

**INVESTIGATING POPULAR FICTION DEVELOPMENT AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE ACADEMIC LIBRARY**

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MPHLEG003

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Signed by candidate

Signature

Date: 31 December 2020

DEDICATION

This dissertation is specially dedicated to my late mother Boledi Matjekane Seloane Maphila for the seed and love of education she planted in me, and in my other siblings. I also dedicate it to my brother Makaladi, my wife Felleng, and to my two sons, Thato Bogoshi and Oratile Sephehle Maphila. Lastly, it is for the honour of my extended family that encouraged me to never give up in life.

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I will be wrong to leave out the Almighty for His love and protection. As an African of Pedi descent, I must acknowledge “leloko la badimo” BoMalope, BoNnoi a” Makgowa le BoModipadi. I mean ba

Maphila'a Sefagahlela Botebele,

batho babo Mmakgari'a mekgoko 'a bo mehlohlor'a makgalwa

Ke ra Maphahlana a tswago bolobi boloba batho,

Bolobi boloba ditaba bja rakganyane 'a Hlabirwa,

Ga enye boloko ka moka

ABSTRACT

The study seeks to find out students' and library staff's perceptions and experiences of the popular fiction collection at the University of the Free State's Sasol Library. The purpose of the study is to examine what these perceptions and experiences mean for the future expansion and development of the leisure collection. The Social Learning Theory guided the study. The study adopted a qualitative and quantitative approach whereby open- and close-ended questionnaires were distributed online to students and to library staff to gather research data. The population that participated in the study comprised undergraduate and postgraduate students and library staff. The study employed stratified random sampling as a research technique. The targeted population comprised 37,800 registered students and 61 library staff members accidentally sampled. This in turn gave sample sizes of 381 for students and 53 for library staff. Quantitative data was analysed using Google Forms and the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Further, qualitative data was analysed thematically through content analysis. The study found that students enjoy reading popular fiction at the Sasol Library's fiction collection for leisure. The study also found that library staff support the existence of the leisure reading collection, even though a small number felt that its operations could be improved. The study therefore recommends that the university direct resources towards the expansion and improvement of the popular collection through the training of staff and stocking of reading genres that the students require.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

| | |
|---------|---|
| DDS | Dewey Decimal System |
| FET | Further Education and Training |
| LIS | Library Information Services |
| OCLC | Online Computer Library Centre |
| OPAC | Online Public Access Catalogue |
| SPSS | Statistical Package for the Social Sciences |
| UCT | University of Cape Town |
| UFS | University of the Free State |
| UFS LIS | University of the Free State Library and Information Services |

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Across the world, academic libraries have witnessed a great change in service structure, user needs, and collection development (Mulla & Chandrashekara, 2006:25). Over the last several years, a significant transformation has been noticed in collection development policies and practices. Academic libraries are compelled to change and transform or lose an opportunity to stay relevant. Since walls and building cannot change the current trends, reference is directed to staff and leaders managing academic institutions. Library staff are embracing change and attempting to adapt quickly and accept the new phenomenon. Kuscus and Fombad (2017) note that library workers in all spheres and sectors must adapt quickly and adjust their perceptions and minds towards technological innovations, changing library user patterns, technological challenges, and illiteracy issues that are affecting our modern society.

Alongside reading and studying for academic purposes is the role of leisure reading which has been written about since the early 1930s. Articles have been written to determine whether academic libraries provide leisure reading collections, promoting, obtaining, and choosing materials for leisure reading (Gilbertson, 2013; Fought, Gahn & Mills, 2014; Watson, 2014; Phillips, 2015; Hardy & Hastings, 2017).

Encouraging a culture of reading is not a new trend in academic libraries. As far as the 1920s and 1930s Janelle Zauha confirmed that “the promotion of reading was considered one of the important functions of a librarian” (Elliot, 2007:35). It is further revealed by Zauha (1998:58) that extracurricular reading was part of a library’s mission. Recreational reading has been supported by academic libraries through the establishment of the recreational browsing rooms. One of the front runners that established popular reading collection was the University of Iowa in 1939 with no less than four recreational reading collections located throughout its 'browsing' libraries (Elliot, 2007:35).

However, there are also records indicating that in the 1950s academic libraries noticed a decline in the use of the recreational collections. Elliot (2007:35) quotes Knapp (1957) where a faculty member is recorded as saying that, “Not too much recreational reading is expected here”. Conklin and Moreton (2015:72) in their 2004 survey for the National Endowment for the Arts

in the United States of America (USA) reported a statistically significant decline in literary reading in the 18-24-year-old range representing a decrease of 17% points from 60% in 1982 to 43% in 2002. A 2006 survey of an American sample of university first years found that more students reported spending no time reading for pleasure than freshmen did in a similar 1993 survey.

Most of the available research on the culture of reading is from the USA and Britain. The most silent continent on this issue is Africa and specifically South Africa. There is little authentic information on the role of African academic libraries in promoting and inculcating a culture of reading. While other continents and countries are revisiting their approaches in dealing with the current dwindling culture of reading by university freshmen, there is no available research depicting the role of South African academic libraries in the promotion of reading of such collections. Lack of reliable data and information to assess whether there is a decline in the culture of reading makes it challenging to present a historical background, trends, and challenges in the context of South African academic libraries.

Rising demands on the academic library to meet curricular needs and to supply the equipment necessary for accessing electronic information is expensive. As higher education moves towards cost-effectiveness, the dwindling reader habits might be considered as one of the many costs constantly examined and measured against tangible returns (Zauha, 1998:46). This is one of the many factors that has led to the decline of reading habits among university students as libraries are constantly facing budget cuts.

Support departments and faculties in universities are constantly in competition for budgets, staff, and space with each other. Hence, for academic libraries to provide a recreational reading collection for pleasure and current awareness is difficult to justify (Rathe & Blankenship, 2006:73). Another factor that might impact on the decline of reading habits is the move by libraries towards electronic books. Many librarians and students flinch in fear at the suggestions of libraries fully adopting electronic books. Durant and Horava (2015:5) further reiterate that the idea of the “bookless” library, is voiced much more prominently than ever before, and as both libraries and publishing continue to be transformed in the digital age, the concept continues to gain momentum.

Research on leisure reading in academic libraries in South Africa is generally scarce. Since the 1990s, there have been a handful of studies and surveys on this subject (Hsieh & Runner, 2005:193). One of the earliest such studies was conducted by Rathe and Blankenship

(Morrisset, 1994) which surveyed academic libraries in the South-Eastern United States. In this study Morrisset's (1994) objective was to determine whether leisure collections were commonplace in academic libraries; what materials the collections included and how they were financed. Morrisset's findings state that fewer than half of the libraries surveyed maintained leisure reading collections, but results showed that private institutions were slightly more likely to maintain leisure collections than publicly supported institutions. In her 1994 study, Morrisset's discoveries showed that libraries have relied solely on donations to develop their leisure collections. Rathe and Blankenship (2006:78) found that academic libraries that promoted recreational reading and separated leisure reading materials from the rest of the collection allowed quick access for the patron, thus promoting recreational reading.

Dewan (2010:45) states that the idea of creating a leisure reading collection in a university library is not new. In the 1920s and 1930s, academic libraries actively promoted the recreational reading interests of students by creating popular reading collections for library users to easily browse through. Academic libraries are moving towards users as they compete for readers' attention. They also become user-orientated and pay attention to the needs of their users.

Cargill (1984:47) indicates that librarians were initially hesitant to embark on the task of creating documents such as a collection policy. At the same time, Hazen (1995:30) questions collections development policy's applicability in today's changing library. Hazen (1995:31) observes that the traditional collection development policies will not meet user needs because of the dynamic nature of those needs.

There have been studies in the library as a changing profession and collection development policy (Janugade, 2003:2). Janugade further says that the advancement of Information, Communication, and Technology has brought a lot of changes not only to the library and information services but also to the roles and expectations of librarians and information professionals. However, few unpublished studies have investigated why academic librarians are resistant to allow popular reading materials as part of the university library collection.

Inadequate information on how libraries found, stock, and utilize popular fiction collections to nurture reading culture specifically in South Africa necessitates this study. This study highlights the value of recreational and popular fiction collection in academic libraries with specific regard to Sasol Library at the University of Free State. The study builds onto

possibilities of nurturing reading culture and that South African graduates should continue to learn even after completing their studies in universities.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The University of the Free State (UFS) was opened in 1904 with only six white Afrikaans-speaking students registering for the Bachelor of Arts degree course offered at the time (UFS, 2006). By 1990, the University had more than 100 departments, 600 academic staff, 550 management, and administrative staff and 690 support staff. By 2003, the University had 7 consolidated faculties namely, the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences; the Faculty of Education; the Faculty of Health Sciences; the Faculty of Humanities; the Faculty of Law; the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences; and the Faculty of Theology and Religion with about 90 departments and over 1860 staff component and 23,000 registered students. With the amalgamation of former Vista and the University of the North (QwaQwa Campus) in 2004, staff compliment rose to 2600 with over 31,000 students (UFS, 2006:375).

UFS State QwaQwa campus is situated in the Eastern Free State. It was established in the early 1980s as a satellite campus for the University of the North and now the University of Limpopo. The University of the North was the only university in those years to cater for black people of the Free State. The campus was amalgamated with the UFS on 2 January 2003, with a decision to keep this campus as a single university with single budgets and management (UFS, 2006:361). The campus caters for students from across the continent, with the majority emanating from the Eastern Free State and Western KwaZulu-Natal. The QwaQwa campus offers programmes in the Faculties of the Humanities, Education, Economic and Management Sciences, as well as Natural and Agricultural Sciences, with postgraduate teaching in various centres of excellence (UFS, 2018). The campus has about 3500 students and 250 staff members, the library has 7 full-time staff members and 5 hourly student assistants. The library boasts 25,000 print titles and has access to 188,000 online resources (UFS, 2018).

South Campus is situated in the city of Bloemfontein at the Mangaung Metro. Originally established in the 1980s as a satellite campus for Vista University, it was incorporated into the UFS in 2004. One of the main roles of the campus is to draw new students from lower levels of education who would previously not have been able to attain higher education and it offers programmes for students to gain access to Further Education and Training (FET) and Higher Education (UFS, 2018). This programme works as an incubator to enable students to access

the mainstream university curriculum after graduating from the preparatory courses. South Campus targets and assists those students who might have been lost in the system or who might have otherwise fallen by the wayside (UFS, 2018). The library facility can accommodate up to 1000 and has a collection of about 26,000 print books and with access to 18,800 online resources. The library is staffed by 2 full-time employees and 3 hourly staff members (UFS, 2018).

UFS Collection Development Policy (2014:4) wrote that “It is the policy of the UFS Library and Information Services (LIS) to ensure that the library responds to the information needs of users, which are teaching, learning, research and recreational needs”. The policy further asserts that the responsibility of the Library is to constantly seek ways to contribute effectively to the quality of teaching and research by facilitating access to worldwide information. The Library also intends to acquire a balanced and up-to-date collection that would assist and support the University in developing well-rounded students who can play meaningful roles in society. As part of the main collection, the popular reading collection intends to fulfil the recreational, spiritual, emotional, social, economic, political awareness, and medical needs of users (UFS Collection Development Policy, 2014:4). Table 1 outlines changes in the collection before and after the decision to establish the popular reading fiction collection.

Table 1.1: Popular reading collection from 2014-2018

| | Books before 2014 | 2014 – 2018 | Total currently in stock |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Afrikaans Leisure reading books | 59 | 2092 | 2151 |
| English Leisure reading books | 309 | 2798 | 3107 |
| Non-fiction Leisure reading books | 1591 | 237 | 1828 |

This collection is inclusive of recreational and leisure magazines, novels, and biographies. This collection aims to develop a general knowledge of users and to encourage a culture of reading. The collection further includes popular, informative provincial and national newspapers reflecting current news which are readable, popular, and informative (UFS Library, 2017:12).

Much work was put into ensuring that the policy was accommodative and flexible to the needs of all registered students. Snow (1996:192) alludes to the fact that to most writers, the collection development policy exhibits a long list of virtues. To some degree, the collection development policy is static and inhibits the librarian's response to changes (Snow, 1996:192). Many collection development policies in most libraries are inflexible and out-dated because of the time and effort involved in their preparation (Snow, 1996:192). Apparent inflexibility and out-datedness render the collection unresponsive to new challenges.

1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM

The ability to read and write is key to successful learning and obtaining knowledge in all academic subject areas. This makes the library an important institution within the University for not only creating life-long learners but also ensuring that students succeed in and complete their studies. Internationally and nationally, there is a growing interest in the importance of assessing applicants seeking study places in higher education using multiple rather than single assessment criteria (Cliff, Ramaboa, & Pearce, 2007:33). This underlines the importance of the library as a space where students can access knowledge from varied disciplines. Cliff *et al.* (2007:34) list four universal factors that inform the interest in testing university first-year entrants. Firstly, it is a growing concern internationally that applicants appear increasingly poorly prepared to cope with the generic academic reading, writing, and thinking demands placed upon them on entry to higher education study. Secondly, there is a concern that the results of conventional school-leaving examinations are not necessarily providing interpretable understandings of the academic competence levels of incoming students. Thirdly, there is a recognition that international trends towards greater diversity of educational background and experience in student intakes are needed and a concomitant need for higher education to have a common understanding of the different academic levels of students from these diverse educational backgrounds. Fourthly, there is a growing need for higher education to be responsive to the educational backgrounds of students in a learning and teaching sense, and for an assessment of academic 'needs' to be an important first step towards the placement of students in appropriate curricula according to their educational background.

Reading is a big problem at university, perhaps because it is not formally assessed (Nel, Dreyer & Klopper, 2004:95). In most cases, students are allowed into universities without any assessment of their reading proficiency. The ability to read academic texts is considered one of

the most important skills that university students require (Nel *et al.*, 2004:350). And yet reading popular fiction is one way of inculcating and reinforcing reading skills in students at universities. It is suggested that the high failure and drop-out rates that most of the university students face are attributed to a lack of academic literacy.

Academic literacy is said by Cliff *et al.* (2007:34) to mean the extent to which students are able to: in order of prevalence; make meaning from texts that they are likely to encounter in their studies; understand words and discourse signals in their contexts; identify and track academic argument; understand and evaluate the evidential basis of argument; extrapolate and draw inferences and conclusions from what is stated or given; identify main from supporting ideas in the overall organisation of a text, understand the information presented visually (for example graphs, tables, flow-charts); and, understand basic numerical concepts and information used in the text, including basic numerical manipulations.

A good reading culture informs all aspects of academic activities and, without adequate reading skills, many students are unable to meet academic reading demands as the nature and magnitude of reading required become demanding. One of the intended roles of the UFS Library's popular fiction collection was to encourage students to read and thereby create a reading culture.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this study was to investigate students' and library staff's perceptions and experiences of the impact of the popular fiction collection at the UFS Academic Library. The specific objectives are:

1. To investigate the popularity of the popular fiction collection at the University of the Free State.
2. To investigate the library staff's perception of the popular fiction collection at the Sasol Library.
3. To investigate students' perceptions of the popular fiction collection at the Sasol Library.
4. To assess the usage pattern of the fiction collection and what the pattern suggests.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How popular is the fiction collection with readers at the Sasol Library?
2. What is the library staff's perception of the popular fiction collection?
3. What is the students' perception of the popular fiction collection?
4. What is the usage pattern of the fiction collection and what does the pattern suggest?

1.6 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

By focussing on the UFS Library and Information Resource Centre, the study sought to mirror and reflect on issues and challenges facing academic libraries in South African Universities. Based on the results, the study sought to propose and inform library collection policies for academic libraries in universities or institutions of higher learning in South Africa. It investigated the type of materials preferred by students as part of the popular reading collection in terms of family life, romance novels, thrillers, comics, biographies, memoirs, and different types of books. The study would impact the revision of the collection development policy and inform the revamping of the popular reading collection marketing strategy. Additionally, it would influence reviews of the Library Strategic Plan on resource allocation or budgeting. Therefore, the study may not only benefit the UFS Library and Information Services (LIS) but also close the information gap for South African Libraries, parts of Africa, and the rest of the world.

1.7 LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The population sample were drawn from mostly registered students, academic members of staff, and library staff at UFS main campus and not from other campuses or branches. The study sample were drawn from the main campus only since only the main campus has a popular reading collection. This might exclude the views of other students in QwaQwa and South Campuses.

UFS is historically an Afrikaans university and there might be language barriers as the study was conducted in English. Most of the academic librarians and students are Afrikaans-speaking and they might have preferred an interpreter to understand some of the questions. The population for the study was limited only to the UFS Library staff and registered students. Some of the questionnaires were sent by email to respondents and this might have its limitations

to the study because of the non-responsive nature of some respondents to the questionnaire and a possible inability to answer follow up questions.

1.8 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

There are three main types of research approaches: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. The nature of a research problem and data collection dictates the choice of a research method (Marshall & Rossman, 2016:2). Some of the data were non-numerical and called for qualitative research methods. Likewise, some numerical and required the use of quantitative data analysis methods involving the use of descriptive statistics in data presentation and analysis (Marshall & Rossman, 2016:2).

The study used a multi-method approach, and the data will comprise of staff and student perceptions of the collection. The term ‘multi-methods’ refers to the use of two or more frameworks in a research project yielding both qualitative and quantitative data (Hall, 2012:2). This study collected data using open-ended questionnaires, semi-structured focus group interviews, and document analysis. The target population were all registered students selected randomly while all qualified staff members were requested through an email to complete a questionnaire. Data collected through questionnaires were analysed, compared, and conclusions are drawn. Data generated and collected through interviews were analysed through document analyses before conclusions were made.

Owen (2014:8) states that documents can provide background information before designing the research project, for example prior to conducting interviews. They may corroborate observational and interview data, or they may refuse them, in which case the researcher is ‘armed’ with evidence that can be used to clarify, or to challenge what is being told, a role that the observational data may also play. Documents such as the policy document of the library and usage statistics played a key role in substantiating what the respondents said during the interviews.

1.9 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH OUTLINE.

This study has been divided into five chapters. Chapter One is the introduction and background to the study. It deals with the introduction and highlights the study context, background information, statement of the problem, research objectives, and questions. Chapter Two

comprises a literature review and a brief theoretical framework. It further unpacks the major concepts introduced in Chapter One particularly those related to the research questions. Chapter Three deals with the research methodology. The chapter explains the research design, methodology, and the data collection process used in conducting the study including information about the population, and the sampling procedure. Chapter Four covers data analysis and interpretation. The final section Chapter Five summarizes the findings, conclusion, recommendations, and practical implications of the study findings.

1.10 DEFINITION OF TERMS

This section intends to introduce and define key concepts that formed the conceptual framework and the scholarly foundation of the study. Mouton (2012:123) warns that there is never a clear-cut definition of concepts. For this study, the following main concepts formed part of the research topic:

1.10.1 Reluctance

Is defined as unwillingness, disinclination, hesitancy, hesitation, objection, unwillingness, doubts and lack of enthusiasm, timidity, foot-dragging, and resistance, doubtful and or having second thoughts (Waite, 2009:722).

1.10.2 Fiction

Is defined as literary works that portray characters and events that are created in the imagination of the writer and intended to entertain and vicariously expand the reader's experience of life (Reitz, 2004:275).

1.10.3 Popular fiction

Is defined as a non-serious work of narrative fiction widely read when it is first published (Reitz, 2004:551). This type of fiction is usually popular for only a short period.

1.10.4 Popular edition

Is defined as an edition of a book printed on an inferior and poor-quality paper and mostly without pictures and illustrations (Reitz, 2004:551). Due to its poor quality, this type of book is sold at a lower price.

