to the teachers and school learners on the observation days.

### *Responses from high school teachers*

The high school teachers provided varied responses to the question of IL collaboration, too. Despite the fact that HST5 mentioned that the Library recently started to provide support to Grade 10 learners and that Grade 9 learners went to the Library for Life Orientation, HST5 stated that the support is not across all grades and therefore believes that there is no formal partnership between their school and the Library. HST1 was not aware of any partnership between their school and the Library; similarly with HST2 and HST3, though HST3 acknowledged that, since Grade 10, learners were taken to the Library, therefore there could have been some communication or invitation, but they would not call it a strong collaboration.

On the other hand, HST4 believed that the Library collaborates with their school for IL instruction by assisting their learners with literacy skills, searching for information and analysing search results. HST4 elaborated:

[...] they are engaging them in debate and one day they were asking me what are prescribed short stories and poems that are given by the department so they can assist learners understand what they are about and how to answer questions. They get guidance from us.

High school teachers were also asked to rate the collaboration between their school and the Library on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest. They were asked to elaborate on their answers. Their responses are shown in Table 5.

*Table 5: High school teachers' rating of the collaboration between their schools and the Library*

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Reason/elaboration</b>
HST1	2	Because our learners prefer to use Google more than the Library and there is no formal collaboration between the school and the Library.
HST2	1	The reason why I'm saying 1 is not that we don't want kids to go to the Library, it is only that the learners are not interested in reading – they are more focusing on the information they are getting on their phone. Even when you ask them to do a small amount of research, they just go to their phone. I think if there were e-books, if they could have access to e-books, I think [there could be collaboration between the Library and school].
HST3	2	I have not seen the collaboration. If there is one now, the collaboration is done by certain teachers for their learners. It is not formal and well known by everyone in the school. It is not standard across all grades. It would be nice if all our learners could be taught to appreciate books and not cut out pages from books because some do that now.
HST4	5	They have never given me any problems and if they need something we communicate on our WhatsApp groups as teachers, librarians and tutors from the organisation [located next to the Library].
HST5	1	It is not yet there.

#### **4.3.4. High school and primary school teachers' opinions about information literacy education**

This section presents data that shows the opinions of the primary and high school teachers in the study with regards to ILE.

### *Responses from primary school teachers*

The schoolteachers in the study were asked if they think it is important for learners to be taught IL skills. All the teachers from the two primary schools in the study believe that it is important for their learners to be taught IL skills. PS1T3 commented:

Yes, I think the literacy skill you're talking about is very important because you can find out that a high school learner cannot search for information even on Google; they cannot find the information that is most relevant to the given topic. This is important because a time will come where technology takes over everything [and learners must be able to search online].

PS2T1 commented:

Yes, it is important because now we are in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which is the information age, so it is important for learners to be taught how to search, access, use and interpret information at an early age. So, it is important to teach them these skills from a young age.

### *Responses from high school teachers*

All the high school teachers in the study shared the same sentiments as the primary school teachers and indicated that it is important for their learners to be taught IL skills. HST3 stated that IL enhances the learners' studies and since learners no longer rely on books only for information, IL can help learners to make use of their personal devices such as cell phones for accessing information. HST3 further mentioned that IL will enable learners to do well at university and be able to compete with other learners.

#### **4.3.5. Recommendations from the schoolteachers**

Once they knew about the Library, the PS1 teachers were asked how they think a partnership with the Library could benefit their school. All of the three teachers from this school believe that a partnership between the Library and their school could improve the IL skills of their learners and prepare learners for high school. PS1T1 commented that librarians can, for example, teach learners how to find information in a book and how to search for information on the computer and that can help them to work independently. PS1T3 stated that there is a

computer laboratory in their school which is used as a mathematics class only and learners do not make use of the computers as they are not computer literate. However, if librarians could equip their learners with IL skills, they would be able to make use of that computer lab.

PS2 was aware of the Library and some teachers from this school, like the foundation phase teacher, already had a relationship with the Library. Teachers from PS2 therefore were asked how they think the partnership could be improved. One teacher stated that their relationship with the Library could be improved through the provision of IL programmes for all teachers, which could be offered for a group of teachers according to the grades they teach or according to their phases, like foundation, intermediate and senior phase.

Those high school teachers who said there is a partnership believe that it can be improved through better communication and formal collaboration. One teacher added that their learners also struggle with career choices and choosing matric subjects, and the Library could help their learners with career guidance. The participant further mentioned that the Library needs to be visible – librarians should visit schools and the community so that people can become more aware of the Library and what it offers.

#### **4.4. Chapter summary**

This chapter presented data from public libraries and primary school and high school teachers. The data show that public libraries provide support to schoolteachers and school learners. The Big6 was also used in the data analysis by exploring whether its elements were present or not in the IL support offered to school learners by librarians. Data pertaining to the relationship between public librarians and schoolteachers were also presented in this chapter. Schoolteachers expressed that they value public libraries and see the importance of IL skills, however, there is little evidence in the data that they act on their claims. The most important findings are discussed in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 5: Interpretation of data, recommendations and conclusion**

### **5.1. Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the readiness of public libraries to offer IL instruction support to school learners. This chapter presents the discussion of the findings related to the case study and in alignment with the three research questions. It also includes the recommendations, suggestions for further studies and the conclusion.