1.10.5 Popular reading

Popular reading also encompasses the activities and feelings produced because of interaction with reading matter and facilities such as books and libraries (Reitz, 2004:592). Popular reading is heavily influenced by bookshops, libraries, and all other activities that have to do with reading for recreation and personal development.

1.10.6 Popular reading collection

Is a fiction collection created for leisure reading as a way of accommodating clients' requests (Dewan, 2010:47). This collection is mostly made up of popular editions and popular fiction. Popular reading collections are mostly shelved separately to facilitate browsing.

1.10.7 Culture of reading.

A culture, broadly speaking is an integrated pattern of behaviour, practices, beliefs, and knowledge. These constitute the operating rules by which people organize themselves (Behrman, 2004:23). It is further known as social behaviour and norms found in human societies and transmitted through social learning.

1.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has introduced the study by providing background and overview of the development of popular fiction collection at UFS. The chapter included an introduction to the study, background information, research problem, research objectives and questions, the significance of the study, the limitation and delimitation as well as the layout of the study. The chapter also highlighted key concepts used in the study. The next chapter discusses the theoretical framework and literature review.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the theoretical framework by describing the development of popular fiction collections in academic libraries. It looks at the history of popular reading fiction in libraries and its challenges. The chapter further includes the literature review which contextualizes the current study and situate it in the context of other past studies.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The term “theoretical framework” is used in research to relate to plans or the “lens” that guides the research process (Maxwell, 2012:39). Apart from providing a plan for the study, the importance of a theoretical framework is to direct and guide the design of the research instruments, data collection, analysis, and interpretation as well as to assist with a deeper understanding of the research findings (Ngulube, Mathipa & Gumbo, 2015:43). To approach or conduct a scientific study, it is of great significance for the researcher to link a study to a theory or model and substantiate how the theory frames the study. The theoretical framework assists a researcher or a study by providing the background information to the study, and the rationale behind ideas and beliefs which inform the study. The theoretical framework outlines the rationale of the study from life or professional experiences. It explores and explains the study or the topic by putting the research into context. The theoretical framework also identifies the possible subjectivity of the researcher to minimise bias. Walker and Solvason (2014:22) emphasise that it is impossible to eliminate all subjectivity from a study. Walker and Solvason (2014:23) depict the journey of the researcher in choosing a theoretical framework and how personal and professional experience might influence their subjectivity and the results of the research. A theoretical framework therefore also deals with the question of the Learning Theories which guide the study.

2.3 LEARNING THEORIES

The study is anchored on the Social Learning Theory, which is essentially based on the assumption that human beings must understand the meaning of their experience (Mezirow, 1997). In this study, experience refers to users' and librarians' perceptions of the popular fiction collection at Sasol Library. Mezirow (1997:5) observes that "transformative learning is the process of effecting change in a *frame of reference*." Mezirow (1997:5) further defines a frame of reference as "the structures of assumptions through which we understand our experiences." In this regard, the study assumes that people make certain assumptions to explain why the popular fiction collection at Sasol Library is the way it is. The concern in this study is therefore to determine the exact factors that inform and influence the collection's current state and to suggest, based on actual evidence, how to improve the popular collection. This way, the study aligns itself with Cranton's (2002) suggestion that transformative learning occurs only when people use critical reflection to challenge their habits of mind. Cranton (2002:65) notes that "Critical reflection is how researchers work through beliefs and assumptions, assessing their validity in the light of new experiences or knowledge, considering their sources, and examining underlying premises."

2.4 THE CHANGING ROLE OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Library professionals have a duty and role in transforming society especially in the light of marginal reading habits among the youth. In the article, "*Promoting a culture for reading in a diverse world*", Doiron and Asselin (2011:110) give an account through narratives and simple stories of the innovative role of libraries and librarians and how they have played their roles to touch every society through reading in rural Africa and the Arab world. The paragraph below presents a story of a young Nassar from Iran, and reflects on his appetite in gaining access to books:

In Iran, especially during the Islamic Revolution, there were bans on many books. We [young people] had to quietly exchange books with others who had access to them (like one of my friends) and hide them within our homes. There were no libraries in schools and so I did not even engage with such spaces. Institutions that were most helpful to my development as a reader and learner were public libraries (Doiron & Asselin, 2011:110).

2.5 ACADEMIC LIBRARY USER NEEDS

Adapting to the needs of the contemporary user is one of the biggest challenges that face academic librarians today (Dewan, 2010:46). Further, Nilges (2006:4) notes that the report for OCLC (De Rosa, Cantrell, Cellentani, Hawk, Jenkins & Wilson, 2005) is an eye-opener especially on understanding the thoughts and perceptions of the library patrons. According to this study, college students prefer a self-serve environment such as websites for their assignments. Further, they have somewhat outdated views of libraries and are very satisfied with information from the Internet. Moreover, college students use libraries in inverse proportion to their increased use of the Web (Dewan, 2010). Lastly, such students believe that libraries lack relevance in their lives (Dewan, 2010:46). Dewan (2010:46) further confirms that in recent years, many academic libraries have responded to these realities by shifting their focus to the user's perspective. Dewan (2010:46) writes that during the past decade, many academic libraries have been actively engaged in the re-examination of their policies and missions to become more user centred. In this current study, the researcher intends to explore how academic libraries could use popular reading collections to attract users into the library space.

2.6 IMPORTANCE OF POPULAR FICTION COLLECTION IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Research shows that a decline in the use of libraries and reading since 2005 is driven by a decrease in use among college students between ages 25–64 (Gauder, 2011:52). The declining interest in college-age students, is a sobering reality. Gauder (2011:53) wrote about the OCLC Survey 2005 report which concluded that college students are reading and using the library less since they started using the Internet. Hence academic libraries are expected to transform their library policies and play a role in resuscitating reading culture in institutions of higher learning. For instance, various media, academic and political authorities in Rwanda spoke about the lack of a reading culture among Rwandans in general. A low reading culture amongst students in tertiary colleges in Rwanda has impacted the nation's education standards (Ruterana, 2012:1). The current study seeks to explore the popular reading collection in academic libraries and its role in encouraging library use and promoting a culture of reading.

2.7 COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICIES IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

A Collection Development Policy establishes ground rules for planning, budgeting, selecting, and acquiring library materials (Olaajo & Akewukereke, 2006:1). It is a library policy that guides everything that goes into acquiring materials, reading material selection, ordering, and the payment of orders. It is a chain of events that includes planning, administration, and control within the operations of the library. Collection development processes serve as a base upon which other library services are built. Olaajo and Akewukereke (2006:1) opine that a focused, positive, and consistent collection development strategy is a necessary tool for any meaningful library development. In the current study, the researcher intends to explore the literature on Sasol Library's collection development policies and their flexibility in allowing popular reading collection in the library.

2.8 LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature review creates a chance and an opportunity for the researcher to become familiar with current ideas, issues, and terms or concepts that surround the topic of study (Neuman, 2012:73). The following key themes in the development of popular fiction collections are discussed to gain what has been studied before and what literature is available: reluctance, fiction, popular fiction, popular reading, popular reading collection, and culture of reading.

2.8.1 Reluctance

Reluctance is defined as unwillingness, disinclination, hesitation, objection, lack of enthusiasm, timidity, foot-dragging, and resistance, doubtful, or having second thoughts (Waite, 2009:722). Kotter (1995:3) observes that many organisations fail as change is implemented too quickly due to many managers not realising that transformation is a process, not an event. Kotter (1995:3) further maintains that the process of transformation advances through stages that build on each other, and it takes years to work. Similarly, Miller and Rollnick (2002:1) present a constructive argument about transformation and change. They say that until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, and general ineffectiveness concerning all acts of initiative and creation. They, therefore, observe that change is manifested from within and until one is willing or has seen the reason to embrace change, they would always be reluctant and hesitant irrespective of the reasons and benefits to

the anticipated change (Miller & Rollnick, 2012:25).

The concept of change is best captured in the phrase “ready, willing, and able” to communicate to a level of motivation for change. There are at least these three critical components of motivation: readiness, willingness, and ability. Libraries encounter resistance to change while contemplating new technologies in areas such as self-checkout systems, new management style, changes in work methods, routine office procedures, the location of a machine or a desk, personnel assignments, or in adopting new job titles. Although this study acknowledges reluctance as a possible drawback, it looked at reluctant individuals as Ford and Ford (2009:3) views such individuals as a resource that provides meaningful contributions if their input is respected.

2.8.2 Fiction

Fiction is defined as literary works that portray characters and events which are created in the imagination of the writer and are intended to entertain and vicariously expand the reader’s experience of life (Reitz, 2004:275). Fiction is mostly acquired by academic institutions for curricular support and not for recreational reading (Fleet, 2003:6). While academic libraries may collect mainstream fiction, it is more often the case that works about a particular author would be included in the collection while some specific works are unavailable except through interlibrary loan or a visit to the local public library (Fleet, 2003:14).

Dewan (2010:313) makes a significant point about fiction. He says that readers can also learn about the world from fiction as well as non-fiction. Dewan further says that reading fiction provides a more easily remembered, pleasurable received information than any other activity. Dewan notes an increasing number of university and college libraries that are “adjusting their policies and overcoming budget restrictions to provide leisure reading materials to their users” (Dewan, 2010:314). The current study intends to explore the development and inclusion of different kinds of fiction materials in the main collection of the UFS Library.

2.8.3 Popular fiction

Popular fiction is defined as works of narrative fiction widely read when it is first published

and superior in quality to pulp fiction (Reitz, 2004:551). This type of fiction is only popular for a short period. It is further delineated between two types of popular fiction. The first is the widely accepted mainstream novel. These works are intended for a popular audience and the emphasis is on characterisation, plot development, thematic relevance, and narrative style and, to some extent, originality (Sanders, 2009:175). Popular fiction is the most suitable to encourage university students to read due to their general popularity. Popular fiction is at times published or printed in books of an inferior and or poor-quality paper and mostly without pictures and illustrations (Reitz, 2004:551). Due to its poor quality, popular fiction is sold at a lower price for affordability.

Little has been written on the role of academic libraries in providing popular fiction for leisure reading to students despite the acknowledgment of the role of literature especially in medical or health sciences (Watson, 2014:2). Benefits attributed to literature in health practitioner education include increasing empathy, developing cultural competence, and improving critical thinking, observation, and communication skills of the students. Watson (2014:3) attests that few literary works have been devoted to describing individual leisure reading collections in health sciences libraries.

2.8.4 Popular reading

Popular reading is generally recognized as a societal practice that is dominated using reading literature and mostly books. Popular reading encompasses the activities and feelings produced because of the interaction with reading materials such as books and facilities which include libraries (Reitz, 2004:592). Popular reading is heavily influenced by the bookshops, the libraries, and all other activities that have to do with reading for recreation and personal development. Therefore, popular reading becomes a culture and a way of influencing an individual's or society's attitudes towards reading as an activity. Popular reading as a practice can produce individuals who are avid readers (Reitz, 2004:592). This reading is not necessarily based upon the need to complete an assignment, prepare for a presentation, or to increase one's academic knowledge (Sanders, 2009:175). Sanders clarifies that popular reading is the kind of literary works that are meant to enrich our lives (Sanders, 2009:175). The current study intends to contextualise popular reading as a way of life within UFS by examining the origins of the popular fiction collection and evaluating its current role at Sasol Library.

2.8.5 Popular reading collection

The popular reading collection is a fiction collection in a library that is made up of popular editions and is also intended to create a culture of reading. To be part of this collection, the book must be regarded as an artefact of popular culture and its ideas and patterns must be recognized and embraced by a large portion of the population (Fleet, 2003:65). Fleet (2003:73) describes and identifies three levels of analysis that can be used in the selection of the popular reading collection. He outlines them as follows: description, in which the essential elements and patterns of specific genres are identified; explanation, in which the persistence of the patterns is explained; and contextual analysis, in which explanations are placed into the context of multiple theory bases.

Fleet (2003) says it is important for the selector to be familiar with each category, whether literary fiction, popular fiction, or genre fiction, to apply appropriate standards to each. This will assist in building a popular reading collection that has the same stature as the academic collection and which is easy to evaluate and justify.

2.8.6 Culture of reading

Culture constitutes the operating rules by which people organise themselves (Behrman, 2004:2). It refers to social behaviour and norms found in human societies and transmitted through social learning. Ruterana (2012:36) takes us through the establishment of reading culture in Rwanda. Reading culture was unknown in Rwanda till the dawn of colonisation in Africa. Ruterana (2012) shows that literary culture in Rwanda was built on oral negotiations and traditions which Rwandans in general still have a strong affinity to (Ruterana, 2012:38). The traditional practices of literacy like storytelling, poems, proverbs, and riddles were learned by the young generation through close observation of what the elders were doing and saying. In this school, educational, social, and cultural norms and values were passed on from generation to generation, through oral traditions by the word of mouth (Kagame, 1978:13).

There are social obstacles that impede the creation of a reading culture among students. Studies show that many students arrive at the university already disliking reading due to their bad experiences (Ruterana, 2012:40).

2.8.7 Obstacles to Reading Culture

Ruterana (2012:40) outlines obstacles to the creation of a reading culture among students as follows.

2.8.7.1 Reading Experiences

It is challenging to inculcate the culture of reading at the tertiary level as most students lack positive early reading experience with their parents and siblings at home and during their first years of schooling (Ruterana, 2012:41).

2.8.7.2 Access to Reading Materials

Ruterana (2012:49) indicates that the scarcity and accessibility of reading materials in Rwanda is another big handicap to reading culture. The only available libraries ill-equipped and poorly furnished are mostly located in secondary schools, higher learning institutions, and universities. Hence, it is difficult for the public to access books. Inadequate reading materials and lack of libraries were the most important obstacle to the culture of reading in Rwanda. Rampant poverty and illiteracy exacerbate the situation (Ruterana, 2012:44).

2.8.7.3 Academic Tradition

Ruterana (2012:46) also found in his study that most students in institutions of higher learning lack an academic tradition (teaching, learning, and evaluation). Most institutions emphasise reliance on course note reading and evaluation mechanisms that require students to write exams using only their notes.

2.8.7.4 Inadequate Infrastructure

Lack of appropriate infrastructure conducive to a good reading atmosphere within the university community contributes to the slow development of a reading culture (Ruterana, 2012:47).

2.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter explored the concept of the popular reading collection in academic libraries by defining key concepts and themes. It also looked at how the Learning Theory Model is likely to influence how academic libraries can move towards incorporating popular reading collection into the library. The chapter also clarified the importance of the theoretical framework and its relationship to theory, further providing a rationale for choosing the Learning Theory Model. The chapter gave a summary of the main studies on the culture of reading and popular reading collection in academic libraries.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Bless, Higson-Smith and Sithole (2013:1) view research as a process of gaining knowledge by formulating questions and finding answers. This chapter outlines the research design and methods followed in the study. It has explained the research paradigm, the reasons for the preferred paradigm, and briefly examined the difference between qualitative and quantitative methods and their use in a case study which this study adopted. The chapter has outlined the research approach, research design, population, sampling strategy, data collection methods, and qualitative data analysis. The chapter also identified ethical considerations for the study, participants' rights, and compliance with ethical issues.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Kivunja and Kuyini (2017:26) define a paradigm as “the abstract beliefs and principles that shape how a researcher sees the world, and how s/he interprets and acts within that world”. This study adopted the social learning paradigm. Johannessen and Hahn (2012) observe that some of the tenets of the social learning paradigm are its collaborative approach in identifying a social problem and its application to challenging accepted assumptions. Schusler, Decker and Pfeffer (2003) use the term ‘deliberation’ to emphasize the collaborative aspect of the social learning process. They, therefore, stress that “Deliberation includes any process to communicate, raise and collectively consider issues, increase understanding, and arrive at substantive decisions” (Schusler *et al.*, 2003:312). Further, Johannessen and Hahn (2012:1) note that “social learning is often treated as an intervention, a designed process facilitated or even initiated by a third party.” The social learning paradigm was used in this study to respond to the university community’s view of the impact of the fiction collection at the Sasol Library at the UFS.

3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

Three approaches are widely used when conducting research, namely: the qualitative research approach, the quantitative research approach, and the mixed research approach. The highly recognisable terms are qualitative research and quantitative research, which are broad terms and are known to encompass a range of methodologies for data collection and analysis (Grix, 2004:116). As defined by Gorman and Clayton (2005:3) qualitative research is the research process of “[drawing] data from the context in which events occur”. Quantitative research is constructed on three fundamental stages: “detecting variables for concepts, employing them in the study, and measuring them” (Grix, 2004:117). The quantitative research method employs techniques that are suitable for numbering or numerical data sets. The significant value of the quantitative research method is that numbers are used to quantify variables. Bless *et al.* (2013:58) suggest that quantitative data can be analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The study used the multi-method approach in which both qualitative and quantitative data were collected through online questionnaires.

3.4 EXPLORATORY CASE STUDY RESEARCH DESIGN

Yin (2017:29) defines an exploratory case study as a process that answers three important questions which include: “firstly, what is to be explored; secondly the purpose of the exploration; and thirdly, the criteria by which the exploration would be judged successful.” The exploratory case study design was important in this research as it attempted to answer the above three questions in terms of the popular fiction collection, its origins, and its impact at Sasol Library.

3.5 STUDY POPULATION

A population is the “entire set of people or objects that is the centre of interest of the research project and about which the researcher wants to determine some characteristics” (Bless *et al.*, 2013:162). In the context of this study, the population would refer to the students registered at the UFS and staff employed by the UFS Library Information Services (UFS LIS). Studying the entire population is impractical due to cost and time implications, and therefore a sample of individuals to be studied must be drawn from the population (Lather, 2006) and a general conclusion made about the entire population. The limitation of generalising findings

from sampling is that it may group subjects in categories that do not represent their voices and the conclusion may not be a true reflection of the reality. The process of selecting units representing the population for the study requires a sampling frame, which is a list of all units of the population (Laher & Botha, 2012:86). Table 3.1 shows the composition of the research population.

Table 3.1: Population for the study

| Target population | Population size | Percentage of respondents to the total |
|--------------------------|------------------------|---|
| Undergraduate students | 21500 | 71.53% |
| Postgraduate students | 8500 | 28.28% |
| Librarians | 47 | 0.16% |
| Library managers | 10 | 0.03% |
| Total | 30057 | 100 |

From the above table, undergraduates (72%) formed the bulk of the research population. They were then followed by postgraduate students (28%), librarians, and library managers in that order.

3.6 SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

To obtain a representative sample of students and librarians the study employed stratified random sampling. Stratified random sampling occurs when there are strata within the population. Within stratified sampling, random sampling was employed and allowed each member of the specified population to have an equal chance of being included in the sample (Pickard, 2007:61). The research used stratified sampling to identify graduate and postgraduate students at the UFS into strata. The study adopted the 95% confidence level and 5% error of margin. *Raosoft* software was used to calculate the sample sizes (<http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html>). Table 3.2 shows the respondents in each stratum using simple random sampling with a 50% response distribution.

Table 3.2: Sampling Frame for the population

| Target population | Population size | Stratified sampling | Relative frequency |
|--------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Undergraduate students | 21500 | 378 | 48.0% |
| Postgraduate students | 8500 | 368 | 46.7% |
| Librarians staff | 47 | 42 | 5.3% |
| | | | |
| Total | 30047 | 788 | 100% |

3.6.1 Purposive sampling

Tongco (2007:147) explains that purposive sampling is “the deliberate choice of an informant due to the qualities the informant possesses”. The study adopted the purposive sampling technique to identify the library staff for the study assumed to know and understand the history and origins of the popular fiction collection in the library. A purposive sample of 14 library staff members were selected for the interviews. The sample comprised of librarians and library managers at all levels of the organisational hierarchy. Table 3.3 shows the purposive sample frame for the library staff.