### **5.2. RQ1: Do public libraries have suitably skilled librarians to deliver IL instruction to school learners?**

In order to respond to the first research question, the study explored librarians' qualifications, work experience, their understanding of IL and their attitude towards teaching.

#### **5.2.1. Librarians' IL training and competencies**

As stated earlier, a LIS qualification puts a librarian in a good position to teach IL. However, librarian duties have changed over time and many librarians in the past were not trained during their formal education in the current technologies that are now needed for the overall success of library and information service delivery, including ILE (Edewor, 2020). Librarians who obtained their qualifications many years ago must keep up with the changes in their role and meet user needs effectively. One of the librarians in the study obtained their formal LIS qualification over 20 years ago. Work experience, however, also plays a crucial role in the readiness of librarians to teach IL – at least five years of work experience, as alluded to by Lyakurwa and Luambano (2019). Some of the librarians in this study have more than five years of work experience in public libraries. The librarians possess among them a combination of qualifications and work experience, which indicates that they are in a good position for IL work in this regard.

They do however have a varied understanding of IL, ranging from sourcing information and giving the relevant information to the user, to teaching the learner to understand their information need and act on it. This varied understanding can affect the way they deliver IL programmes (Demasson, Partridge & Bruce, 2019:48). However, observations revealed that, irrespective of the IL definition that librarians provided in interviews, they demonstrated an understanding of IL in practice. For example, while the study revealed that IL training at the

Library is not explicitly based on any model or international standard, the stages of the Big6 model can be seen in librarians' engagements with school learners. Librarians teach learners task definition by ensuring that learners understand the task at hand and the information needed. They also teach information seeking strategies, location and access of information, and use of information. However, they do not include the information synthesis and evaluation stages of the Big6. It was found through observations that, once learners get the needed information, they finish off their task on their own and therefore librarians do not engage with learners in the later stages of the Big6 model. Similar findings were revealed in the study by Pietikäinen, Kortelainen and Siklander (2017), where learners were also assisted by librarians in the early stages of the information seeking process, and they depended less on librarians towards the end as they gained autonomy in the process of problem solving.

Some of the librarians at the Library received internal one-day IL training, which was viewed as inadequate by one of the participants that attended the training, highlighting that IL is broad and complex, and therefore cannot be fully covered in a one-day training programme. Lack of training opportunities for staff members plays a role in limiting the librarians' efforts to deliver ILE (Kingori, Njiraine & Maina, 2016:20; Lai, 2011).

The study revealed that the training received by some of the librarians focused on finding and collecting relevant information for users in print sources only and did not include the practical aspect of finding information on the internet, which is crucial and includes technological skills that are needed in the digital age. The need for technological skills among librarians was demonstrated in the literature (Ocholla & Shongwe, 2013; Mthembu & Ocholla, 2019). It is crucial that IL training facilitators recognise and include these skills when training librarians to ensure that library staff are kept abreast of the technological developments that affect their jobs.

### **5.2.2. Librarians' attitudes towards teaching IL to school learners**

It is stated in the literature (for example, Lai, 2011; Nkondo, Hart & Nassimbeni, 2018) that IL instruction is the role of librarians. This study found that the participants generally have a positive attitude towards teaching IL to school learners, although they acknowledged that they are not teachers by profession. The librarians in the study embodied enthusiasm when teaching IL to school learners. Other librarians that were not interviewed were also involved in teaching

IL, most especially on orientation days with large groups of learners, and they showed eagerness to assist school learners.

However, it was found that some librarians are not entirely positive about teaching other elements of IL to school learners and said that they are not teachers and perceived the synthesis stage of the Big6 model as the role of schoolteachers. Those librarians raised a concern that not all librarians at the Library have the skills to teach. Perhaps if they were all in possession of professional LIS qualifications, their attitude towards teaching all the necessary elements of IL, as shown in the Big6 model, would be slightly more positive and they would feel better equipped to teach IL. The concern raised by some of the librarians about their teaching skills reiterates that a LIS qualification plays a key role in the readiness of librarians to teach IL (CHE, 2020), and that pedagogical competencies also play an important role in the readiness of public librarians to deliver ILE (Kingori, Njiraine & Maina, 2016).

### **5.3. RQ2: How do public libraries support school learners with ILE in terms of programmes, methods and resources used?**

In order to respond to the second research question, the study explored how the Library supports school learners with IL programmes and what methods and resources are used to teach IL to school learners.

#### **5.3.1. IL programmes at the Library**

Both interviews and observations revealed that librarians in the study do not offer a programme referred to as ‘information literacy’, though digital and computer literacy sessions are offered to school learners to some extent. IL instruction is embedded in various library programmes offered to school learners. These programmes are library tours for orientation, storytelling, reading and spelling programmes, homework assistance programmes and holiday programmes (which again includes library orientation). The literature from South Africa and abroad considers most of these offerings as part of IL instruction (Lai, 2011; Matteson & Gersch 2020; Muchaonyerwa, Odularu-Olatoye & Gunuza, 2021).

The librarians in the study make use of demonstrations, one-on-one consultations, teachable moments and group lecturing methods for ILE, as well as demonstrating to learners how to search for and find information on the internet. Also, on request, they teach the elements of IL

to learners on a one-on-one basis by, for example, showing learners how to locate information through a book's table of contents. The librarians also take the opportunity to teach IL elements when students ask for assistance with homework, and the group lecturing method takes place when learners are divided into groups during orientation. These methods are also evident in the literature, like in Lai (2011), Lyakurwa and Luambano (2019), and Kingori, Njiraine and Maina (2016). The findings revealed that the duration of one-on-one interactions between librarians and learners varied greatly (from one to 20 minutes), depending on the need of the learner. The duration of library orientations was longer – up to 60 minutes for each group of learners.

### **5.3.2. Resources used to teach IL to school learners at the Library**

The findings reveal that librarians in this study use various library print materials, school learners' books, Libby, PressReader, and computers with an internet connection for ILE. However, the findings also show that the Library is faced with a shortage of books that are prescribed in schools. The Library also has a limited number of computers so cannot accommodate a large number of school learners at one time.

A limited number of computers has the consequence of inhibiting the teaching of other IL elements effectively to a large group of learners, such as making use of computers to search for and find information on the internet. The results also indicate that librarians in the study are concerned and consider it a challenge that learners have more interest in using computers than books. While books do contain good information and promote literacy, and without a doubt, literacy skills are needed for IL, librarians should not only see it as a challenge that learners are more interested in using computers than books. They should, instead, regard it as an opportunity for them to equip learners with IL skills (including enhanced digital and computer literacy skills) that will enable learners to search for, find, and use information that is available on the internet beyond the library (Nkondo et al., 2014).

During an informal conversation with the researcher, one of the librarians who participated in the study mentioned that they refer learners to books first, mostly because teachers prefer information from books to information from the internet. There was no evidence in interviews that teachers prefer books to online resources or reasons for such a preference. Therefore, reasons for this behaviour are unknown to the researcher and they raise possible questions of the teachers' knowledge of online resources and the credibility and relevancy thereof.

Librarians are also keen to promote the borrowing of library books and so see it as part of their duty to refer learners to books first.

The findings reveal that time is a challenge for IL instruction at the Library. For example, the observations revealed that orientation sessions for each group of learners last for an hour and that time spent demonstrating to learners how to search for and find information on computers was very limited. A one-hour session is not enough for covering most of the IL elements, most especially when the sessions are offered on a once-off basis. In the case of this study, the issue of limited time spent on computers (and in the Library in general on class visit days) came about because learners had to give each other turns on the computers as the number of computers in the Library could not accommodate all of the learners at once on the class orientation days. In addition, learners had to go back to their school as they were brought to the Library by their teachers, during school hours. The Library had limited chairs in the children's area. Consequently, the majority of learners who visited the Library for orientation had to sit on the mat.

The study found that the stages of the Big6 model are present in the library programmes mentioned earlier, even though librarians were not aware of the Big6 skills model per se. The findings further revealed that the IL programmes mentioned earlier are not offered to the same group of learners in a continuous manner and programmes such as library orientation are offered on a once-off basis only. As discussed in Chapter 2, the repetition of IL programmes has benefits for learners (Egan, Witt & Chartier, 2017).

#### **5.4. RQ3: To what extent do public libraries collaborate with their neighbouring schools with regards to IL instruction?**

To address RQ3, participants were asked the extent to which they collaborate with their neighbouring schools for IL instruction, while teachers were asked about how the Library collaborates with their schools for IL instruction, as well as to rate the level of collaboration.

##### **5.4.1. Librarians' collaboration with primary school teachers**

Librarians should build partnerships with their neighbouring schools (Nkondo et al., 2014:53). Successful collaboration between teachers and public librarians is important when learners are learning IL skills, as both library and school resources, and competencies of librarians and

teachers play a vital role in supporting learners (Pietikäinen, Kortelainen & Siklander, 2017). This study found that librarians collaborate with some teachers from one of the primary schools (PS2) for programmes that include IL instruction for learners, and all the librarians in the study rated their collaboration with PS2 very high. The collaboration is characterised by library visits by school learners and their teachers for library orientation at the beginning of the year and by a visit to the school by librarians for storytelling and signing up for library cards for learners, which ensures that learners have access to library resources. Tikkinen and Korkeamäki (2023) consider such activities as features of collaboration.

However, this study revealed that the existing collaboration is not across all grades, and it is not consistent throughout the year. Regardless of that, these activities were referred to as features of collaboration. Additionally, the communication between the Library and PS2 is irregular. Despite experiencing challenges, the librarians in the study value the relationship, have a positive attitude towards working with schools and acknowledge that schools are integral to library programmes, which is one of the reasons why the relationship – although not perfect – is maintained.