Table 3.3: Sampling frame for the library staff

| Schools/Faculty | Librarians | Purposive sampling |
|--|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Head of Research Unit | 1 | 1 |
| Subject Librarian: Natural Health Sciences | 1 | 1 |
| Subject Librarian: Economics and Management Sciences | 1 | 1 |
| Subject Librarian: Humanities | 1 | 1 |
| Subject Librarian: Theology | 1 | 1 |
| Subject Librarian: Education | 1 | 1 |
| Acquisition librarian | 1 | 1 |
| Circulation Librarian | 1 | 1 |
| Client Librarian | 1 | 1 |
| Assistant Director: Circulation | 1 | 1 |

| | | |
|---|----|----|
| Deputy Director of Information Services | 1 | 1 |
| Library Statistician | 1 | 1 |
| Assistant Director Acquisition | 1 | 1 |
| Metadata Librarian | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 14 | 14 |

Table 3.3 shows the total number of 14 librarians. The study sought to interview the Deputy Director of Information Services, Assistant Director Acquisitions, and Head of the Research Unit. These librarians were believed to possess the knowledge regarding the history and founding of the fiction collection in the library.

3.7 DATA COLLECTING INSTRUMENTS

There are multiple data collection methods in research. The combination of data collecting instruments depends on the researcher and the requirements of the study. Making use of several data collection instruments adds to the validity of the study (Pickard, 2007:192). These data collection instruments include questionnaires, interviews, and document analyses.

3.7.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaires are regarded by most scholars as a convenient and cost-effective data collection method useful for collecting data when the sample is large (Mentz, 2012:101). They are the most popular data collection technique since they can be self-administered and completed without any assistance from the researcher (Bless *et al.*, 2013:194). Questionnaires could be distributed physically or electronically through a link or they could be sent via ordinary mail or email (Bless *et al.*, 2013:195). For this study, the researcher chose to administer the questionnaires online since web-administered surveys can incorporate multimedia items and some survey tools can do real-time randomization of questions (Fricker & Schonlau, 2002:347).

The Google Form questionnaire was considered essential in gathering accurate and honest data because it facilitates “the greatest possible anonymity” (Mentz, 2012:101). The main two disadvantages are the fact that firstly, questionnaires are likely to gather unintended responses if the questions are ambiguous; and, secondly, there is a high possibility of respondents

failing to interpret the intended meaning in questionnaires since the researcher is not present to clarify questions. It is also generally agreed that response rates for questionnaires are typically very low (Mentz, 2012:102).

3.7.2 Interviews

An interview is any interaction between two or more individuals to engage in a process of asking questions and getting responses flexibly or inflexibly to understand a subject (Kumar, 2005:144). Kumar (2005:145) further states that questionnaires and interviews work similarly, their only difference is that in the case of interviews the researcher reads the questions out loud whereas with questionnaires the participants read the questions on their own. The study, therefore, engaged in a face-to-face interview with the three members of the library staff who have worked at Sasol Library for decades and are aware of the origins of the popular fiction collection.

3.7.3 Document analyses

Organisational and institutional documents have played an important role in qualitative research for many years. In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of research reports and journal articles that mention document analysis as part of the methodology (Bowen, 2009:27). Document analysis was used in combination with other qualitative research methods as a means of triangulating methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon.

Document analysis has advantages and disadvantages. Bowen (2009:31) observes that it is less time-consuming and therefore more efficient than other methods since it only entails data selection rather than a collection. Bowen outlines that since the advent of the Internet many documents are in the public domain and are obtainable without the authors' permission. By reading the library documents, the study found out that the Sasol Library does have a policy on popular fiction collection. This corresponded to the role of qualitative data in the study.

Bowen (2009:32) outlines some of the major disadvantages of document analysis such as lack of details. For this study, document analysis involved reading (thorough examination), and interpretation. Documents targeted included the Collection Development Policy, the

Library Management Committee meeting minutes, Policy amendments drafts, and all available communication tools. The documents were dated from 2012 to date since this was the year that Sasol Library effected major changes regarding policy formulations in the library.

3.7.4 Pre-test

Most studies and research steps urge researchers to test instruments and tools before using them in the field for data collection. Pre-testing of data collection is critical to ensure that respondents clearly understand every question (Kumar, 2005:158). Pre-testing the data collection instruments assures the researcher of certain important issues about the instruments (Thomas, 2003:108-109). It ensures that the language is unambiguous and clear. Reynolds, Diamantopoulos and Schlegelmilch (1993) observed that the most important rule of pre-testing is that the population which participated during the pre-test should not contribute to data collection. For this study, the researcher pretested the data collecting tools using library staff from the Central University of Technology (CUT) and the gathered feedback helped to improve the quality of questions in the data collecting tools for the study.

3.8 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Basset (2010:192) views data analysis in qualitative research as the general process of preparing, organising, coding, and condensing of either text, image or audio data collected, and then deciding on whether the data would be represented in figures, tables, discussion or using combined means. This process is further considered by Creswell (2013:183) by suggesting the use of a computer to analyse data.

The study used close-ended quantitative research data from the questionnaires. These were then analysed and presented in the form of different pie charts and bar graphs. Relative Frequencies and other important values were separately calculated using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Respective qualitative data obtained through open-ended questions in the questionnaires were analysed thematically through content analysis and presented in the form of narrative experiences, summaries, and direct quotes from librarians and students.

Data collected in this study were processed and analysed with the aid of the Google Forms computer software program which allows for the setting of questions so that respondents can give in-text online responses. The software then analyses the results. The choice of computer programs was made on the basis that Google Forms are freely available. The software allowed for the manipulation of data (Creswell, 2013:204) through permitting the transcription, coding, and combined searching and retrieval of data.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Research ethics is a crucial part of any social study. It ensures that research participants are treated with the sensitivity they deserve and as humanely as possible (Bless *et al.*, 2013:28). Bless *et al.* (2013:29-31) indicate that informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity are crucial aspects of ethical concerns in research.

3.9.1 Informed consent

Informed consent is important in human research due to the sensitive nature of legal implications. Crow, Wiles, Heath and Charles, (2006) define informed consent as “a voluntary agreement to participate in research. It is not merely a form that is signed but is a process, in which the subject understands the research and its risks”. The study made use of signed agreement forms to ensure that the participants were informed that they are taking part in research and that they would be free to withdraw their consent at any time. The researcher obtained ethics clearance from UCT where the study is registered and from UFS where data was collected. Letters from UFS were specifically obtained from the university’s Vice-Rector and the Director of Sasol Library. Further, the researcher obtained a letter from the Dean of Students for permission to engage student users of the library.

3.9.2 Confidentiality

Kaiser (2009) observes that confidentiality in research involves non-disclosure of identifying information about research participants to protect participants’ privacy. The researcher used all means possible to protect the research data from being accessed by or shared with any unauthorised persons. Such data was used specifically for reporting the study findings.

Questionnaires and recorded interviews were locked in the researcher's office and were accessed by the researcher only. Both questionnaires and recorded interviews were used only for reporting the study findings.

3.9.3 Anonymity

Saunders, Kitzinger and Kitzinger (2015:617) define research anonymity as the task of "keeping participants' identities secret". The study did not use actual names during data collection and in subsequent stages of the research. Further, the participants in the study were made aware that they would not have to give their names in the questionnaire.

3.10 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed the paradigms of this study which were guided by the methodology of the research. The discussion was then followed by an in-depth description of the procedure to be followed during the collection of data. The description of the methodology involved different aspects which includes the research paradigms; research approach; research design; study population; sampling techniques; data collection methods; data collection tools; data analysis and ethical issues. Ethical issues in the study include aspects such as informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality. The next chapter presents the results and attempts an interpretation of the study findings.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with data analysis and the presentation of study findings. Blaikie (2003:28) describes data analysis as the act of determining the extent to which available quantitative or qualitative data may be used to answer the research questions. The chapter finds out to what extent the quantitative and qualitative data collected in this study respond to the four broad research questions. This chapter examines what the research data says about students' and librarians' perceptions and experiences concerning the popular fiction collection at the UFS's Sasol Library. It also determines what these perceptions and experiences mean for the future development of the fiction collection.

The chapter considers data collected from the two questionnaires, namely the student questionnaire, and the librarian questionnaire. The student questionnaire contained responses from both undergraduate and postgraduate students, while the librarian questionnaire sought responses by staff from different sections of the Sasol Library.

The following research questions guided the study:

1. How popular with students is the leisure reading collection at the University of the Free State's Sasol Library?
2. What are students' perceptions of the popular fiction collection at Sasol Library?
3. What are the librarians' perceptions of the popular fiction collection at Sasol Library?
4. What is the usage pattern of the popular fiction collection in terms of genre and text format, and what does the pattern suggest for the future development of the popular reading collection at Sasol Library?

4.2 RESPONSE RATE

Blaikie (2003:167) observes that 'as the response rate declines, the possibility of a sample becoming unreliable, or being even more biased, increases.' A total of 380 questionnaires were administered to students as a representative sample. Similarly, 51 questionnaires were administered to librarians, and 14 respondents were representing twenty-seven and a half

percent (27.5%). The researcher mitigated this low response through regular email reminders. However, the response rate for students was too low at only eight-point nine percent (8.9%) representing 34 respondents. The researcher received 90 printed copies of filled-in questionnaires and added to the previous questionnaires, this totalled 124 respondents out of the targeted 380, thereby achieving a representative sample of 32.6% for the student questionnaire. The researcher then fed the survey results into the Google Form to generate descriptive statistics.

4.3 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

The demographics of a research sample refer to the defining characteristics of the research population such as race, age, and gender (Weisberg & Goodstein, 2009:174). For the student questionnaire, the demographic information in this study stressed three categories: age range, level of study, and faculty. This was important in so far as the study sought to determine how these characteristics influenced students' leisure reading habits. The librarians' questionnaire considered job title, duration of employment, and the library section in which the respondents worked. These helped the researcher to draw from a wide range of perceptions and experiences especially from librarians who have worked in the library for a long time. The following subsections present the demographics of the questionnaire respondents in the study.

4.3.1 Level of study of the respondents

This section presents the respondents' level of study at UFS. Figure 4.1 shows the composition of respondents by their level of study.

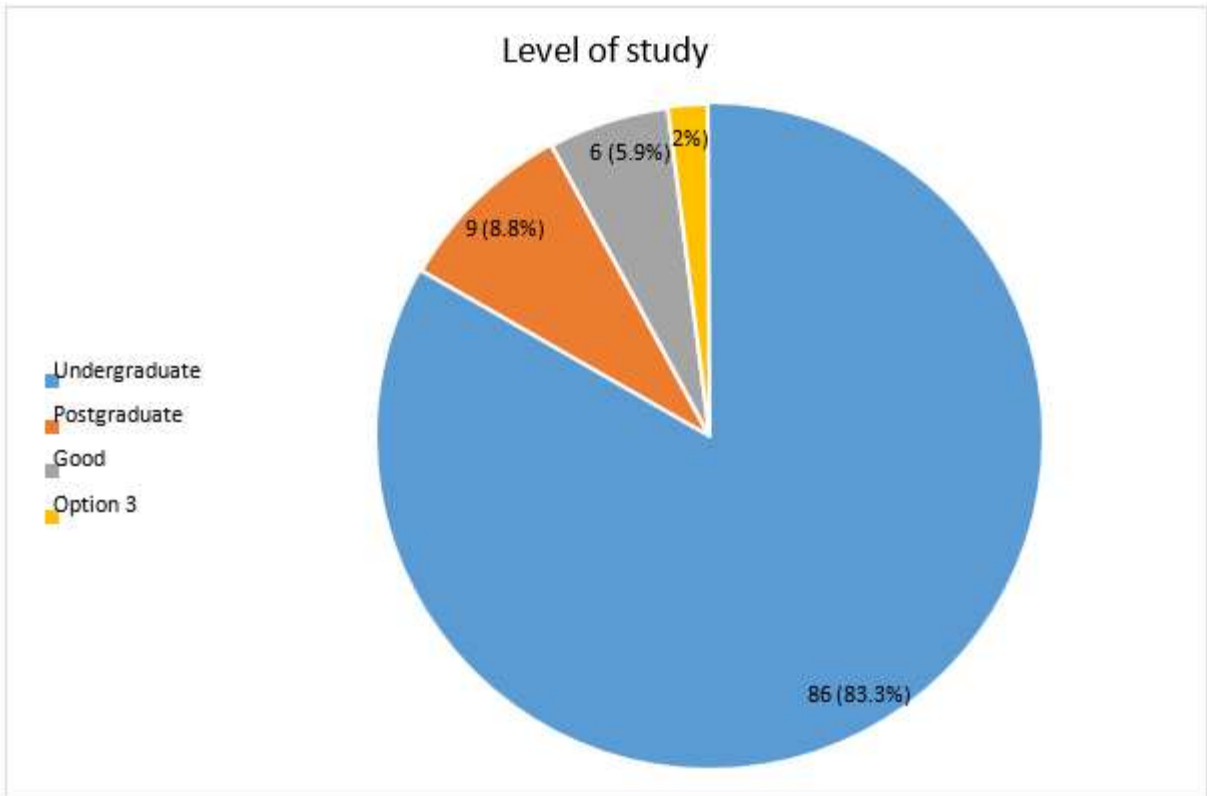


Figure 4.1: Students' level of study

The respondents were asked to state their level of study, specifically whether they were undergraduates or postgraduates. The pie chart in Figure 4.1 shows that 85 (83.3%) respondents were undergraduate while 9 (8.8%) were postgraduate students.

4.3.2 Respondents by faculty

The questionnaire asked respondents to indicate their faculties. Table 4.1 presents a summary of respondents by faculty.

Table 4.1: Respondents by faculty

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--|------------------|----------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Faculty of Economics and Management | 15 | 14.6 | 14.6 | 14.6 |
| Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences | 16 | 15.5 | 15.5 | 30.1 |
| Faculty of Humanities | 24 | 23.3 | 23.3 | 53.4 |
| Faculty of Theology | 3 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 56.3 |
| Faculty of Education | 32 | 31.1 | 31.1 | 87.4 |
| Faculty of Health | 4 | 3.9 | 3.9 | 91.3 |
| Faculty of Law | 9 | 8.7 | 8.7 | 100 |
| Total | 103 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Table 4.1 shows that the study achieved a total response of 124, representing 32.6% of the total sample population. In terms of faculties, 32 (31.1%) came from the Faculty of Education, 24 (23.3%) from the Humanities, 16 (15.5%) from the Natural and Agricultural Sciences, 15 (14.6%) from Economics and Management, 9 (8.7%) from Law, 4 (3.9%) from Health, while 3 (2.9%) came from the Faculty of Theology.

4.3.3 Age range of the students

The student respondents were further asked to indicate their age range. Figure 4.2 shows the students' age range.

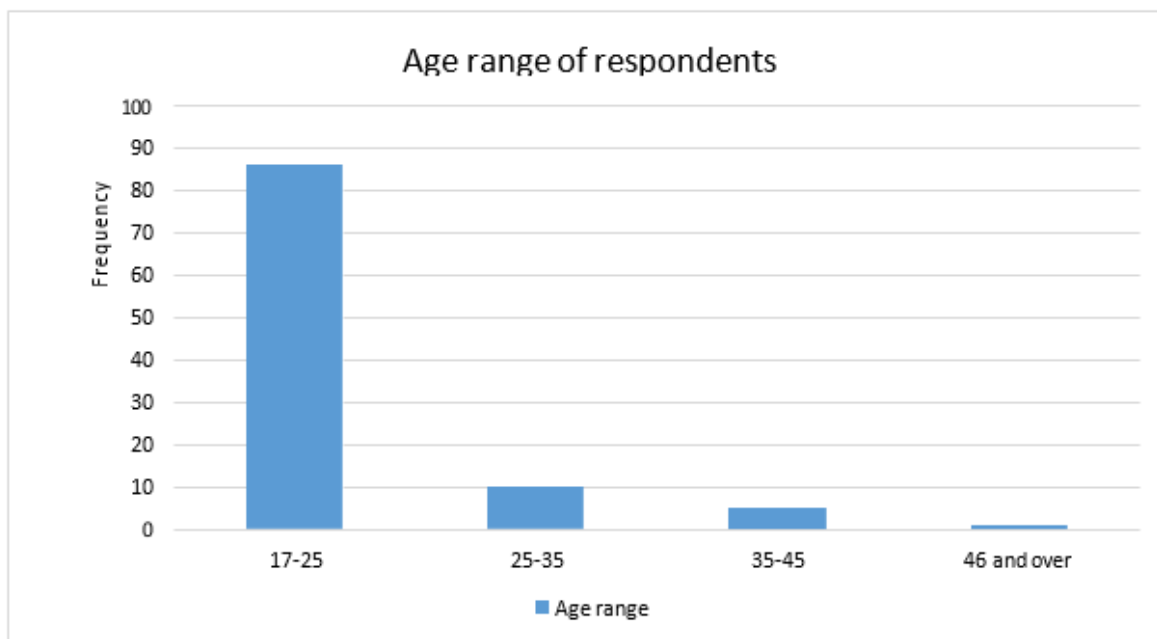


Figure 4.2: Age range of respondents

Figure 4.2 shows that most of the respondents 86 (84.3%) were in the age range of 17-25, while 10 (9.8%) were in the range 26-35. Age range 36-45 had 5 (4.9%) of respondents. The least age range was 46 and over, which accounted for only 1 (1%) of the respondents.

4.4 ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS

4.4.1 Research question one: How popular with students is the fiction collection at the University of the Free State’s Sasol Library?

The foregoing study centred on specific themes to address the above research question and corresponding objective. To do this, the research study relied on possible indicators to act as clues that pointed at the respondents’ awareness of the popular fiction collection at the university library. Sections 4.4.1.1 to 4.4.4.4 address the pointers used to measure the popularity of the popular fiction collection with student readers at Sasol Library.

4.4.1.1 Students’ awareness of Sasol Library’s popular fiction collection

The study sought to find out if the students were aware of the existence of the leisure reading

collection at the Sasol Library. Table 4.2 shows the frequency of the students' awareness of the popular collection.

Table 4.2: Awareness of the existence of the leisure reading collection

| Awareness | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Yes | 14 | 66.7 | 66.7 | 66.7 |
| Maybe | 5 | 23.8 | 23.8 | 90.5 |
| No | 2 | 9.5 | 9.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 21 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Table 4.2 shows that 14 (66.7%) respondents were aware of the existence of the popular fiction collection at Sasol Library. Some 5 (23.8%) participants were not sure if the collection existed in the Library. Only 2 (9.5%) respondents said that Sasol Library did not have a leisure reading collection.

4.4.1.2 Students' enjoyment of reading popular fiction

The study explored whether library users enjoyed reading popular fiction at all. Table 4.3 shows their responses concerning the enjoyment of reading.

Table 4.3: Enjoyment of popular fiction reading

| Enjoyment | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Yes | 14 | 77.8 | 77.8 | 77.8 |
| No | 4 | 22.2 | 22.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | 18 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The Table shows that 14 (77.8%) participants enjoyed reading popular fiction. This was compared to 4 (22.2%) respondents who did not enjoy leisure reading.

4.4.1.3 Types of genres that students prefer

The research also examined the possible leisure reading genres that were most popular with the students. Table 4.4 shows a summary of the students' responses in terms of their genre preference at Sasol Library.