On the other hand, the results from the interviews with the teachers revealed that there is no teacher-librarian collaboration between the Library and PS1, due to the teachers' lack of awareness of the Library. The lack of teacher-librarian collaboration was also confirmed by the majority of the librarians as they rated the collaboration between themselves and PS1 low (1) and voiced that they do not work with PS1 very much.

Findings show that teachers who collaborate with the Library see the impact of the collaboration, which they say is evident in how well learners do in reading with comprehension. These teachers rated the collaboration between themselves and the Library high. While it is good that librarians collaborate with some primary school teachers for IL instruction for learners, the findings show that these teachers would like more: they would like the Library to offer IL programmes and workshops to the teachers as well, in each term of the year, with content that is relevant to the school curriculum. Hopefully, teachers and librarians will jointly plan the content to be taught in these sessions to avoid disconnection between the curriculum and what librarians offer.

The teachers' call for IL programmes for themselves shows that teachers are interested in strengthening their relationship with the librarians. On the other hand, the primary school

teachers who were not aware of the Library would like the Library to orientate teachers first about the resources and services they offer and equip them with IL skills through IL training sessions. Consequently, these teachers could transfer the learned skills to their learners and their learners would be able to make use of the school's computer lab, which is currently not used due to the lack of IL and computer skills amongst learners and the lack of time for computer-literate teachers to equip learners with those skills. Also, it is hoped that such an initiative of equipping schoolteachers with IL skills could mean that all the teachers in the study will encourage learners to make use of the Library.

#### **5.4.2. Collaboration between librarians and high school teachers**

The collaboration between the Library and the high school was rated low by the majority of the high school teachers in the study. Results reveal that the librarians in the study only collaborate with one high school teacher, among the ones that participated in the study, and their collaboration is still new and is not across all grades. However, the high school teachers are interested in having a solid relationship with the Library and like the primary school teachers, the high school teachers suggested that the Library should offer schoolteacher IL programmes and workshops across all school grades on a continuous basis. It is good to see that teachers show an interest in collaborating with the Library because collaboration depends on teachers' willingness to work with the Library. For example, one of the high school teachers took the initiative to develop a relationship with the Library and encourages learners to make use of the Library. The success of collaboration between schools and libraries also depends on the support of school principals (Montiel-Overall, 2008 in Pietikäinen, Kortelainen & Siklander, 2017).

#### **5.5. Study recommendations**

Considering the study findings, the researcher proposes the following recommendations that would enhance IL programmes for school learners at the Library and the collaboration between the Library and the schools in the area.

##### **Relevant, ongoing and standardised IL training for all librarians**

Due to the once-off IL training received by some of the librarians, more and ongoing training support for librarians on IL and teaching skills is needed for them to acquire a deeper and better understanding of IL and pedagogy, and consequently improve their IL programmes. Also, the

Library should ensure that all the librarians at the Library receive IL training as the lack of training opportunities for librarians has negative consequences for the delivery of ILE (Kingori, Njiraine & Maina, 2016:20; Lai, 2011). Additionally, those who conduct IL training for the librarians should strive to offer the training in an updated way that includes the aspects of searching for and finding information through technology, as those are the required skills in a world that is technologically driven. Updated IL training for librarians could be a step closer towards enabling librarians to equip learners with expanded IL training that will ensure that learners search for and find information in both print materials and materials accessed through various technological platforms. It is also recommended that librarians should be familiarised with the Big6 model, or a similar model, to guide their IL understanding.

With regards to the attitude of librarians towards teaching IL to school learners, where it should be understood as their duty, it is recommended that this too be discussed in the IL training for librarians.

### **Formal collaboration with schools in the area**

Because of the somewhat erratic relationship between the Library and the schools in the area, more formal collaboration with the schools across all grades should be sought through mutual engagement and planning. This would require the support of the principals and the librarians in charge to take part and encourage librarians. Also, comments from the schoolteachers indicated that they would like the librarians to provide them with structured IL workshops and so this study also recommends that the Library should welcome this suggestion and consider offering IL programmes to the primary and high school teachers in their area.

Since some teachers were not aware of the resources and services offered at the Library, library staff should improve its visibility and market its resources and services to all the schools in the area so that they can be aware of them and make use of them.

### **Sustainable IL programmes guided by IL model for primary and high schools at the Library**

As it was revealed that not all the stages of the Big6 model were present in librarians' IL engagements with school learners and they were not intentional about using the Big6 model or any other IL model or standard, it is advised that they offer structured IL classes intended for different age groups and be intentional about using the Big6 model, or another IL model. This

will act as a guide when they are delivering ILE to school learners and ensure that they cover all the stages of the model in their IL engagements with school learners at the appropriate time, as all the stages of the Big6 model are crucial for solving an information problem successfully (Eisenberg, 2003). Also, ongoing IL programmes for users are advised. These can be repeated with the same group of learners to ensure that they fully grasp the IL skills (Egan, Witt & Chartier, 2017).

### **Expand resources used to teach IL at the Library**

Librarians have mentioned that some of the learners like to use their personal devices in the Library to access WiFi. Librarians should take advantage of the learners' love for their personal devices such as cell phones to teach IL as it could help with the problem of the shortage of computers. In other African countries, librarians have successfully taught IL using mobile technologies (for example, in Ajuwon et al., 2017).

As the researcher observed that there were a limited number of computers in the Library, more computers should be provided for ILE. The Library authorities should allocate funds, or the Library could fundraise in collaboration with the schools they are in partnership with.

### **5.6. Recommendations for further study**

This study was undertaken as part of a minor dissertation and therefore was relatively small in scope. A broader study that can focus on all the public libraries in Cape Town is recommended to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how libraries deliver ILE to school learners. A comparative study of public libraries in townships and libraries situated in higher income areas in Cape Town is also recommended to find out if there are any similarities and differences in the ILE from these two different places. Future studies can also collect data from school learners to find out about the effectiveness of IL programmes or other support they receive from librarians.

### **5.7. Study summary and conclusion: Readiness of librarians at the Library to deliver IL instruction to school learners**

This study set out to discover the readiness of public libraries to offer IL support to school learners, which, as mentioned earlier, is a precondition for lifelong learning. Librarians from the Library and schoolteachers from the two primary schools and one high school near the case

study library were interviewed, and observations of how public librarians conduct ILE with school learners were carried out. The study found that, although there are no formal IL sessions offered by the Library, librarians at the Library are on the right path with regards to offering ILE to school learners, through the IL elements present in their various programme offerings. Most of the stages of the Big6 skills IL model were identified in their IL engagements with school learners, although librarians were not intentionally applying the Big6 skills. All librarians engage with learners with great enthusiasm, and some of them welcome the IL role as their duty and see themselves as teachers when teaching IL skills to the learners.

Ongoing training support and further education is needed to ensure that the librarians keep up to date with the changes in the LIS field and be exposed to well-used IL models and standards (Big6 or any other models or standards of their choice), as well as innovative ways of delivering ILE to learners of different ages. More resources, such as chairs as well as prescribed textbooks (which are used to teach learners how to locate and access information), which would make ILE more effective, are however needed. The librarians in the study value schools and understand that they need to work with them. However, they need to strengthen their existing collaboration with some schools and initiate one with another school. Over time, it is hoped that all teachers, not just some, will learn to appreciate the Library. Nevertheless, all the teachers in the study recognise the importance of IL skills for their learners and highlight that IL skills will enable their learners to do well even beyond the school level, which would result in citizens that can make use of information effectively for decision making, practise lifelong learning, and participate well in their democracy.

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## Appendix A: Ethics approval for Master's research request



Department of Knowledge & Information Stewardship  
University of Cape Town  
Upper Campus

P.O. Box 7700, Rondebosch, 7700 South Africa  
Level 5, Bunting, The Chancellor Oppenheimer Library  
Tel: +27 (0) 21 650 4546 Fax: +27 (0) 21 650 2529  
E-mail: [dkis@uct.ac.za](mailto:dkis@uct.ac.za)  
Website: [www.dkis.uct.ac.za](http://www.dkis.uct.ac.za)

RefNo.: UCTDKIS2022-07-06

18 August 2022

Ms Cwayita Notshokovu  
Department of Knowledge and Information Stewardship  
Chancellor Oppenheimer Library  
University of Cape Town

### Ethics approval for Master's research

Dear Ms Notshokovu

I am pleased to inform you that ethics clearance has been granted by the Ethics Review Committee of the Department of Knowledge and Information Stewardship, Faculty of Humanities, for you to proceed with collecting data for your Master's study on 'Readiness of public libraries and public librarians to deliver information literacy (IL) instruction to school children: a case study of [REDACTED] Public Library'.

As a next step, please ensure that you obtain approval from the relevant ethics committees to collect data at your data collection sites, as necessary.

We wish you well with your data collection and the completion of your research.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Richard Higgs  
Chair: Department (DKIS) Research Ethics Committee

## Appendix B: Research request approval from the City of Cape Town



CITY OF CAPE TOWN  
ISIXEKO SASEKAPA  
STAD KAAPSTAD

Date : 24 November 2022  
TO : Policy & Strategy  
Ref. : PSRR-0531

### Research Approval Request

In terms of the City of Cape Town System of Delegations (March 2022) - Part 35, No 3 Subsection 4, 5 and 6

"Research:

- (4) To consider any request for the commissioning of an organisational wide research report in the City and approve or refuse such a request
- (5) To grant authority to external parties that wish to conduct research within the City of Cape Town and/or publish the results thereof
- (6) To after consultation with the relevant Executive Director grant permission to employees of the City of Cape Town to conduct research, surveys etc. related to their studies, within the relevant directorate.