Table 4.4: The preferred genres

| Genre | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative percent |
|-------------------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Mystery | 8 | 8.1 | 8.1 | 8.1 |
| Poetry | 7 | 7.1 | 7.1 | 15.2 |
| Romance | 8 | 8.1 | 8.1 | 23.3 |
| Science Fiction | 4 | 4 | 4 | 27.3 |
| Self-improvement | 13 | 13.1 | 13.1 | 40.4 |
| Short stories | 4 | 4 | 4 | 44.4 |
| Young adult | 2 | 2 | 2 | 46.4 |
| Award Winners | 8 | 8.1 | 8.1 | 54.5 |
| Best-selling Fiction | 7 | 7.1 | 7.1 | 61.6 |
| Best-selling Nonfiction | 5 | 5.1 | 5.1 | 66.7 |
| Biographies | 10 | 10.1 | 10.1 | 76.8 |
| Classics | 2 | 2 | 2 | 78.8 |
| Comics | 1 | 1 | 1 | 79.8 |
| Fantasy | 8 | 8.1 | 8.1 | 87.9 |
| Historical fiction | 9 | 9.1 | 9.1 | 97.0 |
| Other | 3 | 3 | 3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 99 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

4.4.1.4 How much time students spend reading popular fiction per academic year

The study sought to find out how often student readers made use of the popular fiction collection at Sasol Library. This was mainly concerning reading for leisure. Table 4.5 shows the popular collection's frequency of usage by respondents.

Table 4.5: The time students spend reading popular fiction every academic year

| Time spent | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|------------------|----------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Less than one hour | 28 | 27.7 | 27.7 | 27.7 |
| More than one hour but less than two hours | 35 | 34.7 | 34.7 | 62.4 |
| More than two hours but less than three hours | 21 | 20.8 | 20.8 | 83.2 |
| More than three hours | 17 | 16.8 | 16.8 | 100 |
| Total | 101 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The Table shows that a good number of the respondents 35 (34.7%) spent more than one hour but less than two hours a week reading popular fiction during the academic year; 28 (27.7%) respondents who said that they spent less than one hour per week reading leisure material during the academic year, 21 (20.8%) indicated that they spent more than two hours but less than three hours per week reading popular fiction during the academic year.

4.4.2 Research question two: What are students’ perceptions of the popular fiction collection at Sasol Library?

The researcher focussed on specific thematic areas to address the above question. Sub-sections to 4.4.2.5 refer to the thematic areas.

4.4.2.1 Why students read less popular fiction at the Sasol Collection

The study asked student respondents to identify what combination of factors made them read less popular fiction from Sasol Library’s collection than they would like to. Table 4.6 is a summary of their considered responses to the question.

Table 4.6: Barriers to popular fiction reading

| Response | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| I do not have enough time to read books | 32(31.1%) | 30(29.1%) | 21(20.4%) | 14(13.6%) | 6(5.8%) |
| I am not very confident while reading popular fiction | 5(4.9%) | 14(13.7%) | 20(19.6%) | 40(39.2%) | 23(22.5%) |
| Reading popular fiction does not feel pleasurable | 11(12.1%) | 8(8.8%) | 23(25.3%) | 29(31.9%) | 20(22.0%) |
| I am too tired to read books | 11(11.0%) | 19(19.0%) | 29(29.0%) | 30(30.0%) | 11(11.0%) |
| I am too slow at reading; it takes me too long to finish | 8(7.8%) | 14(13.7%) | 26(25.5%) | 31(30.4%) | 23(22.5%) |
| I do not enjoy reading books, but I feel I should do it | 9(8.8%) | 18(17.6%) | 21(20.6%) | 29(28.4%) | 25(24.5%) |
| I like reading fiction books, but it is not as much of a priority as other pastimes | 8(7.8%) | 36(35.3%) | 29(28.4%) | 20(19.6%) | 9(8.8%) |
| I have a problem holding my concentration while reading | 7(6.9%) | 15(14.9%) | 24(23.8%) | 38(37.6%) | 17(16.8%) |
| I do not enjoy reading popular fiction | 5(5.0%) | 19(18.8%) | 24(23.8%) | 29(28.7%) | 24(23.8%) |
| I already have enough reading to do for class | 23(22.5%) | 27(26.3%) | 31(30.4%) | 12(11.8%) | 9(8.8%) |
| I would rather socialise than read popular fiction | 8(8.0%) | 18(18.0%) | 27(27.0%) | 30(30.0%) | 17(17.0%) |
| I would rather spend my free time in other ways | 10(9.8%) | 15(14.7%) | 37(36.3%) | 28(27.5%) | 12(11.8%) |
| I do not have access to popular fiction that I am interested in | 12(11.85) | 19(18.6%) | 29(28.4%) | 27(26.5%) | 15(14.7%) |

A total of 32 (31.1%) respondents Agreed Strongly that they would read more if they had more time in their personal life, which pointed to the fact that they were overburdened by academic work. Another 36 (35.3%) participants Agreed they like reading fiction books, but it is not as much of a priority as other pastimes, while 37 (36.3%) respondents were Neutral that they

would rather spend their time in other ways.

4.4.2.2 Students' perception of the importance of reading popular fiction

The study asked student participants to give their views on the role of popular fiction in their day to day lives. Table 4.7 gives a summary of their responses.

Table 4.7: Students' perception of the importance of reading popular fiction

| Response | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Reading fiction serves as an escape from the real world | 38(38.4%) | 32(32.3%) | 19(19.2%) | 8(8.1%) | 2(2.0%) |
| I learn a lot by reading fiction | 32(32.3%) | 30(30.3%) | 21(21.2%) | 10(10.1%) | 6(6.1%) |
| Reading fiction is fun | 25(25.8%) | 31(32.0%) | 27(28.0%) | 10(10.3%) | 4(4.1%) |
| Reading fiction helps me understand my world | 19(19.0%) | 30(30.0%) | 36(36.0%) | 12(12.0%) | 3(3.0%) |
| I mainly read fiction to pass time | 11(11.0%) | 28(28.0%) | 37(37.0%) | 17(17.0%) | 7(7.0%) |
| Reading fiction can be tedious | 10(10.1%) | 20(20.2%) | 33(33.3%) | 22(22.2%) | 14(14.1%) |
| Fiction reading is a pleasant hobby | 21(21.4%) | 38(38.8%) | 22(22.4%) | 10(10.2%) | 7(7.1%) |
| After reading fiction I feel more prepared to understand and solve problems | 16(16.0%) | 24(24.0%) | 43(43.0%) | 13(13.0%) | 4(4.0%) |
| Fiction reading is purely for entertainment | 15(15.0%) | 37(37.0%) | 27(27.0%) | 16(16.0%) | 5(5.0%) |
| Reading fiction has little educational value | 15(15.0%) | 22(22.0%) | 29(29.0%) | 23(23.0%) | 11(11.0) |
| Reading fiction is an enjoyable part of my life | 19(19.0%) | 31(31.0%) | 29(29.0%) | 13(13.0%) | 8(8.0%) |
| After reading fiction I feel I have a better understanding | 19(19.0%) | 33(33.0%) | 35(35.0%) | 9(9.0%) | 4(4.0%) |

| | | | | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| of other countries and cultures | | | | | |
| Nothing I read in fiction relates to real life | 12(12.1%) | 18(18.2%) | 28(28.3%) | 29(29.3%) | 12(12.1%) |
| I often find myself relating something I have read in a fiction book to something I hear in the news | 22(22.7%) | 28(28.9%) | 30(30.9%) | 10(10.3%) | 7(7.2%) |
| I read to entertain myself | 16(16.5%) | 45(46.4%) | 21(21.6%) | 11(11.3%) | 4(4.1%) |
| I read to learn (e.g., to broaden my vocabulary) | 28(28.6%) | 39(39.8%) | 20(20.4%) | 7(7.1%) | 4(4.1%) |
| I read to keep up with what is popular and to be ‘in the know’ | 13(13.4%) | 22(22.7%) | 31(32.0%) | 27(27.8%) | 4(4.1%) |
| I read to simply pass the time | 6(6.2%) | 21(21.6%) | 32(33.0%) | 25(25.8%) | 13(13.4%) |

The Table shows that 38 (38.4%) participants strongly agreed that reading fiction serves as an escape from the real world. A further 45 (46.4%) respondents agreed that they read popular fiction to entertain themselves, while 43 (43.0%) readers were neutral about the claim that they felt more prepared to understand and solve problems after reading fiction. Another 29 (29.3%) respondents disagreed that nothing they read related to real life.

4.4.2.3 Factors that influence how students choose popular fiction books

The study further sought to find out the specific factors that influenced the way student readers chose popular reading materials at Sasol Library. Table 4.8 contains a summary of the study findings.

Table 4.8: How students choose popular books

| Response | Not at all | To some extent | Neutral | Likely | Very likely |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------------|
| I choose the book by famous author | 18(17.8%) | 39(38.6%) | 20(19.8%) | 15(14.9%) | 9(8.9%) |
| I choose the books that are short | 19(19.0%) | 30(30.0%) | 23(23.0%) | 18(18.0%) | 10(10.0%) |
| I choose the books that are long | 22(22.0%) | 22(22.0%) | 40(40.0%) | 12(12.0%) | 4(4.0%) |
| I choose the books that will make me think about myself | 7(7.0%) | 30(30.0%) | 26(26.0%) | 17(17.0%) | 20(20.0%) |
| I read what my parents encourage me to read | 39(39.0%) | 16(16.0%) | 28(28.0%) | 13(13.0%) | 4(4.0%) |
| I read what my lecturers encourage me to read | 14(14.0%) | 23(23.0%) | 32(32.0%) | 27(27.0%) | 4(4.0%) |
| I choose the books with elements of fantasy | 17(17.0%) | 21(21.0%) | 29(29.0%) | 24(24.0%) | 9(9.0%) |
| I choose the books with elements of history | 13(13.0%) | 24(24.0%) | 32(32.0%) | 21(21.0%) | 10(10.0%) |
| I choose books with heroes I can relate to | 13(13.0%) | 26(26.0%) | 23(23.0%) | 26(26.0%) | 12(12.0%) |
| I choose the books that have good love affair plot | 19(19.0%) | 18(18.0%) | 34(34.0%) | 18(18.0%) | 11(11.0%) |
| I choose the books with nice cover and catchy title | 15(15.2%) | 20(20.2%) | 22(22.2%) | 34(34.3%) | 8(8.1%) |
| I choose those type of books that will enable me to have a discussion with my friends later | 7(7.0%) | 31(31.0%) | 20(20.0%) | 26(26.0%) | 16(16.0%) |
| I choose those type of books with open possibilities to alternate the ending | 7(7.0%) | 18(18.0%) | 29(29.0%) | 28(28.0%) | 18(18.0%) |

The Table shows that 20 (20.0%) participants said that it was very likely that they chose books that made them think about themselves. Another 34 (34.3%) respondents said it was likely that they chose books with a nice cover and a catchy title, while 40 (40.0%) readers were neutral to the statement that they chose books that are long.

4.4.2.4 Perceived barriers to borrowing popular fiction

The study also asked respondents to state what incentives would motivate them to borrow and read popular fiction from the library. Table 4.9 contains a summary of the research findings.

Table 4.9: Perceived barriers

| Barriers | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative percent |
|--|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| If I had more time in my personal life | 61 | 35.0 | 35.0 | 35.0 |
| If the books were more interesting | 31 | 17.8 | 17.8 | 52.8 |
| If the books were not so old | 11 | 6.3 | 6.3 | 59.1 |
| If I could read them on my laptop, iPad, etc. | 17 | 9.8 | 9.8 | 68.9 |
| If someone told me about the interesting books. | 23 | 13.2 | 13.2 | 82.1 |
| If I had time to stop in the library media | 29 | 16.7 | 16.7 | 98.8 |
| If the library had an online browsable catalogue | 1 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 99.4 |
| If there were recommendations by someone | 1 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 100.0 |
| Total | 174 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The Table shows that 61 (62.2%) participants would borrow and read more books if they had more time in their personal lives. Another 31 (31.6%) respondents suggested that they would read more if the books were more interesting, while 11 (11.2%) would borrow more popular materials if the books were not so old. Further, 17 (17.3%) of the readers said they would consider reading more if they were to read the books on modern technological media such as laptops and iPad, and 23 (23.5%) said they would read more books if someone told them about the interesting books.

4.4.2.5 How Sasol Library might popularise the fiction collection

The study asked respondents to suggest a combination of ways through which Sasol Library could encourage the enjoyment of leisure reading. Table 4.10 contains their responses.

Table 4.10: Ways to encourage leisure reading

| Way of encouraging leisure reading | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--|------------|--------------|---------------|--------------------|
| More displays of popular fiction | 55 | 23.4 | 23.4 | 23.4 |
| Separate room for leisure reading | 22 | 9.4 | 9.4 | 32.8 |
| Create book exchange programmes | 31 | 13.2 | 13.2 | 46 |
| Collaborate more with public libraries | 31 | 13.2 | 13.2 | 59.2 |
| Create popular book lists | 40 | 17.0 | 17.0 | 76.2 |
| Expand popular book collections | 33 | 14.0 | 14.0 | 90.2 |
| Offer more book groups | 21 | 8.9 | 8.9 | 99.1 |
| Offer certain incentives to readers | 2 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 100.0 |
| Total | 235 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The Table shows that a total of 55 (53.9%) respondents thought that Sasol Library needed to display more popular fiction to encourage leisure reading. Another 40 (39.2%) respondents said that the library needed to create popular book lists. Similarly, 33 (32.4%) respondents encouraged the expansion of the popular fiction collection at Sasol Library. An equal number of 31 (30.4%) felt that there should be more exchange programmes as well as collaboration with other public libraries.

4.4.3 Research question three: What are the librarians' perceptions of the popular fiction collection at Sasol Library?

To address the above question, the study relied on the perceptions of the librarians towards the students as well as towards the library itself. Sub-sections 4.4.3.1 and 4.4.3.2 represent a summary of the librarians' views.

4.4.3.1 Librarians' perceived barriers to students

The study also set out to identify the librarians' views on what possible factors hampered the UFS's students' use of the popular reading collection at Sasol Library. This was based on the librarians' observations after several years of work in the library. Table 4.11 gives a summary of the results obtained.

Table 4.11: Barriers to students

| Barriers | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--|-----------|--------------|---------------|--------------------|
| They do not have access to popular fiction materials | 2 | 14.3 | 14.3 | 14.3 |
| They are overburdened by reading for classwork | 5 | 35.8 | 35.8 | 50.1 |
| They are not interested in popular fiction | 1 | 7.1 | 7.1 | 57.2 |
| They spend their reading time in other ways | 3 | 21.4 | 21.4 | 78.6 |
| Other | 3 | 21.4 | 21.4 | 100.0 |
| Total | 14 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Table 4.11 shows that most librarians 5 (35.7%) felt that students were overburdened by regular academic work which required such students to do a lot of reading for classwork. A further 3 (21.4%) respondents were of the view that students spent their reading time in other ways, even though they did not specify these ways. The same number of 3 (21%) respondents felt that there were other reasons why students did not read as they should. Only 2 (14.3%) librarian respondents thought that students did not have access to popular fiction material, while 1 (7.1%) librarian had the opinion that students were not interested in reading popular fiction.

4.4.3.2 Library barriers

The study further requested the library respondents to identify some of the possible barriers that affect the library's provision of popular fiction collection services. The librarians' views are as contained in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12: Library barriers

| Library barriers | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|------------------|----------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Lack of interest on the part of the library staff | 4 | 30.8 | 30.8 | 30.8 |
| Lack of time on the part of library staff | 3 | 23.1 | 23.1 | 53.9 |
| Lack of training for library staff | 1 | 7.6 | 7.6 | 61.5 |
| I feel that popular reading makes the library less academic | 0 | 0 | 0 | 61.6 |
| Other | 5 | 38.5 | 38.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 13 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Table 4.12 shows that 4 (30.8%) respondents thought that there was a lack of interest on the part of the library staff to support the daily operations of the popular fiction collection. A further 3 (23.1%) librarians felt that the library staff did not have time to help students identify popular fiction materials in the library.

4.4.3.3 Popular collection promotional activities

The study further set out to determine from the librarians, the promotional activities that Sasol Library engaged in to popularise the leisure reading collection. The following Table 4.13 shows a summary of the librarians' responses.

Table 4.13: Promotional activities

| Promotional activities | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Book clubs | 13 | 68.4 | 68.4 | 68.4 |
| Book displays | 2 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 78.9 |
| Book exchange programmes | 1 | 5.3 | 5.3 | 84.2 |

| | | | | |
|-------------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|-------|
| Promotional signs | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 84.2 |
| Speaker series | 1 | 5.3 | 5.3 | 89.5 |
| Other | 2 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 19 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The Table shows that 13 (92.9%) respondents said the Sasol Library used book clubs to popularise the leisure reading collection. Further, 2 (14.3%) participants agreed that the library used book displays, the same number said the library used other ways to promote popular reading.

4.4.3.4 Librarians' support for Sasol Library's acquisition of the popular fiction collection

The study asked librarians to explain if and why they supported Sasol Library's acquisition of the popular fiction collection. Their responses in running numbers included:

Respondent # 1 said *"Most of our students are from previously disadvantaged communities where reading is a luxury. I do support the acquisition of fiction as such to help students to acquire academic literacy skills."*

Respondent # 2 said, *"Yes, it helps create better-rounded students and staff."*

Respondent # 3 said *"Reading fiction allows you to not only escape into another person's world but helps create empathy for people that are different from the reader. It helps us to better understand the wider world. Learning through fiction is sometimes even more effective than in an academic setting."*

Respondent # 4 stated that *"It is very important to foster a love of reading among the students to develop and prepare the students for lifelong learning."*

Further, Respondent # 5 noted that *"It helps the student to improve in their literacy"* while Respondent # 6 said, *"I do, reading can be for leisure too and the mind needs some time off."*

Respondent # 7 said *"Yes, I do support the acquisition of the popular reading collection. I get many inquiries concerning leisure time reading materials"* and Respondent # 8 said *"Yes, I do. Students use it as leisure time activity. The public libraries are far from the campus and most students are living near or on the campus."*

Similarly, Respondent # 9 agreed that “*Yes - I buy the fiction (with recommendations from 3-4 staff members)*” while Respondent # 10 said “*Yes, very strongly. I believe recreational reading helps in promoting literacy, and imagination. It is also relaxing.*”

Respondent # 11 confirmed that “*Yes, reading is very important as it stimulates vocabulary. A reading student does well in their studies, and it has been proven by studies. It creates social contact between people.*”

Moreover, Respondent # 12 said “*Yes, because students should not only read for academic purpose but also for leisure it will help to refresh*” while Respondent # 13 noted that “*Yes, reading for leisure is important.*”

Lastly, Respondent # 14 observed that “*Yes, I do because the popular reading collection helps students to unwind and relax as the study books need lots of focus and concentration*” while Respondent # 15 agreed that “*Yes because it promotes reading culture.*”

4.4.3.5 The need to have book clubs

The survey further asked the librarians to state whether they thought Sasol Library should have book clubs as a strategy for promoting leisure reading habits amongst the students. Their responses included:

Respondent # 16 said that “*They must be developed because they contribute to nation and community building*” while Respondent # 17 said “*Keeping in mind that there are many time constraints on staff, encouraging student books clubs is a good idea.*”

Respondent # 18 noted that “*It could also teach students much more about the organisation of clubs/organisations, time management, leadership, etc.*”

Further, Respondent # 19 observed that “*A suggested format with guidelines could be provided by the Library to help get them started*” while Respondent # 20 said, “*Not that staff shouldn't have their book clubs - this could be a way to get together and do some team building and learn more about each other in a safe environment.*”

Respondent # 21 noted that “*Apart from graded readers, it will help them with that because they will see it as leisure and not part of their studies*” and Respondent # 22 noted that “*Sharing ones understanding regarding the book and exchanging ideas to make reading clubs fun.*”

Moreover, 5 respondents (38.5%) said “Yes” while Respondent # 23 said, “I don't know if students have the time for this.”

4.4.3.6 How often librarians help students with popular fiction resources at Sasol Library

The study also wanted to find out how often librarians assisted students with specific information regarding available popular reading materials. Table 4.14 shows that 4 (28.6%) librarians acknowledge helping students with information a few times a month.

Table 4.14: Frequency of librarians’ assistance

| Library Assistance | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative Percent |
|------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| A few times a week | 1 | 7.1 | 7.1 | 7.1 |
| Once a week | 1 | 7.1 | 7.1 | 14.2 |
| A few times a month | 4 | 28.6 | 28.6 | 42.8 |
| Every couple of months | 2 | 14.3 | 14.3 | 57.1 |
| Monthly | 3 | 21.4 | 21.4 | 78.5 |
| Rarely | 3 | 21.5 | 21.5 | 100.0 |
| Never | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 14 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The table shows that 3 (21.4%) indicated that they did so monthly. A sizable 3 (21.4%) respondents said that they rarely assist students. Only 1 (7.1%) librarian assisted readers with such information a few times a week, while another 1 (7.1%) did so once a week. Interestingly, no librarian said they never helped students identify and access leisure reading materials at the UFS Sasol Library.

4.4.3.7 Reasons that led to the creation of the popular reading collection at Sasol Library

The study also asked the librarians to explain the reasons that led to the creation of the leisure reading collection. Their responses included:

Respondent # 24 said that the popular fiction collection was created due to “*The need to advance the literacy levels of our students*” and Respondent # 25 said the collection was “*An initiative by management.*”

Respondent # 26 noted that “*Books were donated by the provincial library services YEARS ago*” while Respondent 27 # said “*Right in the beginning students asked a lot about leisure reading material. The library started with an exchange program from the public library's head office. This exchange was done every three months. It was such a popular event that the library's management decided to rather buy books and that started the collection. (I know that the library's directors were top leisure reading enthusiasts.*”

Similarly, Respondent # 28 said that “*I know for the children leisure was for the education department students and the academic literacy programme. I should think the other was for the student to relax and enjoy fiction and rest from academic work*” while Respondent # 29 said, “*The reason for creating a leisure reading corner was to help the student when they take a break from academic books to find something interesting to unwind or relax and read lighter material.*”

Respondent # 30 noted that “*Holidays allow leisure reading. Literacy development. Creative thinking*” while Respondent # 31 said, “*it is a place where students can take a break and relax from their academic work.*”

4.4.3.8 Attitudes of librarians towards the popular fiction collection

A specific open-ended question in the study asked the librarians to explain their thoughts on the importance of the popular fiction collection at Sasol Library. Their responses included:

Respondent # 32 said “*They demonstrate the importance of libraries for communities, especially poor communities where books are a luxury*” and Respondent # 33 observed, “*I think students need access to this collection for reading for leisure, help in the improvement of reading skills and for sure to develop a love for reading for studies.*”

Moreover, Respondent # 34 noted that “*the Library has the responsibility to grow a reading nation*” while Respondent # 35 said, “*The collection is important to address the needs of the users.*”

Lastly, Respondent # 36 observed that fiction collections “*form an integral part of any library collection.*”

4.4.3.9 Librarians’ perception of students’ reaction to the presence of the leisure collection

The online questionnaire asked open-ended questions to address the above thematic area. The librarians’ responses included:

Respondent # 37 noted that “*Whenever I visit our leisure reading areas, there are always students and/or staff browsing shelves.*”

Moreover, Respondent # 38 said “*We receive a lot of inquiries as to why we do not have a leisure reading collection*” while Respondent # 39 observed that “*Both are very happy and use the collection regularly, especially before holidays.*”

Further, Respondent # 40 said, “*Sometimes they are surprised as they don't realise fully what we have.*”

Lastly, Respondent # 41 said, “*They appreciate and fully the collection.*”

4.4.3.9.10 Librarians’ perception of the acquisition of the popular collection materials at Sasol Library

The librarians were asked for their opinion on the efficacy of Sasol Library’s infrastructure regarding the acquisition and existence of the popular fiction collection. Their responses included:

Respondent # 42 noted that “*Currently, the Neville Alexander Library does not have a fund to buy leisure reading*” while Respondent # 43 said that “*Our Director wants to have the only say in acquiring the titles.*”

Respondent # 44 observed that “*budget cuts undermine us*” while Respondent # 45 said that, “*The library has a budget allocated for books, journal subscriptions, and e-books and it is used for those purposes.*”

4.4.3.9.11 Where the library shelves popular reading materials

The study also sought to find out whether the library usually shelved the popular fiction materials together with the academic collection at the Sasol Library. The aim was to determine the ease with which the student readers accessed the materials. The findings based on the librarians' responses are as follows.

Respondent # 46 noted that *"They are shelved at a separate section for easy access."*

However, Respondent # 47 said that *"There is a separate location for fiction and non-fiction leisure reading books. But some are also available on the shelves with the rest of the collection."*

Respondent # 48 observed that *"The collection is shelved in two leisure areas in the library and not with the rest"* while Respondent # 49 said, *"Some are shelved with the rest of the collection, but mainly in the Leisure reading areas."*

Lastly, Respondent # 50 said, *"The Graded Readers are shelved separately but the rest of the few leisure reading books are shelved in the 800 class together with the other books."*

4.4.3.9.12 The library's circulation policy concerning popular fiction

The research wanted to determine the Sasol Library's circulation policy concerning leisure reading materials. The librarians' responses are as follows.

Respondent # 51 said that *"They are being issued out to staff members for 12 months and two weeks to students."*

Moreover, Respondent # 52 noted that *"The policy is the same as the academic collection. Undergraduate 10 books for 2 weeks, postgraduate 15 books for 4 weeks, and staff according to academic or support. It is not on a special card, but the amount is including the academic material."*

Respondent # 53 observed that *"The same as with all their material - it depends on the status of the lender."*

4.4.3.9.13 Readers advisories

The study further wanted to investigate whether the librarians received readers' advisory questions from student users of the popular fiction collection. The librarians' responses show that 5 (41.7%) participants said that they did not receive readers' advisory questions from students.

4.4.3.9.14 How the library promotes the popular collection

The study sought to find out how the different librarians popularised the leisure reading collection whenever they are at work. The following represent their responses.

Respondent # 54 noted that the library promoted the collection by "*Actively buying books for the collection*" while Respondent # 55 said that "*During the student's orientation, the collection is part of the information given.*"

Further, Respondent # 56 observed that the library did so by "*Word-of-mouth when students walk in and pose certain queries.*"

4.4.3.9.15 Librarians' perceptions of the future of the collection

The study sought to determine different librarians' perceptions of the future of the leisure reading collection. The findings are as follows.

Respondent # 57 said that "*Leisure reading is therapeutic and should be encouraged*" while Respondent # 58 noted that "*As a reader/user of the collection, I would like to see a wider range of fiction and non-fiction on the shelves, to include a wider variety of cultures, religions, views.*"

Moreover, Respondent # 59 said that "*We need to start developing the leisure reading collection sooner than later.*"

Lastly, Respondent # 60 suggested that "*The future seems to be under a serious threat by the overgrowing invention of social media platforms that compete for the user's attention.*"

4.4.3.9.16 Librarians' perception of students borrowing popular books

The research set out to investigate the librarians' awareness of students borrowing popular books. The following were the responses.

Respondent # 61 said that *"When I borrow leisure reading books, I can see lots of circulation from the return date stamps, though"* while Respondent # 62 noted that *"Yes, I am aware of a few students that inquiries about popular reading materials and are very disappointed with the fact that we have almost nothing."*

Lastly, Respondent # 63 observed that *"The Majority of the students normally come to the library to borrow non-fiction materials for their academic work or projects."*

4.4.3.9.17 The kind of materials that students borrow

The study wanted to know the nature of popular fiction materials that students generally went to borrow from the library. The following represents the librarians' responses.

Respondent # 64 said that *"Fiction books by popular authors and books that have reviews in the newspapers."*

Further, Respondent # 65 noted that *"All kinds, depending on individual interests"* while Respondent # 66 said *"Biography and motivational material."*

Respondent # 67 said *"Love, adventure and science fiction"* and Respondent # 68 said *"Historical fiction and Biographies."*

4.4.3.9.18 Other productive ways of popularising the collection

The research study sought to know from the librarians, what were the other ways through which Sasol Library might make the leisure reading collection popular with student users. The following are the responses.

Respondent # 69 said that *"Apart from student and staff recommendations for acquisition, having someone responsible for keeping the collection relevant and up to date would be a good idea."*

Moreover, Respondent # 70 noted that *“By surveying the student to determine their needs for a fiction collection”* while Respondent # 71 said *“Staff members who read a lot of fiction and keep up to date with the latest publications and prize winners should be allowed to help with the ordering of fiction books. Some staff members who order for the collection currently do not even know the difference between fiction and non-fiction.”*

Respondent # 72 said the library could *“buy the latest books, especially by our South African and African authors.”*

Moreover, Respondent # 73 said, *“Through purposeful displays, word of mouth from each unit and running a survey with students to hear what they want to read.”*

Lastly, Respondent # 74 noted that *“They can purchase more E-books or electronic fiction collections to reach a large number of library users.”*

4.4.4 Research question four: What is the usage pattern of the fiction collection in terms of genre and text format?

The study sought to find out the usage pattern of the popular collection. This was in terms of genre and the format of the texts that the students read. The following subsections outline students' and librarians' perceptions of the usage pattern.

4.4.4.1 Genres that students are likely to read

The current study also investigated the possible genres that students would be likely to read at the Sasol Library popular fiction collection. The following Table 4.15 contains a summary of the study findings.

Table 4.15: Preferred genres

| Preferred genre | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative percent |
|------------------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Award-winners | 37 | 10.6 | 10.6 | 10.6 |
| Best-selling Fiction | 26 | 7.4 | 7.4 | 18.0 |
| Best-selling Non-fiction | 11 | 3.1 | 3.1 | 21.1 |
| Biographies | 29 | 8.3 | 8.3 | 29.4 |
| Classics | 15 | 4.3 | 4.3 | 33.7 |
| Comic Books/Graphic Novels | 13 | 3.7 | 3.7 | 37.4 |
| Fantasy | 26 | 7.4 | 7.4 | 44.8 |
| Historical Fiction | 27 | 7.7 | 7.7 | 52.5 |
| Mystery/Suspense | 27 | 7.7 | 7.7 | 60.2 |
| Poetry | 20 | 5.7 | 5.7 | 65.9 |
| Romance | 30 | 8.7 | 8.7 | 74.6 |
| Science Fiction | 11 | 3.2 | 3.2 | 77.8 |
| Self-Improvement | 32 | 9.1 | 9.1 | 86.9 |
| Short Stories | 25 | 7.1 | 7.1 | 94.0 |
| Young Adults | 18 | 5.1 | 5.1 | 99.1 |
| African Modernist Literature | 1 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 99.4 |
| Sports | 1 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 99.7 |
| Spiritual Growth | 1 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 350 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The Table shows that 37 (36.3%) participants are interested in reading the Award-winners genre. Another 26 (25.5%) respondents prefer Best-selling fiction while 11 (10.8%) would like to read Best-selling non-fiction. Some 29 (28.4%) readers want to read Biographies, 15 (14.7%) love Classics, and 13 (12.7%) prefer Comic books/Graphic novels. Moreover, 26 (25.5%) participants would like to read Fantasy, while 27 (26.5%) readers prefer Historical fiction, and the same number want to read the Mystery genre. Poetry is liked by 20 (19.6%) participants, Romance by 30 (29.4%), Science fiction by 11 (10.8%), Self-improvement by 32 (31.4%), and Short Stories are preferred by 25 (24.5%) respondents.

4.4.4.2 Students' order of preference in terms of popular genres

The study sought to investigate the degree to which the respondents preferred different fiction genres at Sasol Library. Table 4.16 summarises the findings.

Table 4.16: Degree of preference

| Response | I love it | I like it | It is alright | I would rather not read it | I hate it |
|--------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Romance | 30(30.0%) | 26(26.0%) | 31(31.0%) | 11(11.0%) | 2(2.0%) |
| Religious | 17(16.8%) | 22(21.8%) | 37(36.6%) | 14(13.9%) | 11(10.9%) |
| Inspirational | 41(41.0%) | 24(24.0%) | 26(26.0%) | 5(5.0%) | 4(4.0%) |
| Literary | 28(28.3%) | 31(31.3%) | 29(29.3%) | 6(6.1%) | 5(5.1%) |
| Science fiction | 14(14.3%) | 11(11.2%) | 44(44.9%) | 17(17.3%) | 12(12.2%) |
| Fantasy | 31(31.0%) | 29(29.0%) | 23(23.0%) | 10(10.0%) | 7(7.0%) |
| Historical fiction | 31(31.3%) | 25(25.2%) | 32(32.3%) | 7(7.1%) | 4(4.0%) |
| Thriller | 34(34.3%) | 24(24.2%) | 25(25.3%) | 7(7.1%) | 9(9.1%) |
| Spy | 21(21.2%) | 30(30.3%) | 30(30.3%) | 8(8.1%) | 10(10.1) |
| Adventure | 28(28.0%) | 32(32.0%) | 28(28.0%) | 4(4.0%) | 8(8.0%) |

The Table shows that 41 (41.0%) respondents said that they love reading the Inspirational genre of popular fiction. Similarly, 32 (32.0%) participants liked reading the Adventure genre, while 44 (44.9%) readers said it was alright to read Science fiction.

4.4.4.3 Students' perceptions of usage pattern in terms of text format

The student questionnaire asked readers to identify the format of the texts that they borrowed and read from Sasol Library's popular collection. Figure 4.3 summarises the orientation of the student readers' preferences.

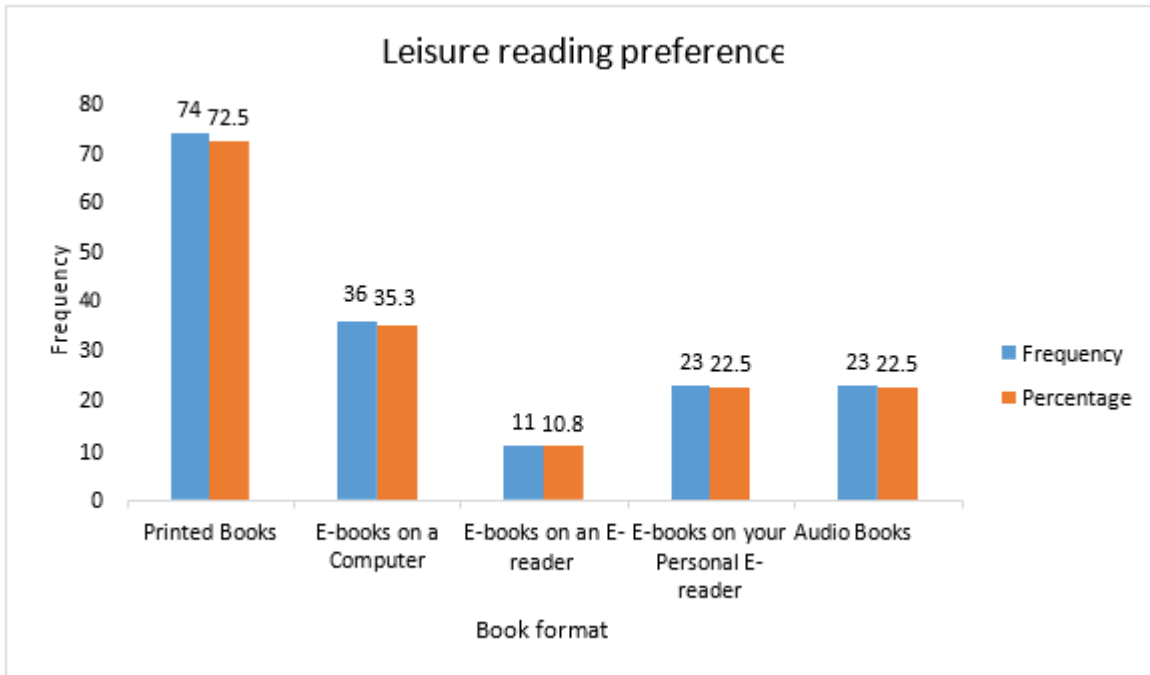


Figure 4.3: Students, perception on usage pattern

The Figure shows that an overwhelming number of 74 (72.5%) of readers preferred printed books to any other text format. This was followed by E-books on a computer 36 (35.3%), and E-books on your personal e-reader 23 (22.5%). Audiobooks also enjoyed equal popularity with 23 (22.5%) of respondents.

4.4.4.4 Perceived e-reader preferences

On the students' preference for e-readers, the study sought to examine and find out the specific type of e-reader that the students preferred while reading popular fiction. Table 4.17 shows the study findings.

Table 4.17: E-reader type

| E-reader type | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative percent |
|---|------------------|----------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| iPad | 20 | 25.3 | 25.3 | 25.3 |
| iPod Touch | 4 | 5.1 | 5.1 | 30.4 |
| Kindle | 15 | 19 | 19 | 49.4 |
| Nook | Missing | Missing | Missing | 49.4 |
| Sony E-Reader | 4 | 5.1 | 5.1 | 54.5 |
| None | 31 | 39.0 | 39.0 | 93.5 |
| Adobe Reader | 1 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 94.8 |
| PDF | 1 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 96.1 |
| Pdf | 1 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 97.4 |
| Any – I do not currently own one. I use my phone. | 1 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 98.7 |
| Hard Copy | 1 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 79 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The Table shows that 31 (39.2%) respondents who chose e-readers do not want to use one to read popular fiction. Another 20 (25.5%) would prefer iPads, while 15 (19%) would like to use Kindle. Moreover, 4 (5.1%) respondents would want to use iPod Touch and Sony E-reader each, while no one wants to use Nook.

4.4.4.5 Students' perceptions of usage pattern in terms of genre

The student questionnaire further asked respondents to identify the genres that they preferred to read during leisure time. It is important to observe that the questionnaire did not discriminate. Rather, this question encouraged the respondents to tick all that applied to their cases. Table 4.18 summarises their responses.

Table 4.18: Usage pattern by genre

| Genre | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative percent |
|--------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Award winners | 37 | 17.8 | 17.8 | 17.8 |
| Self-improvement | 32 | 15.4 | 15.4 | 33.2 |
| Romance | 30 | 14.4 | 14.4 | 47.6 |
| Biographies | 29 | 13.9 | 13.9 | 61.5 |
| Historical fiction | 27 | 13.0 | 13.0 | 74.5 |
| Mystery/suspense | 27 | 13.0 | 13.0 | 87.5 |
| Fantasy | 26 | 12.5 | 12.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 208 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The Table shows that the Award winners' genre 37 (36.3%) was popular with most of the respondents. This was closely followed by the Self-improvement genre at 32 (31.4%), Romance 30 (29.4%), Biographies 29 (28.4%), Historical fiction 27 (26.5%), Mystery/suspense 27 (26.5%), and Fantasy 26 (25.5%).

4.4.4.6 Librarians' perceptions of usage pattern in terms of genre

The study further sought to ascertain the pattern of leisure reading genres that librarians helped students to access at Sasol Library during duty. The intention was to find out to what extent the librarians' observations agreed with those expressed by students. The librarians' responses are contained in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19: Librarians' perceptions of usage pattern

| Usage pattern | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Adventure | 6 | 8.5 | 8.5 | 8.5 |
| Mystery | 5 | 7.0 | 7.0 | 15.5 |
| Fantasy | 7 | 9.9 | 9.9 | 25.4 |
| Humour | 6 | 8.5 | 8.5 | 33.9 |
| Romance | 7 | 9.9 | 9.9 | 43.8 |
| Science fiction | 7 | 9.9 | 9.9 | 53.7 |
| Historical fiction | 6 | 8.5 | 8.5 | 62.2 |
| Sports | 5 | 7.0 | 7.0 | 69.2 |
| Biographies | 6 | 8.5 | 8.5 | 77.7 |
| Real life problems | 8 | 11.3 | 11.3 | 89.0 |
| Graphic novels | 4 | 5.4 | 5.4 | 94.4 |
| I do not recommend any | 1 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 95.8 |
| Anything they might be interested in | 1 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 97.2 |
| All the above | 1 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 98.6 |
| That would depend on what they like | 1 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 100.0 |
| Total | 71 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Table 4.19 shows that the highest percentage of librarians 8 (57.1%) said that they assisted students with accessing books that helped the readers solve real-life problems. This was closely followed by Science Fiction 7 (50%), Romance 7 (50%), and Fantasy 7 (50%).

4.4.4.7 Librarians' perceptions of popular text format

The study also set out to determine the formats of the popular texts that Sasol Library collects for students to read at the leisure reading collection. The following responses summarise the

librarians' views of text formats:

Respondent # 75 said that *"I usually recommend a hard copy of fiction, but an e-book for academic purposes"* and Respondent # 76 noted *"Paperback documentaries."*

Further, Respondent # 77 suggested that *"All the books are hard copies."*

Respondent # 78 said *"e-books (I own an e-reader), print (I have a huge home library)."*

However, Respondent # 79 said *"Real-life problems book and Christian fiction hardcopy"* while Respondent # 80 noted that *"The format is currently more paper-based as students struggle to access eBooks."*

Lastly, Respondent # 81 said that *"In our library mostly we have hard copies of leisure books."*

4.4.4.8 How the Sasol Library selects its popular materials

The study sought to investigate how Sasol Library selected the leisure reading materials that it bought for the students to read. The following varied responses represent a summary of the librarians' perceptions:

Respondent # 82 said *"I look at the content especially the summary at the back of the book"* while Respondent # 83 noted the books are acquired through *"Recommendations from other LIS staff members, reviews in newspapers/social media."*

Further, Respondent # 84 suggested that *"The selection mainly comes from library staff inputs together with some students."*

Lastly, Respondent # 85 said that *"The selection is based on the user needs that are usually accessed during the book exhibition. Users will indicate their preference."*

4.4.4.9 The cost of running the popular collection

The study asked the librarians to give their views on what it cost to provide for and sustain the popular fiction collection. Their views included:

Respondent # 86 said that *"Books are expensive and most of our students are NSFAS recipients, they do not have a luxury of buying books, therefore, it is the role of the library to provide for*

such needs” while Respondent # 87 noted that “A budget of about R50 000 per year will be needed to sustain the collection.”

Lastly, Respondent # 88 suggested that the finances that would sustain the collection would be *“Approximately 20% of the library budget.”*

4.4.4.10 Sasol Library’s ease of accessing university funds to run the collection

The research asked the librarians to express their views on how easy or difficult it was for Sasol Library to access funding from the university, specifically for running the leisure reading collection. The following is a summary of their responses:

Respondent # 89 noted that *“Currently, the Neville Alexander Library does not have a fund to buy leisure reading.”*

Another Respondent # 90 said that *“Our Director wants to have the only say in acquiring the titles”* and Respondent # 91 suggested that *“As far as I know, there is a specific fund from which the material is bought.”*

Moreover, Respondent # 92 noted that *“budget cuts undermine us.”*

Further, Respondent # 93 said that *“The library has a budget allocated for books, journal subscriptions, and e-books and its used for those purposes”* while Respondent # 94 suggested that *“library’s collection development policy promotes and supports the acquisition of these materials.”*

4.4.4.11 How the materials are classified

The study sought to find out from the librarians how the Sasol Library classifies the leisure reading materials. The following is a summary of the librarians’ views:

Respondent # 95 said that *“They are placed under literature, the 800”* while Respondent # 96 noted that *“Materials are currently selected form catalogues provided by the vendors.”*

Moreover, Respondent # 97 suggested that the books are shelved *“According to DDC, we also have 2 separate leisure reading collections (fiction and non-fiction) with shortened DDC numbering.”*

Further, Respondent # 98 said that *“Just a broad number with the first three alphabetical letters of the author's surname - distinguish between English and Afrikaans fiction”* while Respondent # 99 observed that *“We have a collection from 000 - 999 field and fiction and non-fiction.”*

4.4.4.12 Additional comments on the promotion of the popular collection

The study sought more comments from the librarians on their perception of the promotion of the leisure reading collection at Sasol Library. The following is a summary of the findings in this regard.

Respondent # 100 responded that *“The library should invite more stakeholders that can make donations”* and that there should be *“invitations to students to make use of it and more public notifications of new arrivals, maybe on the library's webpage and Facebook page.”*

Further, Respondent # 101 noted that *“Bestsellers and prize winners should be obtained to keep the collection up to date and new up-and-coming local authors of fiction should be supported by buying their books.”*

Respondent # 102 said that *“The library can have reading competitions to encourage reading. Make it part of the information librarian training sessions”* while Respondent # 103 observed that *“Have a book club the online one and promote all kinds of fiction and every two weeks get a new book to circulate amongst the group.”*

Lastly, Respondent # 104 suggested that *“Staff members and students must be fully trained on the importance of fiction reading.”*

4.5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The chapter presented the findings of the study, which examined the perceptions and experiences of students and librarians concerning the popular fiction collection at the UFS's Sasol Library. The research data was collected through questionnaires, which were then analysed using SPSS, and then presented through relative frequency tables, pie charts, and graphs. Qualitative data were analysed through content analysis and presented in the form of descriptive statistics and respondents' quotations. The results showed that both students and librarians were optimistic about the popular fiction collection at Sasol Library. Chapter Five is a discussion of the research findings.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The current chapter sets out to discuss the findings that are contained in the previous chapter, which also involves the task of analysing and interpreting what the collected and analysed data means. Silverman (2017:351) writes that “good data analysis is never just a matter of using the right methods or techniques but is always based on theorising about data using a consistent model of social reality.” Thus, the current chapter relies on available research literature on reading culture to understand the findings drawn from available data. It is also anchored on relevant theory to understand research data concerning students’ and librarians’ experiences and perceptions of the popular fiction collection at the UFS’s Sasol Library.

The study was guided by the Transformative Research Model as an operational theory. Trevors, Pollack and Saier (2012:117) define Transformative Research as “that which ‘transforms’ or causes a major change in thought patterns concerning an area of scientific endeavour.” Therefore, the study identified the improvement of a reading culture as the main theme of the research. It further situated the foregoing theme within the context of popular reading collections in academic libraries as an aspect of Transformative Research. Hence, the study investigated ways in which the popular reading collection at Sasol Library responded to the needs and expectations of student readers and librarians. The main objective was to find out how the experiences and perceptions of both student readers and librarians could be transformed to make the operations of the reading collection more efficient than its current state. It was hoped that this would, in turn, have the effect of enhancing a culture of reading at the UFS’s Sasol Library.

5.2 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The following is a discussion of the research findings. This is done according to the order of research questions to ensure consistency and ease of analysis. The study specifically analyses the themes that emerged from the research questions.

5.3 POPULAR FICTION COLLECTION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE'S SASOL LIBRARY

The foregoing study centred on specific themes to address the above research question and the corresponding objective. To do this, the research study relied on possible indicators to act as clues that pointed at the respondents' awareness of the popular fiction collection at the university library. Therefore, the following subsections address the pointers used to measure the popularity of the popular fiction collection with student readers at the UFS's Sasol Library.

5.3.1 The popularity of the fiction collection at Sasol Library

The main purpose of the first research question was to find out the extent to which the leisure reading collection at the UFS's Sasol Library was popular with student readers. This was measured in terms of the number of hours students spent reading Sasol Library's popular fiction per week. Subsections 5.3.1 to 5.3.2 give a summary of the research findings.

5.3.2 Students' Awareness of the Popular Fiction Collection

The study shows that 14 (66.7%) respondents were aware of the existence of the popular fiction collection at Sasol Library. The current study supports Eyiolorunshe and Eluwole's (2017) study of library resource awareness amongst users at the Landmark University in Nigeria. The said research found that library users' rate of awareness of Textbooks was 92 (92%), Magazines 87 (87%), Reference materials 82 (82%), Journals 80 (80%), e-books 73 (73%), online databases 73 (73%), OPAC 66 (66%). Further, the current study aligns with Yebowaah and Plockey's (2017) extensive study on students' library use awareness at the University for Development Studies in West Ghana. In the latter study, the researchers found that 88.8% of the respondents were active library users. Out of this total figure, 65% of the library users were aware of the library's e-resources.

5.3.3 Students' enjoyment of reading popular fiction

The research data obtained in the current study shows that a majority of 14 (77.8%) participants

enjoy reading popular fiction. This is compared to 4 (22.2%) respondents who reported that they did not enjoy leisure reading. These findings agree with Conklin and Moreton's (2015) study of students' enjoyment of leisure reading at the Southern Illinois University Edwardsville in the United States. The research showed that college students generally enjoyed popular reading. The study found that 81.3% of female students and 68.5% of male students at the university read for pleasure at least a little every week. Moreover, the current study supports Gilbert and Fister's (2011) research on popular reading at the Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota, in the United States. The study found out that almost all participants (93.0%) said that they enjoyed reading for pleasure at the college library.

5.3.4 Types of genres that students prefer

The data shows that the Self-improvement literature, which people read to improve their lives in varied ways, was the most popular genre preferred by 13 (13.1%) of all respondents. The current study does not support the findings of Gilbert and Fister (2011:479) conducted on leisure reading at Gustavus Adolphus College in the US. The study found that 76.9% of all respondents reported that they preferred the General Fiction genre. This was followed by Mystery (38.9%), Classics (33.7%), General non-fiction (31.4%), etc. The current findings also disagree with those of Abeyrathna and Zainab (2004:113), a study conducted to investigate the state of leisure reading preferences amongst secondary school students in Sri Lanka. The study found that Humour was the most popular genre, with 73% of respondents saying that they liked it. This was followed by Detective (38.4%), Historical (34%), Romance (32.4%), etc. However, it is possible that the history of a long war in Sri Lanka informed the respondents' dislike of the atrocities of war as contained in the War genre and made them seek escape and entertainment in the Humour genre. Similarly, the current study seems to suggest that the Self-improvement genre scores highly due to the legacies of social problems that the apartheid history left behind in South Africa.

5.3.5 The time students spend reading popular fiction per academic year

The study findings show that a sizable number of students 35 (34.7%) spent more than one hour but less than two hours a week reading popular fiction during the academic year. This population was followed by 28 (27.7%) respondents who spent less than one hour per week

reading leisure material during the same period. These results show that most of the students use the popular fiction collection for more than one hour per week during the academic year. The findings vary little from Gilbert and Fister's (2011) study on leisure reading at Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota, the US, which found out that 10.0% of respondents engaged in leisure reading for 0 hours per week, 34.5% read for less than 1 hour, 29.6% read for more than 1 hour but less than 2 hours, 14% read for more than 2 hours but less than 3 hours, while 11.7% read for 3 hours and above.

Loan's (2011:8) study on the frequency of usage of the college library for both leisure and academic reading in Kashmir Valley, India, is also relevant to the current study. Loan's (2011) study findings show that most of the students (32.25%) used the college library once a week and, 20.56% used it two or three times a week. Loan's (2011) data also shows that only 6.36% of the respondents used the college library for leisure and academic reading daily, while 9.76% did not use the library at all. Another research that supports the findings of the current study was carried out by Watson (2014:33) at the University of Saskatchewan in Canada. The research sought to determine the leisure reading habits of students in the health sciences. In the study, Watson found out that 69.7% of the student respondents had read a book for enjoyment in the previous week, 48.1% had spent 1 hour or more time, while only 4.8% of the health sciences students had spent 6 hours or more time engaged in leisure reading. Further, 58.7% had read at least 1 book in the previous month, only 2 participants had read 7-8 books, and 66% of the respondents had read 3 or more books over the previous 6 months.

All the above three studies reveal low rates of regular reading, but they work to confirm the findings of the current research. The current study shows that 34.7% of the respondents used Sasol Library's leisure reading collection for more than 1 hour but less than 2 hours every week corresponds to most respondents in the other three studies. Overall, most of these respondents said that they engaged in leisure reading for either less than 1 hour every week or more than 1 hour but less than 2 hours once a week. This trend is represented by 34.5% in Gilbert and Fister's (2011) study, 32.25% in Loan's (2011) study, and by 48.1% in Watson's (2015) findings. It might be right to say that the slight variations in the above values may be due to the prevailing contexts and circumstances in the respective research sites such as culture and levels of technological development.

5.4 STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE POPULAR FICTION COLLECTION AT SASOL LIBRARY

The researcher focussed on specific thematic areas to address the above question. Sub-sections 4.4.2.1 to 4.4.2.5 refer to the thematic areas.

5.4.1 Students engagement with popular fiction at the Sasol Library

The data shows that 32 (31.1%) respondents agreed strongly that they would read widely if they had more time in their personal life. Another 36 (35.3%) participants agreed that they like reading fiction books, but it is not as much of a priority as other pastimes, while 37 (36.3%) respondents were neutral that they would rather spend their time in other ways. Further, 40 (39.2%) disagreed that they were not very confident while reading popular fiction.

The above findings suggest that students at the UFS wish to read, except that they feel time factors and classwork occupy much of their productive time. These findings seem to support Gilbert and Fister's (2011:282) study at Gustavus Adolphus College. The study found that "lack of time to read for pleasure, whether because of homework, a desire to socialise, or a decision to spend time in other ways, is the primary constraint." The current study further concurs with Jolliffe and Harl's (2008:607) research at the University of Arkansas, in which many students "described having regular, steady, full reading lives in which they engaged with a wide variety of texts for personal interest and pleasure."

5.4.2 Students' perception of the importance of reading popular fiction

The data shows that 38 (38.4%) participants strongly agreed that reading fiction serves as an escape from the real world. A further 45 (46.4%) respondents agreed that they read popular fiction to entertain themselves, while 43 (43.0%) readers were neutral about the claim that they felt more prepared to understand and solve problems after reading fiction. The current study partly supports Zaidi, Usman, Fayad and Shariff's (2018) findings in their investigation of leisure reading preferences among medical students at the RAK Medical and Health Sciences University in the United Arab Emirates. In the cited study, an overwhelming majority of respondents reported that reading improved their academic performance, knowledge about the world, and their personal lives. Zaidi *et al.* (2018:73) observe that "a majority (94.5%) of the

female respondents agree that leisure reading had brought about positive outlook compared to male respondents (89.8%).” However, the current study did not capture the gender difference in leisure reading habits as expressed in the cited finding.

5.4.3 Factors that influence how students choose popular fiction books

A total of 20 (20.0%) participants said that it was very likely that they chose books that made them think about themselves. Thirty-four (34.3%) respondents said it was likely that they chose books with a nice cover and a catchy title, while 40 (40.0%) readers were neutral to the statement that they chose long books. The current study’s overall finding that students value their perceptions of what they read for leisure seems to contradict Clark and Rumbold’s (2006) position on popular reading habits in the United Kingdom (UK). The above cited study shows that students’ reading habits are influenced primarily by their parents, and teachers. The comparative high likelihood of students reading what is specifically relevant to their experience in the current research confirms Kamhieh’s (2018) study findings on leisure reading habits amongst university students in Jordan. Kamhieh (2018:174) notes that “book choice may have less to do with book-based appeal factors (such as author, protagonist, etc.,) and more to do with the overall reading experience.” This finding suggests the personal and emotional nature of the act of reading.

5.4.4 Perceived barriers to borrowing popular fiction

The study findings show that 61(62.2%) participants would borrow and read more books if they had more time in their personal lives. Another 31 (31.6%) respondents said they would read more if the books were more interesting, while 11 (11.2%) would borrow more popular materials if the books were not so old. The finding contradicts Loan’s (2011) study of reading and library usage habits of students in Kashmir. The study found that the top three leading barriers to leisure reading are libraries’ restrictions on reading materials (35.36%), inadequate library collections (31.36%), and hikes in the cost of reading materials (28.99%). However, the current findings support Gilbert and Fister’s (2011) research which shows that lack of time (77.1%) is the leading leisure reading barrier to students at Gustavus Adolphus College in the United States. This was followed by the need to socialise (35.7%) and the need to spend time in other ways (31.2%) respectively.

5.4.5 Students' perceptions of how Sasol Library might encourage leisure reading

The study shows that a total of 55 (53.9%) respondents thought Sasol Library should display more popular fiction to encourage leisure reading. Another 40 (39.2%) respondents said that the library should create popular book lists. Similarly, 33 (32.4%) participants encouraged the expansion of the popular fiction collection at Sasol Library. The study findings partly agree with Gilbert and Fister's (2011) research at Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota. The study found that most students (63.2%) said the library should use book lists to address leisure reading barriers. Another 40.5% of the respondents said that the library should increase the popular collection, while 39.2% reported that the library needed a separate room for leisure reading.

5.5 LIBRARIANS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE POPULAR FICTION COLLECTION AT SASOL LIBRARY

The study relied on the perceptions of the librarians towards the students as well as towards the library itself to address the above question. Sub-sections 5.6.1 and 5.6.2 represent a summary of the librarians' views.

5.5.1 Librarians' perceived barriers to students

The findings show that most of the librarians 5 (35.7%) felt that students were overburdened by regular academic work that required them to read for classwork. A further 3 (21.4%) respondents said that students spent their reading time in other ways, even though they did not specify these ways. The same number of 3 (21.4%) respondents felt that there were other reasons why students did not read as they should. The current findings support the findings of Snyman's (2016) longitudinal study of a reading project in Northern Cape, South Africa. The cited research found that poverty leads to the availability of time, which people use to read for escape and to change their lives. However, the current study findings do not support Kuscus and Fombad's (2017) research on the leisure reading needs of the elderly in Temperance Town, South Africa. Noting that elderly people have the same recreational needs as the public, the cited study notes that lack of leisure reading awareness rather than inadequate reading time amongst the elderly in Temperance Town was the leading cause of little library use.

5.5.2 Library barriers to the growth of the popular fiction collection

The data shows that 4 (30.8%) respondents thought that there was a lack of interest on the part of the library staff to support the daily operations of the popular fiction collection. A further 3 (23.1%) librarians felt that the library staff did not have time to help students identify popular fiction materials in the library.

The above findings relate to Mabweazara's (2018) study of the attitudes of librarians in three Zimbabwean university libraries. These were Midlands State University, National University of Science and Technology, and Lupane State University. Even though the respondents in the three libraries had a positive attitude towards their work of promoting reading in the libraries, their negative attitudes are observable when Mabweazara's (2018:220) study notes that "librarians contended with major barriers such as inadequate funding for the library, limited time due to multitasking in different job responsibilities, slow uptake of new concepts, knowledge, and skills within the library." A combination of all these barriers, therefore, affected the library staff's morale and interfered with their duties as promoters of leisure reading in the three Zimbabwean libraries.

However, the current findings disagree with those of Elliot (2009:341). The study found out that the main barrier (70% of respondents) to extracurricular reading at Indiana University in the US was specifically regarding the lack of funding from the university. Elliott's (2009) study observes that "staff issues were another reason cited, with 65 percent listing it as an issue, and 25 percent citing it as the main issue." Further, Elliott (2009:341) notes that there are two types of staff issues, namely, "a lack of staff and a lack of interest from staff." The current study did not seek to differentiate between the two factors above.

The current findings further contradict Gladwin and Goulding's (2012:151) study. This study was conducted to determine the patterns and barriers to leisure reading across fifteen universities in the UK. Gladwin and Goulding's research confirmed that the chief barriers to recreational reading in the UK were "budget followed by lack of staff time and concern about mission drift."

5.5.3 Popular collection promotional activities

The data shows that 13 (92.9%) respondents said the Sasol Library should use book clubs to popularise the leisure reading collection. Further, 2 (14.3%) participants agreed that the library

should use book displays, the same number said the library use other ways to promote popular reading. The finding relates to Thomas' (2003) study of leisure reading promotion in New Zealand and the UK, where the top three promotional activities are quality display materials, national leisure reading campaigns, and libraries partnering with the book world and other organisations. The current findings do not support the findings of Sun and Xie (2016) on leisure reading promotion in China. The cited study found that libraries in China promote leisure reading through New Titles Lists (83.67%), Librarians' Picks (37.71%), and Book Reviews (11.73%).

5.5.4 Librarians' support for Sasol Library's acquisition of the popular fiction collection

The data shows that all 14 (100%) participants support the role that the popular collection plays at the UFS's Sasol Library. All the respondents agreed that the popular collection was of important value to student readers. The findings align with those of Sanders (2009), which analysed popular reading collections and leisure reading habits at 45 public universities in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia in the United States. Sanders (2009:177) observes that "twenty-nine libraries (64%) responded that they offer a separate collection of books for patrons' leisure or recreational reading." The librarians' full support of the acquisition of the popular collection also supports the findings of Watson (2014), which studied leisure reading collections at seven health science and science libraries in Canada. Watson (2014:20) found that "librarians and library staff felt that the collection was well used and felt that it provided library users with benefits such as stress relief and relaxation and exposure to other perspectives." Moreover, Conklin and Moreton (2015:76) observed that "librarians who take the effort to investigate students' preferences, experiment with new services, pursue a mix of ideas, and work closely with instructors find satisfaction in knowing they did their part to encourage reading as an enjoyable and transformative lifelong learning pursuit." Lastly, the current study finding supports Bosman, Glover, and Prince's (2008) research at Virginia Commonwealth University, USA. The study found that a positive attitude and direct involvement of librarians in the promotion of leisure reading through book reMARKS (a blog where readers seek advice on available reading materials) formed the main reason for success in promoting reading at the university.

5.5.5 The need to have book clubs

The data shows that 12 (92.3%) participants said that a book club was a good promotional idea for leisure reading. Only 1 (7.7%) said that they were not sure if the students had time away from academic work, for book clubs. These findings on librarians' support for book clubs align with Hardy and Hastings (2017) on the state of reading culture amongst librarians in the City of Cape Town. In the cited research, it was found that the library staff participation in book clubs increased "from 11% in 2011 to 45% in 2014" (Hardy & Hastings, 2017:14). This trend seems to inform the librarians' belief in the fact that book clubs might work for student readers just as they do for them.

5.5.6 Librarians' help with popular fiction resources at Sasol Library

In the study, a total of 4 (28.6%) librarians said that they helped students with information about the popular fiction collection at Sasol Library a few times a month. This figure was followed by 3 (21.4%) librarians who indicated that they usually helped students with such information every month. Another 3 (21.4%) participants acknowledged that they rarely assist students to identify leisure reading materials in the library.

These findings relate to other prior research done on trends in popular reading across other universities in the world. Even though Gilbert and Fister (2011) found that 93% of college students enjoyed leisure reading at Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota, the above low figures of librarians' help of student readers at Sasol Library support Dewan's (2015:30) finding that academic librarians did not, for the most part, view the promotion of leisure reading as part of their mandate. It is in this context that Dewan (2010) suggests that librarians need to be at the forefront of promoting reading culture in schools and colleges. Dewan (2010) says that this can be done by librarians helping readers navigate the difficult library terrain, as well as helping them identify interesting materials. Omenyo's (2016) study of the role of the library in promoting reading at a public school in Ghana also acknowledges little support from librarians. In the study, 5 teachers observed that the library was understaffed, and the incumbent librarian was unqualified. In a similar study conducted in Jos, Nigeria, Danladi and Soko (2018) found that library activities were not integrated with inculcating a reading culture.

5.5.7 Reasons that led to the creation of the popular reading collection at Sasol Library

The findings show that 3 (21.4) participants indicated that the leisure reading collection was started as a source of leisure reading. Another 2 (14.3%) respondents said that the collection was started of the need to develop well-rounded students, while the same number said that they did not know how the popular collection came to be. Only 1 (7.1%) respondent said that the popular collection was started to promote reading culture. Another 1 (7.1%) participant said that the collection was started because students asked for it, and another 1 (7.1%) respondent said that the collection was meant to encourage literacy. The findings do not support Brookbank, Davis and Harlan's (2018) study of leisure reading at thirty-nine academic libraries in the Pacific Northwest, United States. In the latter study, 42% of respondents reported that user demand was the main reason that led to the founding of popular reading collections in their respective libraries.

5.5.8 Librarians' attitudes towards the popular fiction collection

All the 12 (100%) respondents stressed that the popular fiction collection was important to students. They observed that the leisure reading collection was pivotal for the future development of the UFS's Sasol Library. The finding shows that there is still potential for the expansion of Sasol Library's popular collection for inculcating a reading culture in student users of the library. Abeyrathna and Zainab (2004:110) did a study on recreational reading amongst high school students in Sri Lanka. They observe that a good part of leisure reading culture depends on the encouragement and motivation that students receive from their teachers and librarians. They, therefore, argue that it is important for "teacher librarians to renew their efforts on instructing and guiding older children in the use of the school library to revive and foster a positive attitude towards using the library for leisure reading." This position is supported by Shrestha's (2008:44) study on students' use of library resources and self-efficacy at Tribhuvan University in Kathmandu, Nepal. The study stresses that many library users are generally ignorant of where relevant resources are located. As such, the "librarians must educate the library users and provide the necessary knowledge and skills in using the library resources properly and effectively."

5.5.9 Librarians' perception of students' use of the leisure collection

The study also requested the library staff to give their perceptions of how students used the popular collection at Sasol Library. A total of 11 (91.7%) participants reported that they were positive about the use of the leisure reading collection. Only 1 (8.3%) responded said that they were unaware of the students' use of the collection. The high agreement rate and positive views shown in the current study by the librarians reflect Noh, Lee, and Choi's (2018:67) study in South Korea. The research which sought to compare librarians' and library users' perceptions of the library in 40 Korean libraries revealed that library staff generally rate services offered by the library higher than library users do. The study specifically noted that "the librarians scored very high for the items that the libraries' educational role was expanding, the libraries were a part of the educational system, and the libraries' value on reading and literacy was great."

5.5.10 Librarians' perceptions of the acquisition of the popular collection materials at Sasol Library

The study also sought to determine the librarians' perceptions of the acquisition, running, and infrastructure of the leisure reading collection. The findings show that a total of 4 (30.8%) participants were unaware of the process of acquisition of the leisure reading materials. However, 5 (38.5%) respondents were categorical that the Sasol Library administration funded the acquisition and use of the leisure reading materials by student readers. Interestingly, 3 (23.1%) respondents felt that there was administrative interference in terms of budget cuts in the process of acquiring reading materials. The findings in the current study confirm those of Lockwood (2012:21) of research conducted on readers' attitudes on reading for pleasure in England. The study underscored the fact that reading for pleasure relies heavily on funding, and the library's ability to provide readers with a wide variety of choices.

5.5.11 Where the Library shelves popular reading materials

The research data shows that 7 (53.8%) participants said that popular materials are shelved separately. Moreover, 4 (30.8%) readers observed that the Sasol Library shelves some of the popular fiction materials separately, while it shelves the rest together with the books at the academic collection. The findings align with Watson (2014) who studied leisure reading

collections in academic health sciences and science libraries at seven libraries in Europe and the USA. The cited study found that “the leisure reading materials in all libraries visited were shelved apart” (Watson, 2014:27) from the other reading materials. The underlying objective here is for ease of access to prospective users. Moreover, the current study supports the findings of Bosman *et al.* (2008) on leisure reading practices at Virginia Commonwealth University. The latter research found that not only was an informal browsing collection situated on the first floor for ease of access to would-be leisure reading users, but a separate lounge was set aside near the university’s coffee shop to emphasise the concept of reading for pleasure.

5.5.12 The library’s circulation policy concerning popular fiction

The finding shows that 5 (45.5%) respondents said that the circulation policy for leisure reading materials is the same as for the academic collection. Also, 4 (36.4%) readers gave responses that implied that they were not sure of Sasol Library’s circulation policy. Only 1 (9.1%) respondent said that *1 copy of a leisure reading book may be bought, but permission should be granted at this stage by the Acquisitions Librarian due to budget constraints*. Another 1 (9.1%) participant commented that *they are being issued out to staff members for 12 months and two weeks to students*. The findings confirm Watson’s (2014) research on what strategies encouraged leisure reading in academic libraries in Europe and the United States referred to above. The latter study found that “In every case, the loan period for the leisure reading collection materials was the same as for the rest of the library. Loan periods ranged from 2 to 4 weeks, with various numbers of renewals allowed” (Watson, 2014:27).

5.5.13 Readers advisories

The study finding shows that 5 (41.7%) participants said that they did not receive readers’ advisory questions from students. Further, 4 (33.3%) agreed that they received readers’ advisory questions. The findings confirm Moyer’s (2007) research on adult public library patrons in the United States that found little interaction between leisure readers and library information desks. To encourage popular reading, Moyer (2007:76) stresses that “librarians need to remember that the more they can talk to their readers and learn about them, the better they can suggest titles.” The professional assumption here is that the librarians are better placed to advise readers on what specific titles might satisfy readers’ specific needs.

5.5.14 How the library promotes the popular collection

The responses show that 2 (22.2%) respondents said that they promote the popular collection by word of mouth. Another 2 (22.2%) participants said that they do not promote the collection. Only 1 (11.1%) respondent said that *they promote the collection by book displays and library orientations*, while another 1 (11.1%) said that they did so *with book launches and advertising new books*. Moreover, 1 (11.1%) said that the popular collection *is not adequately promoted*. Further, 1 (11.1%) participant responded that they promoted the popular collection *by actively buying books for the collection*. Lastly, 1 (11.1%) respondent said that *during students' orientation the collection is part of the information given*. These findings confirm Gladwin and Goulding's (2012) study on the promotion of leisure reading across university libraries in the UK. It was found that "the majority of respondents (33 or 57.9%) did not have recreational reading collections, nor did they promote leisure reading" (Gladwin & Goulding, 2012:147). However, the current findings contradict Bosman *et al.* (2008) research on the leisure reading collection promotion at Virginia Commonwealth University in the United States. In the latter case, the promotion of the leisure reading collection was mainly done through methods such as browsing collections, blogs, regular book swaps, book displays, and extensive reading programmes.

5.5.15 Librarians' perceptions of the future of the collection

The results show that 9 (75%) respondents foresee a bright future for the growth of the leisure reading collection. However, only 3 (25%) participants foresee challenges that range from administrative interference to the role of social media. The finding confirms Gilbertson's (2013) research into the future of leisure reading collections in academic law libraries. Gilbertson (2013:22) observes that "almost 50 percent of academic law libraries had some sort of affirmative collection development policy for purchasing and maintaining popular reading or viewing materials."

5.5.16 Librarians' perception of students borrowing popular books

The data shows that 8 (72.7%) participants agreed that they always see students coming to borrow popular reading materials. However, 2 (8.2%) said that they were not sure. Only 1 (9.1%) respondent said that most of *the students normally come to the library to borrow non-*

fiction materials for their academic work or projects. On one hand, the findings support Gilbert and Fister's (2011:481) study at Gustavus Adolphus College where the researchers found that "Almost two-thirds (61.0%) report that students "occasionally" look for recreational reading materials in their libraries." On the other, they partly contradict other related findings that "Close to one-tenth (9.2%) said "very frequently", but almost one-third (29.1%) said they rarely see students looking for recreational reading materials in their libraries" (Gilbert & Fister, 2011:481).

5.5.17 The kind of materials that students borrow

The data shows that 5 (41.7%) respondents said that they had seen students read a variety of popular materials depending on interests. However, 3 (25%) participants said that they did not know if students borrowed leisure reading materials. Another 1 (8.3%) said that students read *fiction books by popular authors and books that have reviews in the newspapers.* These findings also generally confirm Gilbert and Fister's (2011:481) study, which notes that "librarians at other institutions report that their students exhibit interest in a wide variety of materials."

5.5.18 Other productive ways of popularising the collection

The above data shows that 3 (25%) participants suggested that Sasol Library should keep a well updated popular reading collection. Moreover, 2 (16.7%) respondents said that the library should carry out a student survey to find out what genres the readers would like to be included in the popular collection. Another 2 (16.7%) participants said that the popular collection should include eBooks. The first two suggestions agree with the findings of Fought *et al.* (2014) in their study of collection development at the University of Tennessee's Health Sciences Library. The cited study notes that there is a need for libraries to have a better understanding of user needs through constant survey research of library users. This would then lead to an updated leisure reading collection. However, the findings disagree with Phillips (2015) that suggests the use of popular media sites such as Facebook to popularise the leisure reading collection at Sasol Library.

5.6 USAGE PATTERN OF THE FICTION COLLECTION IN TERMS OF GENRE AND TEXT FORMAT

The study sought to examine the usage pattern of the leisure reading collection. This was in terms of genre and the format of the texts that the students read. The following subsections outline students' and librarians' perceptions of the usage pattern.

5.6.1 Genres that students are likely to read

The findings show that 37 (36.3%) participants are interested in reading the Award-winners genre. Another 26 (25.5%) respondents prefer Best-selling fiction while 11 (10.8%) would like to read Best-selling non-fiction. Some 29 (28.4%) readers want to read Biographies, 15 (14.7%) love Classics, and 13 (12.7%) prefer Comic books/Graphic novels. The Young Adults genre is liked by 18 (17.6%) of the readers. The students' apparent preference for Award winners and Biographies contradicts Majid, Ng, and Ying's (2017) study on leisure reading preferences of bilingual female students in Singapore. The latter study found that Adventure, Fantasy, and Romance were the most preferred genres in that order. The least preferred were Sports, Arts and Craft, and Biographies, respectively.

5.6.2 Students' order of preference in terms of popular genres

The data shows that 41 (41.0%) respondents said that they love reading the Inspirational genre of popular fiction. Similarly, 32 (32.0%) participants liked reading the Adventure genre, while 44 (44.9%) readers said it was alright to read Science fiction. The findings do not support Gilbert and Fister (2011) at Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota. The latter study found that students' leisure reading habits generally favoured General Fiction, Mysteries, Classics, and General nonfiction in that order. However, the current finding supports Kraaykamp and Dijkstra's (1999) research on social differentiation and leisure reading habits for the Netherlands. The study found that Dutch readers found the Science Fiction genre to be the most complex and too demanding to read.

5.6.3 Students' perceptions of usage patterns in terms of text format

The findings show that 74 (72.5%) participants preferred printed books to other text formats in the popular collection. A further 36 (35.3%) respondents who took part in the study said that they had a bias for E-books on a computer, while 23 (22.5%) library users liked E-books on your personal e-reader. Audiobooks also enjoyed equal popularity with 23 (22.5%) participants. However, our data show that taken together, 80.3% of all respondents prefer some form of an e-book to a printed book. This shows that e-books enjoy a slightly higher collective popularity than do printed books.

The above figures confirm the findings of Abuloum, Farah, Kaskaloglu and Yaakub (2019), which was carried out to investigate students' preferred formats of leisure reading at the University of Bahrain. The study shows that printed book format is still the single most preferred text format for many students in both high schools and colleges. It also confirms the findings of Mizrachi, Salaz, Kurbanoglu, Boustany and ARFIS Research Group (2018:9) in a research conducted at the University of California to investigate the preferred text format amongst college students worldwide. The study found that "78.44% of the 10,293 respondents prefer print format for reading academic course materials; 10.04% prefer electronic format, and 11.52% do not express a preference either way." The current study further supports Majid *et al.*'s (2017:6) research conducted on leisure reading in Singapore. The study found that 82.5% of respondents preferred traditional printed books to E-books (13.2%).

5.6.4 Perceived e-reader preferences

The finding shows that 31 (39.2%) respondents who chose e-readers do not want to use one to read popular fiction. Another 20 (25.5%) would prefer iPads, while 15 (19%) would like to use Kindle. Moreover, 4 (5.1%) respondents would want to use iPod Touch and Sony E-reader each, while no one wants to use Nook. The data supports Olsen, Kleivset, and Langseth's (2013:1) research on students' e-reader preferences at the University of Agder in Norway. The study found that "Students were in general positive to the use of e-readers but still show a preference for print on paper." The study further showed that "54% preferred print, 28% a combination of print and e-reader, and finally only 11% were satisfied solely [with] using an e-reader" (Olsen *et al.*, 2013:1). Lastly, the research showed that students preferred the iPad to the Kindle for reading. Moreover, the current study findings relate favourably with Mizrachi *et al.*'s (2018) findings in their comprehensive comparative analysis of students' reading

preferences and behaviours worldwide. Their research found that students all over the world prefer laptops (80.90%), phone (36.83%), desktop (30.54%), iPad (28.43%), e-reader (7.00%), nothing (4.34%), and audio (1.97%).

5.6.5 Students' perceptions of usage pattern in terms of genre

The data shows that award winners' genre 37 (36.3%) was popular with most of the respondents. This was closely followed by the Self-improvement genre at 32 (31.4%), Romance 30 (29.4%), Biographies 29 (28.4%), Historical fiction 27 (26.5%),

Mystery/suspense 27 (26.5%), and Fantasy 26 (25.5%). The data disagrees with Erdem's (2015) comparison of leisure reading habits at Ankara University and Erciyes University in Turkey. The latter study revealed that the three most preferred genres in Ankara University were Literary works (67.6%), Humour (44.0%), and Historical Fiction (41.8%). At Erciyes University, however, students preferred Historical Fiction (80.2%), Literary works (56.4%), and Romantic Fiction (36.6%) respectively.

5.6.6 Librarians' perceptions of usage pattern in terms of genre

The research data collected shows that the highest number of librarians was 8 (57.1%) who said that they assisted students with locating books that helped the readers tackle real-life situations through constant self-improvement. Perhaps the high score of the Self-Improvement genre can be explained in terms of the omission of the Award Winners genre from the questionnaire, which would probably have scored higher than the Self-Improvement genre. The data underscore the fact that librarians have an invaluable role to play in both active and passive promotion of popular reading, as suggested by Dewan (2015:30). Further, Conklin and Moreton (2015:74) show that college students do take seriously the readers' advisories that they receive from librarians. However, the researchers also point out that such advisories need to take into consideration the books and types of genres that the readers themselves say they would like to find in the library.

5.6.7 Librarians' perceptions of popular text format

The current findings show that 9 (75%) respondents said the library collects paperback/hardcopies of popular books. Only 2 (16.7%) participants said the books were in both e-format and hardcopy format. Similarly, 1 (8.3%) said that they did not collect. These findings differ only marginally from Watson's (2014) study on leisure reading collections in seven libraries in the UK and USA. The latter research found that "No collection contained e-materials" (Watson, 2014:28).

5.6.8 How the Sasol Library selects its popular materials

The data shows that 3 (25%) respondents think that the library collects materials based on recommendations from students. Another 2 (16.7%) participants said that they did not know how the materials were collected. Further, 1 (8.3%) reader each said that the library collected the materials based on interest and currency, based on the author, based on the language of the text, and from a combination of input from both library staff and students. Similarly, 1 (8.3%) each suggested that the library collected the leisure reading materials based on a combination of input from library staff and social media platforms, that the materials were acquired, and that the materials were collected based on their content. These findings suggest the use of a variety of methods to select leisure reading materials to cater to readers' diverse needs regarding leisure reading in the library. They, therefore, align with Watson's (2014:26) research above, which included lists of new publications, bestseller lists, book reviews, recommendations from other library staff, what the librarians themselves enjoyed reading, circulation statistics, and relevant databases.

5.6.9 The cost of running the popular collection

The findings show that 6 (50.0%) respondents were not sure of the cost implications of running the popular fiction collection at Sasol Library. Moreover, 2 (16.7%) participants said it was the role of the Sasol Library to provide for the cost of running the popular collection. Further, 1 (8.3%) respondent each said that running the collection would cost approximately 20% of the library budget, would cost R50,000 per year, is based on regular research on new editions, and would cost R100 000 per year. The high number of uncertain respondents alludes to the various ways that popular collections might access funds, as discovered in Watson's (2014) study

already discussed above. The latter research found that all the seven libraries fulfilled their budget needs from external funding, grants, and donations which ranged between less than 1000 Pounds to 14,000 Euros.

5.6.10 Sasol Library's ease of accessing university funds to run the collection

The findings show that 5 (38.5%) respondents think that the Sasol Library has a fund that runs the collection, even though they do not refer to the ease/difficulty with which the library accesses the funds. On the other hand, 4 (30.8%) participants acknowledge that there are administrative barriers that undermine the operations of the leisure collection. These include politics and budget cuts. The findings do not portray the dire financial situation that Watson's (2014) study found prevailing across the seven libraries that she studied. Watson (2014:27) observes that "For Lux Humana [library], cost considerations meant that only about 20% of desired titles could be purchased."

5.6.11 How materials are classified

The data shows that 4 (33.3%) respondents said the materials are arranged according to the Dewey Decimal System. Further, 2 (16.7%) participants said that they were not sure of how the books were arranged, and the same number said that the library uses an unnamed catalogue to classify the popular fiction materials. The findings run parallel to Boyd's (2019) discoveries on the strategies that work in the promotion of leisure reading within academic contexts at the Florida Gold Coast University in the United States. The cited study found that adopting an egalitarian approach where shelves are zigzagged, and books ostentatiously positioned to attract the reader works better than known conservative methods. Hence, the study notes that the library experimented with varied methods that included arranging the leisure reading materials "in sets of five, by similar colour, and in a mix of spine-out and face-out configurations. These techniques are proving effective to this day" (Boyd, 2019:95).

5.6.12 Additional comments on the promotion of the popular collection

The data shows varied responses. One each (10%) observed that there was the need to train both staff members and students; Sasol Library should encourage the formation of book clubs;

library should do general marketing of popular books; there should be reading regular reading competitions; the library should buy more bestseller genres and invite more local authors; more author stakeholders should be invited so they might donate books; they were worried about the expansion of popular Afrikaans books. The views align with the findings of Boyd's (2019) study referred to above. It suggests that improving the operations of a leisure reading collection must involve stocking more titles for the young adult population. It means knowing the collection's audience, employing catchy display techniques, and availing enough space for the leisure reading collection. Other strategies include constant research on how to better book circulation processes, sending out regular returns, and keeping the leisure collection "attractive, current, and uncrowded" (Boyd, 2019:107).

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

The main objective of the research was to investigate the general popularity and usage of the leisure reading collection at the UFS's Sasol Library. This study was done by focussing on students' perceptions and experiences during their interaction with the popular collection. Further, the study examined librarians' perceptions and experiences of the popular collection during their course of duty in the library. The following recommendations are based on the findings of the research, and they relate directly to what the study findings mean for the future development of the leisure reading collection at the Sasol Library.

5.7.1 The popularity of the leisure reading collection

The study particularly investigated the extent to which the leisure reading collection at Sasol Library was popular with its student users. A specific recommendation emerges from the varied responses received from the participants. It is recommended that the UFS's Sasol Library continue developing and expanding the leisure reading collection through sufficient funds allocation. This is because the fiction collection is popular with most students, who view it as a resource for entertainment, enjoyment, and for learning about other parts of the world beyond South Africa.

5.7.2 Students' perceptions and experiences of the popular fiction collection

The findings show that there are areas that need to be improved regarding the way students view the popular collection. The researcher recommends that the library engages in more promotional activities to popularise the services that the leisure reading collection offers across the university's academic year. This is because the student users of the collection view it as an important resource for developing their reading culture, which then assists them in developing all facets of their lives as good citizens.

5.7.3 Librarians' perceptions and experiences of the popular fiction collection

Librarians' responses show that there are shortcomings in the way Sasol Library's popular collection is run. The researcher recommends more activities that sensitise the staff about the operations of the library, and specifically how the popular collection materials are funded and acquired. The study also recommends regular training and constant motivation to ensure that the staff effectively carry out their duties at the collection.

5.7.4 Recommendations for further research

The study focussed on the popularity and perceptions of the leisure reading collection at the UFS's Sasol Library. This study suggests further studies in the following aspects of the popular collection:

- The study investigated students' and librarians' perceptions and experiences of the leisure reading collection. The researcher recommends another study to focus on the perceptions of the academic staff and parents, and how their experiences impact the growth and development of the popular fiction collection.
- The study narrowed down on the UFS's Sasol Library. The current study recommends that other studies narrow down on popular fiction at other faculty libraries in the UFS.

5.8 CONCLUSION

The study set out to examine the perceptions and experiences of students and librarians regarding the popular fiction collection at Sasol Library. It is acknowledged that Sasol Library supports the popular fiction collection, and that popular collections are part and parcel of

responsible academic learning in many universities across the world. Therefore, this presents a challenge on how best to grow and develop the leisure reading collection at the Sasol Library. The popular fiction collection plays an important role not only in acting as a source of leisure and entertainment for the student readers. It is an invaluable resource for diverting learners' attention from the boredom and rigour of academic work. Further, the popular collection widens learners' awareness by exposing them to the experiences of peoples in other parts of the wider world. Students' and librarians' experiences as contained in the study, therefore, act as a good starting point from where to grow, develop, and expand the popular fiction collection at the UFS's Sasol Library.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Questionnaire for Students

Preamble

Questionnaire for Students

I am a postgraduate student at the University of Cape Town pursuing a Masters' in Library and Information Studies. I am conducting a study on a topic titled 'Investigating Popular Fiction Collection Development at the University of the Free State Sasol Library'. Popular fiction is the genre of light-hearted novels that people read for enjoyment rather than for serious academic analysis. The purpose of the study is to investigate the views and perceptions of students towards the growth of popular reading collection at the University of the Free State Sasol Library. The study will mirror and reflect on issues and challenges facing academic libraries in South African Universities using Sasol Library as a case study. Based on the results, the study seeks to propose and inform library collection policies for academic libraries in universities or institutions of higher learning in South Africa. Thank you for your willingness to participate in this study.

Please initial the boxes below to confirm that you agree with each statement:

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequence.

I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential.

I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials or identified in the study findings.

Instructions

Kindly complete the questionnaire below.

1. Tick opposite your current level of study.

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Undergraduate | |
| Postgraduate | |

2. Tick opposite the Faculty of the University of the Free State Sasol Library where you are currently registered.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Health Faculty | |
| Natural and Agricultural Sciences | |
| Theology | |
| Education | |
| Economics and Management | |
| Humanities | |
| Law | |

3. Tick in the box that represents your age range.

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 17-25 | |
| 26-35 | |
| 36-45 | |
| 46 and more | |

Section B: Students perceptions of popular reading fiction in academic libraries

4. Do you enjoy reading popular fiction?

| | |
|-----|--|
| Yes | |
| No | |

5. If No, please explain.

6. If yes, what type of genre do you like reading?

- a) Award Winners
- b) Bestselling Fiction
- c) Bestselling Non-fiction
- d) Biographies
- e) Classics
- f) Comic Books or Graphic Novels

- g) Fantasy
- h) Historical Fiction
- i) Mystery/Suspense
- j) Poetry
- k) Romance
- l) Science Fiction
- m) Self-improvement
- n) Short Stories
- o) Young Adult

7. How much time do you spend reading popular fiction per week during the academic year?

- a) Less than one hour
- b) More than one hour but less than two hours
- c) More than two hours but less than three hours
- d) More than three hours

8. What makes you not read popular fiction as much as you would like during the academic year?

| No | Attribute | Strongly y | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly y |
|----|---|---------------|-------|---------|----------|---------------|
| a. | I do not have enough time to read books | | | | | |
| b. | I am not very confident while reading popular fiction | | | | | |
| c. | I cannot let myself go while reading popular fiction | | | | | |
| d. | I am too tired to read books | | | | | |
| e. | I am too slow at reading; it takes me too long to finish | | | | | |
| f. | I do not enjoy reading books, but feel I should do it | | | | | |
| g. | I like reading fiction books, but it is not as much of a priority as other pastimes | | | | | |
| h. | I have a problem holding my concentration while reading | | | | | |
| i. | I do not enjoy reading popular fiction | | | | | |
| j. | I already have enough reading to do for class | | | | | |
| k. | I would rather socialise | | | | | |
| l. | I would rather spend my free time in other ways | | | | | |
| m. | I do not have access to popular fiction that I am interested in | | | | | |

9. Please rank the items below from Strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree to Strongly disagree

| No | Attribute | Strongly y | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly y |
|----|--|---------------|-------|---------|----------|---------------|
| a. | Fiction reading serves as an escape from the real world | | | | | |
| b. | I read a lot by reading fiction | | | | | |
| c. | Reading fiction is fun | | | | | |
| d. | Fiction reading helps me understand my world | | | | | |
| e. | I mainly read fiction to pass time | | | | | |
| f. | Reading fiction can be tedious | | | | | |
| g. | Fiction reading is a pleasant hobby | | | | | |
| h. | After reading fiction I feel more prepared to understand and solve problems | | | | | |
| i. | Fiction reading is purely for entertainment | | | | | |
| j. | Reading fiction has little educational value | | | | | |
| k. | Reading fiction is an enjoyable part of my life | | | | | |
| l. | After reading fiction I feel I have a better understanding of other countries and culture | | | | | |
| m. | Nothing I read in fiction relates to real | | | | | |
| n. | I often find myself relating something I have read in a fiction book to something I hear in the news | | | | | |
| o. | I read to entertain myself | | | | | |
| p. | I read to learn (e.g., broaden my vocabulary) | | | | | |
| q. | I read to keep up with what is popular and to be 'in the know' | | | | | |
| r. | I read to simply pass the time | | | | | |

10. When choosing books, how do you make your choice? (Please rank below based on how likely they are to influence your choice).

| No | Attribute | Not at all | To some extent | Neutral | Likely | Very Likely |
|----|------------------------------------|------------|----------------|---------|--------|-------------|
| a. | I choose the book by famous author | | | | | |
| b. | I choose books that are short | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|----|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| c. | I choose books that are long | | | | | |
| d. | I choose the books that will make me think about myself | | | | | |
| e. | I read what my parents encourage me to read | | | | | |
| f. | I read what my lecturer encourages me to read | | | | | |
| g. | I choose the books with elements of fantasy | | | | | |
| h. | I choose the books with elements of history | | | | | |
| i. | I choose books with heroes I can relate to | | | | | |
| j. | I choose the books that have good love affair plot | | | | | |
| k. | I choose the books with a nice cover and catchy title | | | | | |
| l. | I choose those type of books that will enable me to discuss with my friends later | | | | | |
| m. | I choose those type of books with open possibilities to alternate the ending | | | | | |

11. Rank each genre (fiction category) from I love it, I like it, it is alright, I would rather not read it, I hate it.

| No | Attribute | I love it | I like it | It is alright | I would rather not read | I hate it |
|----|-----------------|-----------|-----------|---------------|-------------------------|-----------|
| a. | Romance | | | | | |
| b. | Religious | | | | | |
| c. | Inspirational | | | | | |
| d. | Literary | | | | | |
| e. | Science fiction | | | | | |
| f. | Fantasy | | | | | |
| g. | Historical | | | | | |
| h. | Thriller | | | | | |
| i. | Spy | | | | | |
| J. | Adventure | | | | | |

12. Which genres from a potential Sasol Library Leisure Reading Collection would you be interested in reading? (Select all that apply)

- a) Bestselling Fiction
- b) Bestselling Non-fiction
- c) Biographies
- d) Classics
- e) Comic Books or Graphic Novels
- f) Fantasy
- g) Historical Fiction
- h) Mystery/Suspense
- i) Poetry
- j) Romance
- k) Science Fiction
- l) Self-improvement
- m) Short Stories
- n) Young Adult
- o) Award Winners
- p) Other (please specify)

13. What format of leisure reading would you prefer? (Select all that apply)

- a) Printed books
- b) E-books on a computer
- c) E-books on your e-reader
- d) E-books on an e-reader that you check out from the library
- e) Audiobooks

14. If you selected e-readers as your response in the previous question, what brand of reader do you use, or would you prefer to use?

- a) iPad
- b) iPod Touch
- c) Kindle
- d) Nook
- e) None
- f) Other (please specify)

15. I would borrow and read popular books from the Sasol Library if... (Check all choices that apply to you)

- a) I had more time in my personal life.
- b) the books were more interesting.
- c) the books were not so old.

- d) if I could read them on my laptop, iPad, kindle, nook, etc.
- e) if someone told me about the books that are there.
- f) if I had time to stop in the library media centre.

16. How might the Sasol Library encourage popular fiction reading at the University of Free State?

- a) More displays of popular fiction materials
- b) Create a separate room for reading popular fiction
- c) Create a book exchange programme
- d) Collaborate more with public libraries
- e) Create popular booklists
- f) Expand popular book collections
- g) Offer more book groups
- h) Offer certain incentives (please specify)

17. Is there any other information that you would like to share with us concerning either your own experience with the reading of popular fiction or how Sasol Library might encourage the reading of popular fiction?

Thank you for your participation.

If you have any questions, please contact the undersigned.

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 Town **Cell:** 27 768432369
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Supervisor: Dr Patrick Mapulanga
Institution: University of Cape
Phone Number:
Email: patrick.mapulanga@uct.ac.za

Appendix B: Questionnaire for Library Staff

Preamble

I am a postgraduate student at the University of Cape Town pursuing a Masters' in Library and Information Studies. I am conducting a study on a topic titled 'Investigating Popular Fiction Collection Development at the University of the Free State Sasol Library'. The purpose of the study is to investigate the views and perceptions of students towards the growth of popular reading collection at the University of the Free State Sasol Library. The study will mirror and reflect on issues and challenges facing academic libraries in South African Universities using Sasol Library as a case study. Based on the results, the study seeks to inform library collection policies for academic libraries in universities or institutions of higher learning in South Africa. Thank you for your willingness to participate in this study.

Please initial the boxes below to confirm that you agree with each statement:

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequence.

I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials or identified in the study findings.

Instructions

Kindly complete the questionnaires below.

1. Tick opposite your current designation or job title.

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Director | |
| Assistant Librarian | |
| Acquisition Librarian | |
| Circulation Librarian | |
| Cataloguing Librarian | |
| Information Librarian | |

2. Tick opposite the section of the University of the Free State Sasol Library you are employed.

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Directorate Section | |
| Acquisition Section | |
| Circulation Section | |
| Cataloguing Section | |
| Faculty Section | |

3. Tick opposite the duration that you have been employed at UFS Sasol Library.

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| 1-3 years | |
| 4-6 years | |
| 7-10 years | |
| More than 10 years | |

4. What are some of the barriers that students encounter with the reading of popular fiction at Sasol Library?

- a) They do not have access to popular fiction materials
- b) They are overburdened by reading for classwork
- c) They are not interested in popular fiction
- d) They spend their reading time in other ways
- e) Others (please specify)

5. What are some of the barriers that the library encounters while helping students identify popular fiction materials?

- a) Lack of interest
- b) Lack of time
- c) Lack of training
- d) I feel that popular reading makes the library less academic
- e) Others (please specify)

6. In your knowledge, which of the following popular fiction promotion activities does Sasol Library engage in?

- a) Book clubs (coordinating or hosting)
- b) Book displays
- c) Book exchange programme
- d) Popular fiction collection
- e) Promotional or directional signs
- f) Speaker series
- g) Others (please specify)

7. As a library professional do you support the library's acquisition of popular reading collection? Please briefly explain the reason behind your answer.

8. Do you think there is a need to have book clubs in the library to create a culture of reading? Please briefly explain the reason behind your answer.

9. How often do you recommend or advise and or issue out popular reading books?

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| A few times a week | |
| Once a week | |
| A few times a month | |
| Every couple of months | |
| Monthly | |
| Rarely | |
| Only when I have time | |
| Never | |

10. What popular reading collection genre do you advise or recommend to students for reading?

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Adventure | |
| Mystery | |
| Fantasy | |
| Humour | |
| Romance | |
| Science fiction | |
| Historical fiction | |
| Sports | |

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Biographies | |
| Real-life problems | |
| Graphic Novels | |
| Other (Please specify) | |
| I do not recommend any | |

11. What led to the creation of the leisure reading collection at your library? Please briefly explain your answer.

12. Please name and briefly explain the formats (e.g., e-books) of the popular fiction materials which you collect.

13. Please explain how the materials (e.g., titles) are selected.

14. Please explain what it costs to provide the collection.

15. Please explain who incurs the costs of the materials.

16. Please explain how the materials are classified.

17. Please explain whether the materials are shelved with the rest of the collection.

18. Please explain what the library's circulation policy is regarding popular fiction materials.

19. Please explain how students and faculty react to the presence of the collection.

20. Please explain your thoughts on the value or importance of the collection.

21. Please explain whether you get readers' advisory questions from users.

22. Please explain if and how you promote the collection.

23. Please explain what future you see for your leisure reading collection.

24. In your knowledge, briefly explain if you are aware of students, in general, coming to the library to borrow popular reading materials.

25. In your knowledge, briefly explain what kind of popular fiction materials students come to borrow.

26. In your opinion, please explain if there is any other productive way through which the Sasol Library might expand the popular fiction collection apart from the above.

27. Please share any additional thoughts or comments that you have about the promotion of popular fiction reading at Sasol Library.

Thank you for your participation.

If you have any questions, please contact the undersigned.

Researcher: Legopheng Marcus Maphile
Institution: University of Cape Town
Town **Cell:**27 768432369
Email:mphleg003@myuct.ac.za

Supervisor: Dr Patrick Mapulanga
Institution: University of Cape
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Appendix C: University of the Free State Approval

UNIVERSITY OF THE
FREE STATE
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE
VRYSTAAT
YUNIBESITHI YA
FREISTATA



Office of the Vice-Rector: Research and Internationalisation
Kantoor van die Viserektor: Navorsing en Internasionisering

24-Jul-2019

Dear Mr. Marcus Maphile

UFS AUTHORITIES APPROVAL

Research Project Title:

Investigating popular fiction development at the University of the Free State Sasol Library

This letter serves as confirmation that your request to collect data from students and/or staff members at the University of the Free State for your research project has been approved.

Kind Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'RC Witthuhn', is written in a cursive style.

PROF RC WITTHUHN

**VICE-RECTOR: RESEARCH & INTERNATIONALISATION CHAIR: SENATE
RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

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Appendix D: University of Cape Town Ethical Clearance



Department of Knowledge and Information Stewardship

University of Cape Town
Upper Campus

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RONDEBOSCH, 7701
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E-mail: dkis@uct.ac.za
Internet: www.dkis.uct.ac.za

Ref.no.: UCTLIS201810-15

28 June 2019

Dear Mr. Maphile

I am pleased to inform you that ethical clearance has been granted by the Ethics Review Committee of the Department of Knowledge and Information Stewardship on behalf of the Humanities Faculty of the University of Cape Town for your master's study entitled: *Investigating Popular Fiction Development at the University of the Free State Sasol Library.*

You are reminded to seek further permission from the University of the Free State before commencing with your data collection.

I wish you well with your study. Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MKahn'.

Ms. Michelle Kahn
Chair, Departmental Research Ethics Committee

"Our Mission is to be an outstanding teaching and research university, educating for life and addressing the challenges facing our society."