The Director: Policy & Strategy is hereby requested, in terms of subsection 5, to consider the request received from

Name : Cwayita Natshokovu  
Designation : Master of Library and Information Studies student  
Affiliation : University of Cape Town  
Title : "Readiness of public libraries and public librarians to deliver information literacy (IL) instruction to school children: a case study of [REDACTED] Public Library"

Taking into account the recommendations below (see Annexure for detailed review):

#### Recommendations

That the CCT Director: Policy and Strategy grants permission to Ms Cwayita Natshokovu, in her capacity as a Master of Library and Information Studies candidate at the University of Cape Town (UCT), to conduct research in the City of Cape Town subject to the following conditions:

- Approval is subject to staff capacity (time and resource availability) and the willingness of City officials to participate in the research, on a voluntary basis;
- Adherence to the scope and scale of the research with no more than 3 CCT officials in the Library and Information Services department to be interviewed;
- The Library and Information Services (LIS) Department has agreed to observations of the [REDACTED] Public Library and the interviewing of CCT nominated respondents;
- The staff member is to liaise with the Librarian-in-Charge (LIC), [REDACTED] regarding the sessions and timeslots to observe;
- Three (3) CCT officials to serve as the nominated interviewees for Library and Information Service department for the researcher to contact directly :  
[REDACTED]
- Each interview session to be capped at a maximum of 45 minutes;
- Access to the [REDACTED] Library and any City facility is at the researcher's own risk and the City cannot be held accountable for any loss, damage and/or injury sustained by the researcher or their equipment;
- The City officials' inputs are to be anonymised and the conditions of anonymity be adhered to in the research report;
- The use of direct quotations of CCT participants in the report is not permitted unless with prior agreement of the respondents and authorised in writing by the relevant City official, before the interview

CIVIC CENTRE IDIKO LEEENKONZO ZOLINTU BURGERSENTRUM  
12 HERTZOG BOULEVARD CAPE TOWN 8001 PRIVATE BAG 39181 CAPE TOWN 8000  
www.capetown.gov.za

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## Appendix C: Research request approval from the WCED



**Directorate: Research**

[meshack.kanzi@westerncape.gov.za](mailto:meshack.kanzi@westerncape.gov.za)

Tel: +27 021 467 2350

Fax: 086 590 2282

Private Bag x9114, Cape Town, 8000

wced.wcape.gov.za

**REFERENCE:** 20220826-5949

**ENQUIRIES:** Mr M Kanzi

Ms Cwayita Notshokovu

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Dear Cwayita Notshokovu,

**RESEARCH PROPOSAL:** READINESS OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND PUBLIC LIBRARIANS TO DELIVER INFORMATION LITERACY (IL) INSTRUCTION TO SCHOOL CHILDREN: A CASE STUDY OF [REDACTED] PUBLIC LIBRARY.

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **29 August 2022 till 30 September 2023**.
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Mr M Kanzi at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number.
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:

**The Director: Research Services  
Western Cape Education Department  
Private Bag X9114  
CAPE TOWN  
8000**

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards,  
Meshack Kanzi  
Directorate: Research  
DATE: 29 August 2022

## **Appendix D: Consent form for public librarians**

**University of Cape Town**

**Faculty of Humanities**

**Title of the research project:**

**Readiness of public libraries to deliver information literacy instruction to school children: a case study of a City of Cape Town public library**

**Name of the researcher:**

Cwayita Notshokovu

**Department:**

Knowledge and Information Stewardship

**Cellphone:**

**Email:**

**Name of participant:**

**Nature of the research:**

Considering the need for information literacy, the lack of school libraries in South Africa and the low information literacy skills amongst school leavers, public libraries can step in and close the information literacy gap by offering information literacy support to school learners. Information literacy is crucial for learners, and the lack of it has implications for their personal, academic, and work life. By offering information literacy support to school learners through educational programmes, public libraries could be preparing South Africa's school leavers for tertiary education and put South Africa in a better position to compete in the global knowledge economy. However, it is not clear how well equipped public libraries

are for this role. Thus, the main aim of this study is to investigate the readiness of public libraries to offer IL support to school learners.

**Participant’s involvement:**

**What is involved:** To investigate the problem mentioned above, I would like to interview you and observe the information literacy sessions at the Library to learn how librarians at the Library conduct information literacy instruction with school learners.

**Risks:** There are no risks to you for participating in this research.

**Benefits:** There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this research. However, your information can help me learn about information literacy support offered to school learners by public librarians at the Library.

**Costs:** There should be no costs to you for participating in this study, except for your time. It is estimated that the interview will take 45 minutes. The observation will take place during one of your IL sessions with school children.

**Please indicate your consent to the following by signing below:**

- I have read this consent form and the information it contains and had the opportunity to ask questions about them.
- I agree/disagree (strike through as appropriate) to participate in the interview.
- I agree/disagree (strike through as appropriate) that interviews may be recorded.
- I agree/disagree (strike through as appropriate) to participate in the observation.
- I agree to my responses being used for education and research, subject to the following:
  - I understand that I will not be personally identifiable in the write-up of the study.
  - I understand that I am under no obligation to take part in this research.
  - I understand that I have the right to withdraw from this research at any stage.

Name of participant: .....

Signature: .....

Name of the researcher: Cwayita Notshokovu

Signature of researcher: .....

Date: .....

If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact:

<b>Researcher</b>	<b>Supervisor</b>
Cwayita Notshokovu	Michelle Kahn

## **Appendix E: Consent form for schoolteachers**

**University of Cape Town**

**Faculty of Humanities**

**Title of the research project:**

**Readiness of public libraries to deliver information literacy instruction to school children: a case study of a City of Cape Town public library**

**Name of the researcher:**

Cwayita Notshokovu

**Department:**

Knowledge and Information Stewardship

**Cellphone:**

**Email:**

**Name of participant:**

**Nature of the research:**

Considering the need for information literacy, the lack of school libraries in South Africa and the lack of information literacy skills amongst school leavers, public libraries can step in and close the information literacy gap by offering information literacy support to school learners. Information literacy is crucial for learners and the lack of it has implications for their personal, academic, and work life. By offering information literacy support to school learners through educational programmes, public libraries could be preparing South Africa's school leavers for tertiary education and put South Africa in a better position to compete in the global knowledge economy. However, it is not clear how well equipped

public libraries are for this role. Thus, the main aim of this study is to investigate the readiness of public libraries to offer information literacy support to school learners.

**Participant's involvement:**

**What is involved:** To investigate the problem mentioned above, I would like you to participate in a focus group interview that will help me to learn about the IL support offered to your school learners by the Library's librarians and the extent of the relationship between you and the Library's librarians.

**Risks:** There are no risks to you for participating in this research.

**Benefits:** There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this research. However, your participation can help me learn about information literacy support offered to school learners by public librarians.

**Costs:** There should be no costs to you for participating in this study, except for your time. The focus group interview will take 45-60 minutes.

**Please indicate your consent to the following by signing below:**

- I have read this consent form and the information it contains and had the opportunity to ask questions about them.
- I agree/disagree (strike through as appropriate) to participate in this research project.
- I agree/disagree (strike through as appropriate) that the interview may be recorded.
- I agree to my responses being used for education and research, subject to the following:
  - I understand that I will not be personally identifiable in the write-up of the study.
  - I understand that I am under no obligation to take part in this research.
  - I understand that I have the right to withdraw from this research at any stage.

Name of the participant: .....

Signature: .....

Name of the researcher: Cwayita Notshokovu

Signature of the researcher: .....

Date: .....

If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact:

<b>Researcher</b>	<b>Supervisor</b>
Cwayita Notshokovu	Michelle Kahn

## **Appendix F: Interview guide for public librarians**

### **Readiness of public libraries and public librarians to deliver information literacy instruction to school children: a case study of a City of Cape Town public library**

Interview guide for public librarians

Department of Knowledge and Information Stewardship

University of Cape Town

Student: Cwayita Notshokovu

Supervisor: Michelle Kahn

I am Cwayita Notshokovu, a student studying Master of Library and Information Studies at the University of Cape Town. As part of my studies, I am undertaking research on: Readiness of public libraries and public librarians to deliver information literacy (IL) instruction to school children: a case study of a City of Cape Town public library. To complete my research, I would like you to participate in this interview. Your responses will be treated with anonymity and confidentiality. Please note, participation in the research is voluntary, meaning that you may withdraw at any point in time.

Participants will be asked to elaborate when the interviewer considers it necessary.

#### **1. Librarian's qualifications**

1.1. What is your job title?

1.2. Do you have any post-school qualifications? If yes, what are they?

1.3. Do you have a LIS qualification? If yes, what is it and when did you obtain your latest LIS qualification?

#### **2. Librarian's work experience**

2.1. How long have you been working in the public library sector?

2.2. How long have you been employed at the Library?

### **3. Librarian's information literacy understanding and teaching**

3.1. What do you understand by the term 'information literacy'?

3.2. To what extent does your interaction with school learners include teaching the following:

3.2.1. Task definition (defining the problem and identifying the information needed)?

3.2.2. Information seeking strategies (determining all possible sources of information and selecting the best sources)?

3.2.3. Location and access (locating sources; finding information within sources)?

3.2.4. Use of information (engaging with the information and extracting relevant information)?

3.2.5. Synthesis (organising information from multiple sources and presenting the information [e.g., formulating an answer])?

3.2.6. Evaluation (judging the effectiveness of the product and the efficiency of the process)?

3.3. Which information resources and technologies, if any, do you use for teaching information literacy?

3.4. What methods, if any, do you use to teach information literacy? For example, do you do library tours, one-on-one sessions, group teaching?

3.5. Is the IL instruction you offer to school learners based on any IL standard or model? For example, the Big6 model, Kuhlthau's model of the Information Search Process (ISP), SCONUL's Seven Pillars of Information Literacy?

3.6. Does your information literacy instruction incorporate aspects of other key literacies related to information literacy, such as computer literacy or media literacy? If so, how?

### **4. Librarian's information literacy training**

4.1. Have you ever received training (formal or informal) or guidance on how to teach information literacy?

**5. Librarian's attitudes towards and challenges of teaching information literacy**

5.1. In your opinion, do you think that teaching information literacy to school children is your duty?

5.2. Do you think the Library has enough resources to support the teaching of information literacy to school learners?

5.3. Are there any (other) challenges that you and your library are faced with in teaching information literacy to school children?

**6. Librarian's collaboration with schoolteachers**

6.1. How often do you interact with schoolteachers from the neighbouring schools?

6.2. Do you ever visit schools for information literacy instruction? If yes, how often?

6.3. Do you ever invite schoolteachers to the Library for information literacy instruction? If yes, how often?

6.4. How, if at all, do you collaborate with the schoolteachers to assist learners with information literacy?

6.5. On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the collaboration between the Library and the neighbouring schools for information literacy instruction, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest? Please elaborate on your answer.

**Thank you for your time!**

## **Appendix G: Interview guide for schoolteachers**

### **Readiness of public libraries and public librarians to deliver information literacy instruction to school children: a case study of a City of Cape Town public library**

Interview guide for schoolteachers

Department of Knowledge and Information Stewardship

University of Cape Town

Student: Cwayita Notshokovu

Supervisor: Michelle Kahn

I am Cwayita Notshokovu, a student studying Master of Library and Information Studies at the University of Cape Town. As part of my studies, I am undertaking research on: Readiness of public libraries and public librarians to deliver information literacy (IL) instruction to school children: a case study of a City of Cape Town public library. To complete my research, I would like you to participate in this focus group interview. Your responses will be treated with anonymity and confidentiality. Please note, participation in the research is voluntary, meaning that you may withdraw at any point in time.

Participants will be asked to elaborate when the interviewer considers it necessary during the interview.

#### **Introductory question**

Are you a member of a public library? If so, please tell me a little about how often you use it and for what purposes.

#### **Collaboration with the Library**

Do you think the Library provides support for the teaching and learning activities of your school? If so, how?

Are learners in your school referred to the Library for their schoolwork? For example, to use materials in the Library to complete a school task.

Do you or the teachers in the grade/s you are the head of communicate with public librarians about the learners' upcoming tasks with which the Library might be able to assist learners?

How does the Library collaborate with your school for information literacy instruction, if at all?

On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the collaboration between your school and the Library for information literacy, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest? Please elaborate on your answer.

### **Opinions about IL**

Do you think it is important for learners in your school to be taught information literacy skills?

How do you think the Library should or could support teachers to develop the information literacy skills of learners?

### **Closing/recommendations**

If there is no existing partnership between the Library and the school: how do you think a partnership between the Library and your school would benefit school learners in their schoolwork? If a partnership already exists: how could it be improved?

**Thank you for your time!**

## Appendix H: Observation guide for public librarians

### Readiness of public libraries to deliver information literacy instruction to school children: a case study of a City of Cape Town public library

Observation guide for public librarians

Department of Knowledge and Information Stewardship

University of Cape Town

Student: Cwayita Notshokovu

Supervisor: Michelle Kahn

This observation guide was used to observe the IL interactions of public librarians with regards to teaching school children at the Library. Anonymity of those being observed is assured.

General information					
Name, date and time of IL instruction session:					
Number of staff members involved:					
Duration of the session:	1-10 minutes	10-20 minutes	30-40 minutes	50-60 minutes	Over 60 minutes

General comments (including attitude of the staff during IL session):

**Physical setting**

Is the space generally conducive for learning?	Yes	No	Comments:
Is the lighting good?	Yes	No	Comments:
Are the desks and chairs enough?	Yes	No	Comments:
Is the seating comfortable?	Yes	No	Comments:

Is the space big enough?	Yes	No	Comments
Is the furniture in good condition?	Yes	No	Comments (e.g., functional or non-functional):
Are user workstations in working condition?	Yes	No	Comments:
Is the condition of the teaching equipment adequate for the purposes of this interaction?	Yes	No	Comments:
Is the noise level in the library acceptable for the purposes of this interaction?	Yes	No	Comments:

Classroom layout (sketch)			
List resources used (e.g., books, PC, flipcharts)			
<b>Method(s) used</b>			
Are any of these elements of the Big6 included in the IL session; if so, how?	<b>1. Task definition</b> (identifying/understanding the information needed)	Comments:	
	<b>2. Information seeking strategies</b> (identifying all the possible sources of information and selecting the best sources)	Comments:	

	<b>3. Location and access</b> (locating information sources and finding information within sources)	Comments:
	<b>4. Use of information</b> (engaging with the information and extracting relevant information)	Comments:
	<b>5. Synthesis</b> (organizing information and presenting the information; formulating an answer)	Comments:
	<b>6. Evaluation</b> (effectiveness of the product and efficiency of the process)	Comments:
Method(s) used (e.g., teachable moment, group lecturing,		

library tour/orientation)	
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General reflections: