



University of Zululand

**JOB REQUIREMENTS AND CHALLENGES OF LIS
GRADUATES IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN KWAZULU-
NATAL, SOUTH AFRICA**

By

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this is my original research work as part of the fulfilment of Master's degree in Library and Information Science in the Department of Information Studies at the University of Zululand. The Dissertation has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at this or any other university. All information in this document were obtained and presented in accordance with academic guidelines and ethical procedures and conducts. I have also fully cited/referenced all materials and results in this work that are not purely my original ideas.

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Signature



Signature



2019

DEDICATION

To my family, supervisor and friends, I dedicate this work. I am grateful for their words of encouragement, which will always ring in my ears. They were there for me all the way and I will always appreciate their contributions throughout the entire research project. I also dedicate this work to the Heads of Library Services of the Department of Arts and Culture in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) province for granting the permission to reach the study's participants.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation investigates job requirements and challenges of Library and Information Studies (LIS) graduates in public libraries. It is of paramount importance that a workplace recruits a workforce with requisite competencies to offer professional services. Having requisite competencies/employability skills help in keeping with the demands and challenges of the unfolding knowledge society whilst meeting the mission of the library and information services respectively. This study is aimed at investigating required competencies from LIS graduates by public libraries. The study emanates from skills gap, which is a concern to most public libraries. Skills gap relates to candidates with inappropriately skills that were placed in professional positions in some public libraries. It is also noted that drastic changes in the entire LIS market have constituted a daunting challenge, which eventually demands the revision and re-orientation of LIS curricula. Curricula revision and re-orientation is a process that cannot be achieved overnight. To understand the nature of required competencies for workforce in public libraries, the following objectives were set and investigated: to determine the job functions and requirements of the public libraries, to find out the perceptions of employers and LIS graduates on job requirements of the sector, to find out the perceptions of employers and LIS graduates about the LIS curriculum and to determine the challenges facing LIS graduates regarding their functions/duties in the work place.

Post-positivism paradigm was employed through triangulation of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies in data collection and analysis. Content analysis and survey as research methods/designs were employed. The study collected secondary data from four (4) newspapers (Sunday Times, Ilanga, Mail and Guardian and Sunday Tribune) covering a three- year period (from January 2015 to December 2017) of job advertisements. This data was collected through qualitative and quantitative content analyses. Primary data was gathered from assistant directors and LIS graduates. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with assistant directors. Structured questionnaires were administered to LIS graduates. The data collected was analysed qualitatively and quantitatively using themes, subheadings, graphics and statistics.

Most advertised jobs (50%) required Grade 12, which is not a professional LIS qualification. Majority (85%) of the jobs required job experience of 1-3 years. There seem to be a knowledge gap in terms of cataloguing and classification as well as technical knowledge.

There is strong demand for generic skills, particularly computer literacy and communication skills. There is still need for new skills (51%). There seem to be no balance between theory and practice (70%). There is need for curriculum review. Employed LIS graduates face several challenges which include inadequate knowledge and skills, especially in cataloguing and classification, and information communication technologies. More practical exposure and on -job training are highly recommended. There is a strong need for development and promotion of continuing education through short courses and workshops to fill the knowledge and skill gaps. Regular curriculum review is essential to meet the rapidly changing information access and user needs. Experiential learning period should be extended and voluntary service learning needs to be encouraged. Employment of staff without tertiary qualification in LIS in public libraries requires review by Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA) and other stakeholders.

The originality of this study emanates from its scope, subject matter and the application. The study is significant for providing theoretical background for the development of research in the following domains: public libraries, LIS curriculum and LIS graduates/professionals.

Key words: *Library, Public library, Job requirements, LIS Graduates, LIS education*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DAC	Department of Arts and Culture
DA	Development Act
DPRU	Development Policy Research Unit
FET	Further Education and Training colleges
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HEQF	Higher Education Qualification Framework
HSRC	Human Science Research Council
HRDS	Human Resources Development Strategy
IFLA	International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IKS	Indigenous Knowledge Systems
IT	Information Technology
KLA	Kansas Library Association
LIS	Library and Information Services (job market)
LIS	Library and Information Science (graduates in this study)
LIASA	Library and Information Association of South Africa
LiSLIG	Special Libraries Interest Group South Africa
NSDS	National Skills Development Strategy
NLSA	National Library of South Africa
NQF	National Qualifications Frameworks
OSALL	Organisation of South African Law Libraries
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization
SAL	South African Library
SALB	South African Library for the Blind
SAOUG	Southern African Online User Group
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SDLA	Skills Development Levies Act
SL	State Library of Queensland
SLIS	Special Libraries and Information Services South Africa

TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training Colleges
UNISA	University of South Africa
WEF	World Economic Forum

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1. Introduction

This is an introductory chapter on job requirements and challenges of LIS graduates in KwaZulu-Natal provincial public libraries. The chapter sets out with a presentation of the conceptual and contextual background of the study. The contextual background includes a narration of the current status of the Library and Information Science (LIS) sector in South Africa. Afterward, the problem is stated and the aim of the study, the research objectives and research questions thereof outlined. Further on, the significance, scope and limitations of the study are provided. An indicative literature review and the research methodology used to investigate the research problem are articulated. The chapter ended with a summary.

1.2. Conceptual setting

There are different interpretations of the term ‘theory’. The general public understanding of the word differs from that of those in academic or research environment. Ocholla and Le Roux (2011) state that “neither library science nor information science has a recognisable discipline specifically for research framework or model”. Normally LIS research is based predominantly on research theories developed and used in closely related disciplines (Ocholla and Le Roux 2011: 9). They are of the view that, the LIS field “appears to lack a common history and thus a common body of theory guiding and shaping the intellectual traditions of the subject field and its research”. Creswell (2014: 54) adds that theory helps to explain the phenomena in the world, for example, explaining what a research seeks to find. The present study is informed by core competency theory. Core competency theory is a work of Selznick (1957) who is also well known for organisational theory. The theory of core competency was used in related studies (Raju 2016 and Raju 2017) to determine the LIS professional competencies in the academic sector in South Africa. In this study, it is used to determine the job requirements of public libraries from LIS graduates in terms of qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes. In addition, the theory has been applied to determine if the LIS education and training sector is significantly preparing LIS students for the workplace, exclusively public libraries.

The employment sector is always on the lookout for skilled, competent, suitable and qualified candidates to fill its positions. Graduates need to have employability skills along with technical understanding and subject knowledge. These skills and knowledge are important in helping individuals carry out tasks to the best of their ability. A range of employability skills are normally acquired through formal education from training institutions, including universities and colleges. However, not all of the knowledge and skills that are required by the job market can be obtained through formal education. Yadav and Bankar (2016) consider these skills to be “employability skills” because they are transferable core skills that represent the essential functions that enable the acquisition of the knowledge, skills and attitudes required in the 21st century workplace. This is due to the fact that such skills are needed by an individual to be employable. Raju (2017) refers to these skills as competencies. The Library and Information Science (LIS) sector requires certain knowledge, skills and other competencies from its graduates.

Recruitment and hiring standard in a public library environment, like other world of works, are very important for the provision of basic employment requirements. Failure to have a common standard could have adverse effect on the recruitment of suitable candidates for professional positions. Normally, one needs an accredited degree to become a public librarian or information professional; however Simpson (2013) is of the view that it is also possible to become a librarian through a vocational route or training. According to Simpson (2013), one needs either a first degree, which is accredited by the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), or a degree in any subject followed by an accredited postgraduate qualification, in order to become a professional in a public library. To ensure that library provisions meet the needs of all its users, qualification will need to be coupled with a specified minimum number of years of previous work experience and a set of abilities and/or competencies. However, Simpson (2013) notes that it is not always the case that library schools produce enough graduates with the required skill sets to fill positions in academic and public libraries.

In this study the following concepts: library, public library, job requirements and graduates were defined.

There are various conceptual definitions of what a library is. To a layman, a library is generally understood as a building with books. A library is in fact much more than the layman’s view as will be shown below. Hamilton and Seidelin (2003) in Intellectual freedom

in the information society, libraries, and the Internet view a library as a tool for life-long learning; place of inspiration and ideas; area of acquiring new skills; study resource for local community; and wide-eyed discovery place. Worpole (2004: 6) is of the view that a library is a way of arranging and classifying knowledge, information and cultural resources. Chen and Erickson, (2009) define a library as an institution which keeps forms of stored information like books and other media. Library and Information Association of South Africa (2015: 20) points out that libraries are categorised into academic libraries; public libraries, school libraries and special libraries. From the highlighted library types, public libraries are the focus of this study. A detailed discussion on the typologies of libraries is provided in chapter two.

IFLA/ UNESCO public library manifesto (1994); IFLA (2003); the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) (2013) view a public library as a centre of information that plays a pivotal role in ensuring that all kinds of knowledge and information are readily available to its user group/community. A public library is generally considered an organisation that serves the public, and not for profit making purposes. Mostert (1997: 8) views a public library as an institution that is funded by public money, a house consisting of a number of different documents as well as the information sources related to informal education, recreation, cultural enrichment, social and information needs and/or purposes. According to Gill et al (2001: 15) public library is referred to as an organisation that is locally based and intended to meet the needs of the local community and operates in relation to the information needs of that particular community. It is further stated by Gill et al (2001) that public libraries are extremely important in ensuring that educational, information and developmental needs of the users are met. Generally, public libraries lend items from their collections to members with minimal or without any payment and also provide other numerous services- such as loaning of materials, provision of reference services, storytelling for toddlers, photocopying services, etc.- for its user community. From the various definitions of public libraries provided, public libraries can be understood as institutions that provide numerous services to its users to meet their educational, information and developmental needs. Gill et al (2001: 2) and LIS charter (2014: 58) highlight the roles of public libraries as follows:

- Promotion of reading and writing, with a focus on family literacy programmes;
- Education and learning: formal and informal;

- Community and other useful information provision, e.g. consumer health, employment opportunities;
- Participatory democracy and active citizenship;
- Fostering creativity and cultural expression;
- Support of businesses;
- Social cohesion and the fostering of appreciation of cultural diversity; and
- Information literacy to allow citizens to participate in the knowledge society

By job requirements we generally refer to the skills, experience, individual qualities, educational qualifications and an area of knowledge or specialisation for a particular profession or they can be referred to as competencies. In the context of this study, job requirements are viewed as a combination of academic qualification, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes required by public libraries as the potential employers of LIS graduates. For Raju (2017) knowledge, skills and attitudes are collectively called competencies. Raju (2017) further divides them into professional/disciplinary and generic/transferable competencies. Yadav and Bankar (2016) consider these skills to be “employability skills” because they are transferable core skill groups that represent essential functions and enable knowledge, skills, and attitudes required by the 21st century workplace. For Chen and Eriksson (2009) job requirements are the necessary competencies/skills for performing a particular job. Chen and Erickson (2009) further note that job requirements are more education and age related regardless of the field. Qualifications framework serves as a common standard that recognises qualifications and competencies of individuals. Ensor (2003) emphasises that SAQA also plays an immense role in acting as a roadmap to South African National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

A graduate can be defined as someone who has received a diploma or degree after completing a particular course of study in a college, school or university. In this context, the researcher is specifically dealing with LIS graduates. LIS graduates are basically those people who have been recognised by a university or any higher institution of learning as having studied and completed the requirements of LIS degree at that particular LIS School.

1.2. Contextualisation

LIS graduates are employed in different sectors of the economy. A study conducted by Ocholla and Shongwe (2013:38) identified five categories of the LIS market (sector) in South

Africa that includes- academic, archives and records management, information, library, knowledge management and thus presented in table 1.1 below.

Table 1. 1: Categories of LIS sector

LIS Categories	Job titles
Academic	Lecturer, junior lecturer, graduate assistant
Archives and Records	Archivist, records manager, records controller, records officer, documents officer, records and archives officer
Information	Information specialist, manager, analyst and officer
Library	Librarian (cataloguing, circulation, assistant, information, principal, IT, system and acquisitions)
Knowledge management	Knowledge manager, specialist, practitioner and officer

Source: Ocholla and Shongwe (2013: 38)

From the five identified categories of the LIS sector, the library category is of interest to the present study. The library category is in itself is vast with different library typologies. This includes the National Library of South Africa, the South African Library for the Blind (SALB), public and community libraries, school libraries, special libraries, government libraries and Higher Education libraries (The National Library of South Africa, 2014 in the South African Libraries 20 Years Review). The National Library of South Africa (NLSA) (2014) further indicates that, “there are also strong professional formations such as the Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA) and the National Council for Library and Information Services (NCLIS)” as organisations that govern the operation of libraries in the country.

According to the National Library of South Africa (2014) as citing the South African Yearbook 2012/13, there are more than 11 373 libraries in the country, comprising 77 higher education libraries, 9 416 school libraries, 79 government departmental libraries, one national library with two branches, SA Library for the Blind, and 1800 public libraries provided by provincial government and metro libraries. In South Africa, the public library category is perceived to be the main employers for LIS graduates (Ocholla and Shongwe, 2013). The latest study by Raju (2016) revealed that academic libraries are major employers of LIS graduates as well. The minister of Arts and Culture is cited in the South African Libraries 20 year review (2014) as having stated that the library sector has created in the region of 1274 new jobs since 2007/2008. Critically, the minister is of the view that “public libraries have to

be seen as centres that offer communities means to gain access to government information, or finding jobs that are advertised in the newspapers, or for learners and students who need to find information on the internet”. It is in this regard therefore that the present study focuses on the public library, a sub-sector of the library category under the broad LIS market/sector.

Public libraries are situated across all the government spheres or provinces in South Africa. There are nine (9) provinces in the country. The nine provinces are: Eastern Cape (EP), Free State (FS), Gauteng (GP), KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), Limpopo (LP), Mpumalanga (MP), Northern Cape (NC), North West (NW) and Western Cape (WC). Each province comprises of a certain number of public/community libraries which altogether amount to a total of 1800 libraries in the country (The National Library of South Africa, 2014). This study, therefore, only focuses on one province and that is KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), the second most populous province in South Africa with 19.8 per cent (%) share of the national population (Statistics South Africa, 2016). The province is located in South East of the country. KZN has one metropolitan municipality (eThekweni) and ten district municipalities which are then divided into forty-four (44) local municipalities as revealed in the KZN Provincial Growth and Development (PGD) strategy reviewed in June (2016). The ten district municipalities are as follows: eThekweni (6 local municipalities), uMgungundlovu (7 local municipalities), uThukela (5 local municipalities), uMzinyathi (4 local municipalities), Amajuba (3 local municipalities), Zululand (5 local municipalities), uMkhanyakude (5 local municipalities), uThungulu (6 local municipalities), iLembe (4 local municipalities) and Sisonke (5 local municipalities) (KZN PGD strategy, 2016).

Library Infrastructure Programme in KZN province

According to The Department of Arts and Culture’s budget speech (2016), since 1994, the department has built over 60 public libraries. The department also renovated and extended some public libraries. “The full cost of construction, furniture and equipment is funded by the Department and through a conditional grant for community libraries provided by the National Treasury” (The Department of Arts and Culture: budget speech, 2016). Furthermore, the department is also providing support funding to the new state-of-the-art library which was planned to be built in the City of Durban in year 2017.

The Department of Arts and Culture’s budget speech (2016) pointed out that, “The public library service consists of the central organisation based in Pietermaritzburg, housing the central reference and audio visual libraries, and four regional depots: Northern, Midlands,

Coast, and South Coast Depots”. The Department of Arts and Culture’s budget speech (2016) highlights the following as the regional depots operating under the departmental regions:

- Western Region Library Depot- formerly Northern Depot,
- Southern Region Library Depot- formerly Midlands Depot,
- Northern Region Library Depot- formerly Coastal Depot, and
- Eastern Region Library Depot- formerly South Coast Depot,

The focus of the present study is specifically on all four (4) regional depots which has five library depots in the province. The Department of Arts and Culture: public library services in the Departmental budget speech (2016) indicate that public libraries are held in high esteem since they are considered as major contributors to the development and advancement of the communities in which they operate. The budget speech (2016) further indicates that the modern democracy is as a result of the support rendered by public libraries through their literacy, education, enlightenment, and the principle of lifelong learning initiatives. DAC library services offer services as well as support to associated public libraries in the entire province (KZN). “The service consists of a central organisation based in the head office in Pietermaritzburg and cascaded to the regional library depots in Northern, Western, Southern, and Eastern regions of the province” (DAC Budget speech, 2016). KZN library services are aligned according to regional library depots. Each region represents its respective library depot in which all public libraries operate under. Western region represents Dundee public library depot; Northern region represents Coastal depot and Mbazwana depot; Eastern region represents South Coast depot; and Southern region represents Midlands depot. Regional library depots have the following services:

- Professional support and training,
- Provision of library materials for users,
- Implementation of library service standards,
- Monitoring of collection development in libraries, and
- Interest groups forums

There are 189 public libraries that are affiliated to DAC KZN libraries and 49 non-affiliated that are currently in place in the province. In the 189 affiliated DAC libraries, 7 libraries are not yet completed. Each regional library depot has its respective number of public libraries. Coastal depot has 60 public libraries, Midlands 49, Dundee 35, South coast 34 and Zululand 11.

The LIS education and training sector plays a major role in equipping students with the required, and ever changing, employability skills for the LIS market. We seek an education that can enable people to bring rich collective experiences and abilities to the field (Keevey and Higgs, 2010: 690). The curricula offered by LIS schools need to be aligned with what is required in the LIS job market. Yet, Katuli-Munyoro and Mutula (2016) noticed that Library and Information Science (LIS) education and training programmes were criticised for producing graduates without the requisite skills to perform right away on their first jobs in Zimbabwe. LIS education should equip students with the needed knowledge and skills to be employed after graduation, and also to gain the understanding required to adapt within the changing environment (Yadav and Bankar, 2016). Education statistics website (www.southafricanmi.com/education-statistics) indicates that, there are 25 Universities in South Africa that are classified into traditional, comprehensive or universities of technology, formerly technikons. Bunting and Cloete (2010) state that universities of technology focus on a vocationally oriented education; comprehensive universities offer a combination of academic and vocational diplomas and degrees; and traditional universities focus on theoretically oriented university degrees. There are 12 higher education institutions (HEIs) that offer LIS qualifications in South Africa. The Department of Arts and Culture in the Library and Information Services (LIS) Transformation Charter (2009: 59) states that, education and training programmes of LIS professionals is provided formally by the following universities:

- Durban University of Technology, Department of Information Science (university of technology)
- University of Cape Town, Department of Information and Library Studies/Centre for Information Literacy (traditional university)
- University of Fort Hare, Department of Information and Library Science (traditional university)
- University of KwaZulu-Natal, Department of Information Studies (traditional university)
- University of Limpopo, Department of Information Science (traditional university)
- University of Pretoria, Department of Information science (traditional university)
- University of South Africa, Department of Information Science (traditional university)

- University of Western Cape, Department of Library and Information Science (traditional university)
- University of Zululand, Department of Library and Information Science (comprehensive university)
- Walter Sisulu University, Department of Library and Information Science (comprehensive university)

Though the 2009 Charter highlighted the 10 above-mentioned LIS schools, more recent literature gives 9. The State of Libraries in South Africa (2015: 42) highlights the following 9 LIS schools in South Africa:

- Durban University of Technology, Information and Corporate Management
- Fort Hare, Department of Library and Information Science
- University of Cape Town, Library and Information Studies Centre
- University of KwaZulu-Natal, Information Studies Programme
- University of Limpopo, Programme of Information Studies
- University of Pretoria, Department of Information Science
- University of South Africa, Department of Information Science
- University of the Western Cape, Department of Library and Information Science
- University of Zululand, Department of Information Studies

Raju (2005) identified the following LIS qualifications offered by Institutions of Higher Learning in South Africa:

- ND: LIS (National Diploma: Library and Information Studies, which is a three year programme offered by technikons)
- B. Tech. LIS (Bachelor of Technology: Library and Information Studies, which is a national programme offered by technikons at the fourth level of study after completion of three year ND: LIS)
- Post graduate Diploma in Library and Information Science (a programme offered at universities at the fourth level of study after completion of a bachelor's degree)
- B. Bibl. or equivalent (four year university LIS degree)

Library and Information Services (LIS) Transformation Charter (2009) classified the qualifications in the following way:

- An undergraduate diploma of either three years or two years duration.

- A one-year advanced certificate in education for school librarianship for qualified educators.
- A three-year undergraduate degree programme in which an information science major is combined with a major and courses in another discipline.
- A four-year professional degree in which majors in Library and Information Science are combined with a major and courses in another discipline.
- A postgraduate diploma in LIS, offering a capping vocational qualification on top of a degree in any discipline. This qualification is offered by four universities.

At undergraduate level, some institutions offer a three-year programme whereas others offer a four-year programme. Library and Information Services (LIS) Transformation Charter (2009) indicates postgraduate studies as follows: at postgraduate level institutions also offer such programmes as honours, masters and doctoral studies. Honours is a one (1) year programme that commences from a three-year undergraduate programme. From an honours programme one can then continue to master's programme. On the other hand, an undergraduate degree, which is a four year programme, leads directly to a master's programme. Normally, a master's programme is offered as coursework or research for a two-year period. Master's programmes are followed by doctoral programmes.

The LIS curriculum consists of the following core areas as highlighted by the Library and Information Services (LIS) Transformation charter (2009):

- Study of user needs and user behaviour
- Information and knowledge management
- Information storage and seeking
- Knowledge organisation
- Knowledge representation
- ICTs and their applications

The LIS job market continues to evolve, thereby affecting LIS education and training and resulting in the reformulation of the curricula that is offered by LIS schools and institutions. The Library and Information Services (LIS) Transformation Charter (2009) revealed that LIS education and training encountered some challenges, most notably: the closure of a number of LIS schools; fewer institutions continuing to train school librarians; current practitioners not receiving continuing professional development to equip them with new skills; failure to draw young people into the LIS profession; and most importantly, the LIS curricula not

always meeting the needs of the current profession and the individuals in it. The State of Libraries in South Africa Report (2015) revealed the following as the current challenges facing LIS schools universally, institutionally and/or nationally: LIS schools are under pressure to keep up with the changing employment landscape that always needs new skills and knowledge; the difficulty of attracting full-time postgraduate students and academic staff; internet connectivity problems that affect teaching, learning and research; failure to meet a variety of students' learning needs; difficulties in integrating the LIS discipline with new knowledge and new technologies; and finally, the lack of a standardised curriculum which affects the professional status of a three-year program.

1.4. Problem statement

Public libraries remain the main employers of LIS graduates in South Africa (Ocholla and Shongwe, 2013), in line with Reddy et al.'s (2016: 88) observation that "over half of the country's graduates enter the community and social services sector, which is dominated by the public sector." It is therefore imperative that the required skills and competencies of LIS professionals are investigated. Such an investigation has implications on many stakeholders, the public libraries themselves, the LIS graduates, and LIS curriculum developers. Although there are several studies (e.g., Ocholla and Bothma, 2007; Ndwandwe and Onyancha, 2012; Ndlangamandla and Ocholla, 2012; Ocholla and Shongwe, 2013; Shongwe, 2014) that have focused on the job market of LIS graduates in South Africa in general, there is no in-depth study focusing specifically on public libraries' job requirements and the challenges facing LIS graduates.

Two identified gaps expressed in related studies are a shortage of skills and lack of training (Library and Information Services (LIS) Transformation Charter, 2009; Library and Information Services (LIS) Transformation Charter, 2014; Mphidi, 2016). These challenges have led to inappropriately skilled people filling professional posts, with an attendant deleterious effect on service delivery. There appear to be no training programmes to improve the skills of library staff. This makes it difficult to fulfil the requirements of the LIS charter (2009), which states that, "The librarians/information professionals in the evolving knowledge society in the 21st century require both specific and generic knowledge, skills and attitudes for the changing environment and mission of library service."

Other concerns originate from the LIS job profile; there are drastically varying emerging professions across the LIS sector which sometimes require LIS curricula revision and re-orientation. Given that the skills and knowledge that are required are constantly evolving, LIS schools need to keep up with these changes in order to equip LIS graduates with the necessary skills for the job market. Curricula revision is a process that includes changes in some National Qualifications Framework (NQF) levels, admission requirements and the weighting of credits in qualifications, and this cannot be achieved overnight. It is important for a workplace to recruit a workforce that has the requisite skills to offer professional services in keeping with the demands and challenges of the evolving knowledge society. Shongwe (2014) highlights that, in this modern information and knowledge economy, information technology (IT) has changed the LIS market and library operations.

Even though the LIS Charter (2009; 2014) reveals some gaps in public libraries, there is still no in-depth investigation conducted with respect to LIS graduates and their job requirements as employees of public libraries in the country. Therefore, this study sought to provide theoretical background for the development of research in the LIS domain, public libraries themselves, LIS curriculum and LIS graduates/professionals. To achieve this, LIS job adverts in the Sunday Times, Ilanga, Mail and Guardian, and Sunday Tribune newspapers covering a three-year period, from January 2015 to December 2017 were scanned and analysed, assistant directors from the regional library depots were interviewed, and questionnaires were administered to LIS graduates.

1.5. Aim of the study

The study was aimed at investigating job requirements and challenges of the LIS graduates in public libraries in KZN.

1.6. Research objectives

The following objectives were set:

- To determine the job functions and requirements of the public libraries focusing on qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes of LIS graduates in public libraries through newspaper scanning.
- To find out the perceptions of employers and LIS graduates on the job requirements of the sector.

- To find out the perceptions of employers and LIS graduates about the LIS curriculum.
- To determine the challenges facing LIS graduates regarding their functions/duties in the workplace.

1.7. Research questions

An in depth understanding of the research problem of this study was achieved through the following research questions:

- What are the job functions and requirements of LIS graduates in public libraries based on qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes?
- What are the perceptions of employers and LIS graduates on the job requirements of the sector?
- What are the perceptions of LIS graduates and employers about the LIS curriculum?
- What challenges do LIS graduates face with regards to their functions in the workplace?

1.8. Significance of the study

As public libraries remain the main employers of LIS graduates in South Africa (Ocholla and Shongwe, 2013) and Reddy et al (2016: 88) acknowledging that “Over half of the country’s graduates enter the community and social services sector, which is dominated by the public sector”, it is imperative that the required skills and competencies of LIS professionals are investigated. The study is significant as it provides theoretical background for the development of research in the domain, public libraries, LIS curriculum and LIS graduates/professionals. It is hoped that this study could shed light on the skills and competencies required of the LIS graduates in public libraries. The study may as well assist the LIS institutions and stakeholders involved in LIS education and training in terms of curriculum development, for example, balancing theory and practice. This study could also highlight the core skills LIS graduates/professionals should possess for employment in public libraries, adding to the few related studies on LIS education and training e.g. Ocholla (2007); Ocholla and Bothma (2007); Ndwandwe and Onyancha (2012); and Ocholla and Shongwe (2013) to mention a few.

While a number of studies (Ocholla and Bothma, 2007; Ndwandwe and Onyancha, 2012; Ndlamandla and Ocholla, 2012; Ocholla and Shongwe, 2013; Shongwe, 2014) have been

conducted on the job market of LIS graduates in South Africa, however, there is lack of evidence of studies focusing solely on the job requirements and functions of LIS graduates in public libraries. As the biggest employer of LIS graduates, as evidence in studies by (Ocholla and Shongwe, 2013; Reddy et al, 2016), this study, through a triangulation of data sources, provides an in-depth understanding of the job functions, requirements and challenges of LIS graduates in public libraries in South Africa. Such an understanding is crucially for curriculum development in order to align LIS education to the functions and requirements of LIS graduates, in this case, public libraries in South Africa. Moreover, the study to contributes to the body of knowledge through an in-depth understanding of the skills needed by the LIS graduates for the LIS market, specifically the public libraries in the present dispensation, as against the previous studies that employed just content analysis (Ndwandwe and Onyancha, 2012; Ocholla and Shongwe, 2013). The study interviewed respondents and collected data through questionnaires. This amalgamation of instruments produced new results that made it unique from previous studies. In practice, this study will likely help the LIS market and LIS schools in terms of curriculum development.

1.9. Delimitation of the study

The study investigated job requirements and challenges of LIS graduates in public libraries, specifically within the province of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) in the country. As there is a relatively high number of public libraries in the country, the researcher would not be able to sample them all. The study was thus limited to only KZN provincial public libraries. There are about 209 public libraries in the province, therefore due to time and financial constraints the researcher selected from the structure of public libraries in the province. The structure of KZN public library services is arranged according to five (5) regional library depots namely Dundee, Coast, South Coast, Midlands and Mbazwana depots. Each regional library depot services a certain number of both standards and centre public libraries. The researcher only selected all five regional library depots and their centre public libraries representing each respective regional library depot in the province. Centre public libraries were limited to four regional library depots, and as a result of this, Mbazwana regional library depot consists of only standard libraries. Assistant directors were only from regional library depots. LIS graduates/professionals were selected from both regional library depots and centre public libraries. The study only scanned four (4) newspapers (Sunday Times, Ilanga, Mail and Guardian, and Sunday Tribune) for job advertisement covering a three-year period, from

January 2015 to December 2017. There were no online sources scanned for job advertisements because online sources are regularly updated which would have made it difficult to trace job advertisements as far back as 2015.

1.10. The dissertation structure

The dissertation is divided into six chapters. Figure 1.1 provides the diagrammatic illustration of the layout of the study, followed by the summary.

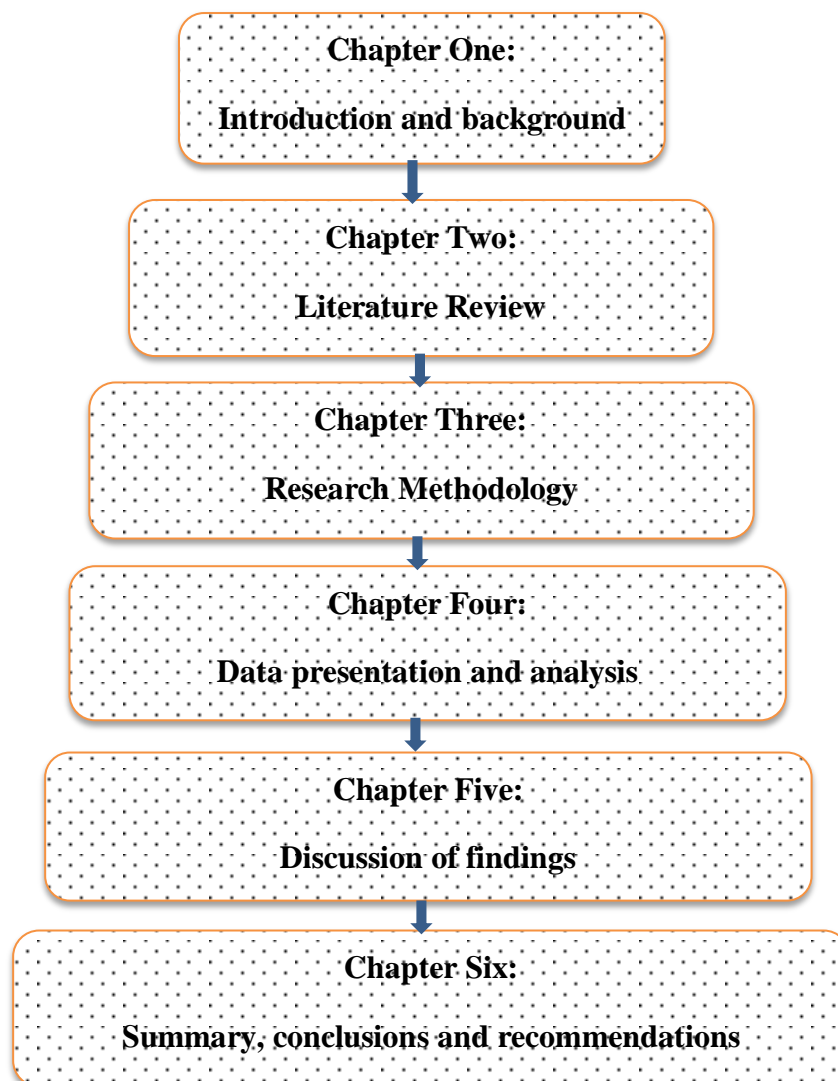


Figure 1. 1: Diagrammatic dissertation layout

Chapter 1: Introduction and background

The study problem was conceptualised and contextualised in the library and information science sector. The research aims at investigating the “job requirements and challenges of the LIS graduates in KZN provincial public libraries”. Research objectives together with research

questions that were derived from them were outlined. Significance of the study and its parameters were provided.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter gives a broad overview of the Southern African LIS sector with respect to LIS graduates. Various sources were consulted in reviewing the literature: books, online journals, and online databases.

Chapter 3: Research methodology

This chapter reflects how this study was carried out. The adopted elements of the research methodology for this study are discussed in details. Elements include research paradigm, research approach, research instruments and others. The elements of the methods are discussed for ease of replication for future use by other researchers who may be interested in using the same methods.

Chapter 4: Data presentation and analysis

This chapter presents how the data collected was analysed. Data was collected from two population groups. The first group is KZN public libraries and the four newspapers (the Sunday Times, Ilanga, Mail and Guardian, and Sunday Tribune). Public libraries include library managers and LIS graduates. The newspapers include LIS job related adverts.

Chapter 5: Discussion of findings

The chapter discussed the key findings of the study. The key findings are a true reflection of whether or not the research problem was effectively tackled.

Chapter 6: Summary, recommendations and conclusion

The sixth chapter discussed the summary, recommendations and conclusions of the study.

1.14. Definition of terms

Library: A library is normally defined as an institution which keeps forms of stored information like books, for individuals interested in using them, like the public (Chen and Erickson, 2009).

Public library: A public library is a library that is of public service rather than a profit-making organisation. The Department of Arts and Culture (2013) defines a public library as the “local centre of information, making all kinds of knowledge and information readily available to its users”. Gill et al (2001) describes it as a “locally based service meeting the needs of the local community and operating within the context of that community”.

Normally public libraries lend out items from their collections to members without any payment and also provide other numerous services for its user-community.

A public library is not only to provide services to its users but also to provide job opportunities to qualified personnel, like the LIS graduates.

Job requirement: The concept ‘job requirements’ is described by Chen and Eriksson (2009) as necessary skills for performing a particular job. The authors also highlight that job requirements are more education and age related, regardless of the field. Chen and Eriksson (2009) revealed that, most advertised LIS jobs always require someone to be highly learned.

Graduate: A graduate can be defined as someone who has received a diploma or degree after completing a particular course of study in a college, school or university. In this context, the researcher is specifically dealing with LIS graduates. LIS graduates are basically those people who have been recognised by a university or any higher institution of learning as having studied and completed the requirements of LIS degree at that particular LIS School.

1.15. Summary

This chapter has served as the background to the entire study. The chapter provided the conceptual and contextual basis of this research. The investigated problem, the aim of the study, the objectives and research questions therefrom were discussed. The contribution of the study and the constraints were presented. Indicative literature review, research methodology and dissertation structure were indicated. Skills gap and the ever changing LIS landscape, as identified major concerns in literature, led to this study. Identified problems are fully addressed in the next three chapters: chapter 2 through the review of literature, chapter 5 through the discussion of findings and chapter 6 through the provision of the recommendations from the study. The next chapter reviews existing literature in line with the set research objectives.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

The previous chapter provided the conceptual and contextual background of the study. This chapter reviews literature to give a glimpse on similarities, patterns, trends and also differences across the existing research in the LIS field regarding job requirements and challenges of LIS graduates in public libraries. The review of literature has been substantial in establishing the gaps, and thus providing the present study's contribution. It has also given an insight into the tested methods and procedures used in similar studies in the domain, and even elsewhere. The first part of this chapter provides the discussion on the theory guiding this study (theory of core competency). Thereafter, it gives an overview of the LIS sector. Then, employment requirements, human resources concern, workforce skills in public libraries, training of the LIS professionals and employment equity are discussed. Also covered are the issues in the job market, which include skills gap and changes in the LIS job profile as well as the emerging professions. LIS curricula along with qualifications framework are provided and issues pertaining to funding, opportunities and challenges with regard to South African public libraries are discussed. The chapter will thereafter be summarised.

2.2. Theoretical support

Application of a theory to a study is determined by the main research question as well as the relevance of that particular theory. The present study used the Core Competency Theory. A concept of core competence is closely connected to the idea of a business strategy. Core refers to something fundamental whereas competence means skill or ability. In a business context, core competencies refer to something unique a business has or can do which enables it to compete effectively. Core competencies can be considered business strengths. This concept was first suggested by two business management theorists namely Prahalad and Hamel (1990). According to Prahalad and Hamel (1990) the theory of core competency fulfils three criteria namely it is not easy for competitors to imitate; it can be reused widely for many products and markets and; it must contribute to the end consumer's experienced benefits and the value of the product or service to its customers. These theorists discussed this concept in their book called "competing for the future." Core competency theory is a work of

Selznick (1957) who is well known for organisational theory amongst his other theories. Selznick is believed to be the one among others to develop the concept of core competencies. Later, Hamel and Prahalad (1990) expanded on the concept of core competency with respect to delivering sustainable competitive advantage in an organisation/company. Prahalad and Hamel (1990) view core competencies as “the collective learning of an organisation that involves coordinating diverse production skills and integrating multiple streams of technologies”. Prahalad and Hamel (1990) further indicate that core competency is a product of specific set of skills or production practices which is the product of a group of skills for delivering added value to customers.

A practical example of delivering added value to customers is when a skilled and competent library professional delivers satisfactory services to library patrons in a public library setting. Agha and Alrubaiee in Gupta (2013) point out that core competencies generate competitive advantage and also affect the performance of an organisation. Gupta (2013) believes that “core competency is a very important factor of excellence”. Selznick (1957) and Prahalad and Hamel (1990) concept of core competencies is focused on the competitive advantage in a business environment rather than on individual persons. However, in the context of this study, the concept of core competency basically focuses on an individual body (LIS graduates/professionals), rather than on the organisation itself. Edgar and Lockwood (2012) and Gupta (2013) note that competencies are always based on skills, which implies that an individual gets the advantage of a unique set of skills, knowledge and capabilities to perform duties competitively and satisfactorily in a workplace. For the purpose of the present study, competencies are viewed as needed professional qualification, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes from LIS graduates to perform their everyday duties/functions satisfactorily in public libraries. Kawshala (2017: 254) points out that “with today’s competition, knowledge is power and having knowledge that others do not possess would most certainly give power to one over the other”.

To understand the nature of job requirements of public libraries required from LIS graduates, the needed competencies were investigated on the three population groups: newspapers (Sunday Times, Ilanga, mail and guardian and Sunday Tribune), five assistant directors of the regional library depots and 58 employed LIS graduates. Four newspapers were scanned for LIS job advertisements in order to understand the needed competencies from LIS professionals/graduates to be employed in the library sector- a sub-sector forming the broad LIS sector/market. Assistant directors provided answers on the expected job requirements/

competencies of LIS professionals/graduates to be employed in public libraries, which determine the duties and responsibilities of the LIS professionals/graduates in this context. LIS graduates are in better positions to articulate their everyday duties in line with competencies they possess and those they consider needed after identifying gaps. Therefore, a better understanding from LIS graduates regarding their competencies and duties will enable them to identify possible challenges.

The adoption of this theory in the present study has implications on LIS professionals/graduates as it will shed light on their employability skills. The theory also has impact on the LIS education and training offered in South African LIS schools. This theory was previously used in related studies such as Raju (2016) and Raju (2017) and significantly succeeded in determining the LIS professional competencies in the academic sector in the country (South Africa). Raju (2016) study used this theory to understand the core competencies in LIS education with focus on professional, generic and personal competencies in the higher education sector of South Africa. Raju (2017) supported her study with a similar theory to develop the LIS professional competency index for the higher education sector in the country. As mentioned, the present study used the core competency theory to better understand job requirements/employability skills of LIS graduates in the public library environment with focus on qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes. This theory is also be used to determine if the LIS education and training sector is successfully and effectively preparing LIS students for the workplace whilst providing possible ways for the curriculum development of LIS institutions. This is deduced from the responses from both LIS professionals and assistant directors on the offered LIS curricula.

Scholars like Prahalad and Hamel (1990); Edgar and Lockwood (2012); Gupta (2013) indicate that the theory of core competency comprises three main elements, namely: resources, capabilities and competence; where resources include land, labour and capital in general, capabilities involve different possibilities that help build core competencies; and competence is a set of closely related abilities, commitments, knowledge and skills. In the context of this theory, resources are linked with the sources of development, the method of skills acquisition and the technologies involved. For example, a public library, as an employer has a duty to provide regular training to its workforce to re-skill them. A provision of training to workforce plays a significance role in keeping them updated with the latest developments in their everyday duties, functions and or responsibilities. Barney in Kawshala (2017: 254) notes that resources can be categorised into organisational, physical and human.

From the three highlighted categories of resources, the human category is closely linked with the resource of focus in the present study which Barney in Kawshala (2017) views as manpower, management team, training and experience. Therefore, training and experience relate to the present study as LIS graduates, before graduation, need relevant training in order to gain experience in line with the required competencies in their future workplaces so that they can fit into the ever changing work environment.

Competence is a set of closely related abilities, commitments, knowledge and skills that help an individual person or an organisation to perform a job in a most effective way (Kawshala, 2017: 254). Kawshala (2017) adds that competence can take place in a person's life stage in his/her profession, because levels of responsibilities have their own requirements. Henderson and Cockburn as cited by Kawshala (2017: 254) group competencies into two categories, which are functional competencies and integrative competencies. Raju (2017) groups competencies into professional and generic. Kawshala (2017: 254) indicates that it is of paramount importance for an organisation to manage and enhance its competencies in preparation for future changes. A practical example of managing and enhancing competencies may be in the form of providing workshops, seminars or conferences for the workforce in an organisation. Capabilities involve different possibilities that help build core competencies. Kawshala (2017: 254) is of the view that capabilities are very important resources for organisational performance.

2.3. Overview of library and information services sector

When we think of the library sector, a constellation of organisations, professional associations, employees, employers, academic institutions and many stakeholders are involved. It is safe to state, as will be revealed below, that the South African library sector is vast. Different libraries fall under various government departments. Some identified departments by Strand (2016: 107) are: the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC), Department of Basic Education (DBE), and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). Strand (2016) further points that DAC directs all services from nine provinces in the country, six metropolitan services and the National Library of South Africa. It is also brought to attention by Strand (2016) that DBE ensures the funding for school libraries in the country. Finally, DHET is said to provide academic libraries for universities and Technical Vocational Education and Training Colleges (TVETs). The scope of the

library sector in South Africa includes, a national library service, the NLSA; libraries in higher education institutions (HEIs); public and metro libraries, community information services operating under provincial and local authorities; school LIS; special LIS; the sub-directorate of meta-information in the (DAC) the Department of Arts and Culture and other stakeholders (LIASA, 2003). According to the Library and Information Services (LIS) Charter (2009) public/community libraries; special libraries; university libraries and national libraries form the LIS sector in South Africa. In 2014 the LIS Charter (2014) categorised the LIS sector to include school libraries; public libraries; Thusong Services Centres and (IKS) Indigenous Knowledge Systems; University, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges and research councils; national libraries and special libraries; the library of Parliament and legal deposits centres. The State of Libraries in South Africa (2015) listed academic libraries; school libraries; special libraries; and public and community libraries as forming the library sector in SA. Table 2.1 presents the structure of the library and information services sector in South Africa.

A look at the library sector reveals that most classifications are along the lines of the clientele the libraries serve; for instance, a public library serves all and sundry; school library serves the school community; academic libraries serve the HEIs such as university and college communities; special libraries serve organisations (corporate bodies, research institutions, non-governmental organisations, etc.); and government libraries serve government departments to mention but a few. Within the broad groupings/categories there may as well be sub-groupings like a school library which can be a form/classroom library, a corner library or a standalone purpose built library. Clearly, the libraries come in many forms. In South Africa, academic libraries, school libraries, special libraries and public and community libraries are recognised and are most prominent (Kansas Library Association (KLA), 2004; Fourie, 2007; LIS Charter, 2009; LIS Charter, 2014; the National Library of South Africa (NLSA) newsletter, 2014; IFLA, 2015).

LIASA website (2017) highlights academic and research libraries, archives, government libraries, national libraries, public and community libraries, school libraries, special libraries, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) college libraries as South African libraries. Each library type serves its own unique clientele and is commonly located in the most suitable area for its user community. In terms of collections, missions and goals, workforce and funding there are differences as well. Academic libraries are those libraries

situated in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) like universities and colleges. The LIS Charter (2009: 27) and the LIS Charter (2014: 69) state that academic libraries are considered as academic information services that serve the purpose of teaching, learning as well as research in a particular institution of higher learning. Services provided by academic libraries are aligned with organisation's goals and mission for which the libraries are situated.

The State of South African Libraries (2015: 18) points out that an academic library is a library that serves universities, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions, and Further Education and Training (FET) colleges. School libraries are generally understood as libraries within primary and secondary schools. School libraries are also called school library media programmes and students and teachers are the clientele for them (Kansas Library Association; 2004: 2). Their collection usually supports the school curricula. Among the library types in the country are also special libraries which are normally libraries located in various government sectors and non-governmental sectors and these libraries provide specialised information resources. The State of South African Libraries (2015: 24) claims that "South Africa has a large number of special libraries situated in government departments, national and provincial parliaments, private business or corporations, hospitals and museums, and non-governmental organisations." Special libraries are normally organised in various associations. The Library and Information Services (LIS) Charter (2014) highlights associations like LIASA's Special Libraries Interest Group (LiSLIG), the Special Libraries and Information Services (SLIS), the Organisation of South African Law Libraries (OSALL) and the Southern African Online User Group (SAOUG) as associations of special libraries in South Africa.

Most popular and familiar library types are public and community libraries which are libraries that are customarily situated in our communities and provide materials that serve various user groups in a community such as toddlers and adults. Some public libraries modify their names to community libraries to best fit the clients they are serving. These library types serve quite a number of purposes and render various services to user communities. The general public of all ages, companies, individuals, non-profit organisations, pre-schoolers and other entities fall under the clientele for public libraries (Kansas Library Association; 2004: 2). Their collection is believed to support community needs and various popular interests of the public. Presented in Table 2.1 is the structure of the LIS sector in SA.

Table 2. 1: Structure of the library sector

The structure of the library sector	
1. Fourie (2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Library Service, The NLSA; • Libraries In Higher Education Institutions (HEIs); • Public and Metro Libraries, Community Information Services Operating under Provincial and Local Authorities; • School LIS; • Special LIS; • The Sub-Directorate of Meta-information in the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) and other stakeholders
2. LIS Charter (2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public/community libraries; • Special libraries; • University libraries and • National libraries
3. LIS Charter (2014)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School libraries; public libraries; • Thusong services centres and (IKS) indigenous knowledge systems; • University, vocational and technical education and training (TVET) colleges and research councils; • National libraries and special libraries; • Library of parliament and legal deposits centres.
4. The State of Libraries in South Africa (2015)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic libraries; • School libraries; • Special libraries; • Public and community libraries

2.3.1. South African public libraries

The library category is a sub-sector under a broader LIS sector which includes academic, archives and records, information, library and knowledge management. In South Africa, libraries have been around from as far back as the 18th century. First, libraries were for private use. Most of the first buildings that were built as churches and halls eventually housed library materials. There were no acts, legislations or frameworks guiding the operation of libraries back then; but as time progressed, libraries shifted from private use to serve the general public and there was an introduction of the legislative frameworks for library operations. Developments in the nation also necessitated the increase to the number of libraries in the country. Currently, there are manifold and diverse libraries in different government spheres spread across South Africa, serving different client groups, located in

various settings including government organisations and private institutions, and funded by various stakeholders.

Public libraries in South Africa come in a variety of forms. The Department of Arts and Culture (2013: 132-137) in the project report for the costing of the South African public library and information services bill highlights container book unit, container library, basic public library, branch public library, central public library, regional public library and mega public library as public libraries in South Africa. This section presents public libraries in the South African context and addresses issues of funding, the staff skills, staff categories, challenges and opportunities. The history of libraries in South Africa was presented earlier in section 2.3.1 (Table 2.1).

2.3.1.1. Public library funding

Normally, organisations receive their funding from government, individual bodies and other stakeholders. Gill et al (2001: 31) observes that funding is of paramount importance to the success of a public library in fulfilling its goals. Gill et al (2001) notes that when there is a lack of funding it becomes impossible to develop policies for service provision and affective use of available resources in a library. It is further indicated by Gill et al (2001) that there are primary and secondary sources of funding for public libraries. Primary sources of funding include: taxation at local, regional and central level, and block grants from local, regional and central level. Secondary sources of funding include: donations from funding bodies and or private individuals; revenue from commercial activities such as book sales, publishing, etc.; revenue from users' fees, such as fines; revenue from charges to library users for individual services like photocopying and printing; sponsorship from external organisations and lottery funds for specific initiatives

The LIS Charter (2009: 19) indicates that DAC has provided the conditional grants for public and community libraries. The LIS Charter (2009) further points out that the conditional grant was used for building libraries and renovating their buildings; buying equipment and delivering mobile libraries and container libraries for communities; appointing more staff, and extending opening hours; expanding and improving ICT connectivity; developing and implementing a new provincial ICT system; upgrading security and improving library assets; buying more library materials; and stocking more books in indigenous languages. In addition, the LIS Charter (2009) reveals that funding was still a stumbling block as a result of lack of funding framework for the delivery of library and information services.

DAC (2013: 12) mentions provincial funding sources, national conditional grants, donations (where it included private donations and bequests) and philanthropic foundations as the sources of funding public libraries in South Africa. DAC (2013) also indicates that provincial funding sources include the provincial own funds (provincial equitable share and own revenues) through transfers to municipalities; whereas the national conditional grants are allocated in provinces by the national government.

Donations have been revealed to be of paramount importance in the history of South African libraries (DAC, 2013). For instance, Sir George Grey presented the South African Library with his collection in 1861. Currently the collection is known as the grey collection. Donations can be in the form of money or physical items like physical books (DAC, 2013: 12). DAC (2013) furthers that funding can range from those from individual and small communities to large donations by corporations and bequest or trust funds. Furthermore, channels for donations and bequest include Biblionef South Africa, which can be accessed through www.biblionefsa.org.za; Room to Read, which can be accessed through www.roomtoread.org; Nali Bali, accessible through www.nalibali.org; Greater Good South Africa, accessible via www.myggsa.co.za; and Read Educational Trust, which can be accessed through www.read.co.za. Philanthropic foundations include Carnegie Foundation, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Ford Foundation and have been important to South African libraries (DAC, 2013). These foundations are closely linked to donations and bequests.

From the various highlighted sources of funding for public libraries, it is clear that SA public libraries receive their funding from different stakeholders. However, the conditional grant is the greatest source of funding.

2.3.1.2. Opportunities

By opportunities in the context of the study we mean the progress, developments and advancement in the public library environment. Ocholla and Shongwe (2013: 44) state that public libraries remain the main employers of LIS graduates/professionals in African continent. The LIS Charter (2014: 56) observes that South African public libraries have been supported with large material, whereas policy and legislative refinements have created large public library services in order to increase gains and extend the reach to almost all communities. It is also reported in the LIS Charter (2014) that government's conditional grants have played a major role in redressing past imbalances while directing libraries to meet

ever changing communities' 'demands. Conditional grants have been of paramount importance in building new libraries and refurbishing existing ones. To top it all, extra staff have been hired (LIS Charter, 2014).

2.3.1.3. Challenges facing public libraries

There are various challenges facing South African libraries. Institutions of learning and students need to thrive and be prepared to overcome the challenges that are faced by today's societies and, most likely, future ones. As was earlier mentioned South African libraries come in a variety of forms, which implies that each library type has its own challenges. Nevertheless, there are some common challenges facing all library types in the country. The common challenges include lack of funding, poorly trained staff or lack of staff and the use and management of information and communication technologies (ICTs) as indicated by several studies including (Kansas Library Association (KLA) 2004; Witbooi, 2007; the LIS Charter 2009; Ocholla and Shongwe 2013; the LIS Charter 2014; the National Library of South Africa 2014; Morris et al, 2014; Library and Information Association of South Africa, 2015; Mphidi and Fourie, 2016). This section focused on challenges facing South African public libraries exclusively. These are libraries being reported to be the main employers of LIS professionals in South Africa and the African continent as a whole (Ocholla, 2005; Ocholla and Bothma, 2007; Ocholla and Shongwe, 2013), to mention a few.

Generally, challenges in organisations sometimes serve as the main source of competition. In this sense, every functional organisation, including SA public libraries, face challenges. The challenges affecting SA public libraries stem from those facing the entire LIS market in the country since 1994 (Witbooi, 2007: 66). Witbooi (2007) includes departmental alignment, governance, funding and human resources as part of the challenges affecting the LIS sector. With regards to public libraries in the country, Witbooi (2007) cites budget problems, very limited resources, increased demands as well as low membership profile as challenges. The LIS Charter (2014: 14) reveals that challenges facing public libraries originate from a number of events, ranging from the period of apartheid to that of funding neglect in the early years of democracy in South Africa. The Charter further notes that most challenges relate to infrastructural deficits, human resources and operational difficulties. It is also indicated in the Charter that there was an unequal resourcing of public libraries in suburbs, townships and rural areas. The Charter goes on to report that library working hours are not supportive, for example, South African public libraries open only for forty (40) hours per week due to insufficient staff in many public libraries. Bearing in mind the insufficient library working

hours, it is obvious that the number of staff members is not enough in SA public libraries as earlier discussed. On the other hand, the shortage of staff in most public libraries may be as a result of lack of qualified and skilled individuals. The LIS Charter (2014) reports, “there are many examples where inadequately or inappropriately trained people are appointed to positions for which they are not equipped.” This supports the observations in the LIS Charter (2009). The LIS Charter (2014: 55) submits that there have been complaints from a number of public librarians because they believe that the supply chain management procedures that were put forth by the government cause unnecessary delays and problems to the acquisition of library materials like books. To top it all, the LIS Charter (2014) observes that protest actions of library attacks remain a great issue in the whole LIS market. As public library is considered an accountable institution at the heart of the community, the LIS Charter (2014: 57) therefore recommends that it should be run by qualified staff with the set of skills required to operate at greater capacity in order to advance the goals of a modern service equipped with the technologies needed by citizens for their own individual development, and for building healthy societies. The Charter also recommends that there should be a national strategic plan informing development, expansion and association of public library services.

We presently live in an information/knowledge era whereby information and technology are rapidly changing and shaping everyday work environments. The changes bring about countless challenges in the library environment. Morris et al (2014: 4) are of the view that it is impossible to predict challenges that might affect public libraries in 2050 but it is no doubt that technological advances, increased competition, demographic transformations and financial constraints will shape the future of public libraries. These challenges are considered the major challenges facing public libraries that will affect their future; and they are discussed in sections 2.3.1.3.1; 2.3.1.3.2; 2.3.1.3.3; and 2.3.1.3.4. Mphidi and Fourie (2016: iv) observe that budget cuts, insufficient fund, shortage of staff, lack of using ICTs, insufficient literacy programmes and inadequate physical space for users are still stumbling blocks in public libraries.

2.3.1.3.1. Technological developments

Technology changes rapidly. The changes can be likened to that of the fashion industry. Technology is affecting lives, as well as the operation of various organisations, including the public libraries in the country. Morris et al (2014: 4) detect that there are great changes in the way humans interact, consume and communicate with information and media which eventually affect literacy and reading habits. Morris et al (2014) further indicate that there are

new technologies with facilities that are shaping our societies as well as the way deal with information as human beings. This implies that new skills are required from workers, for instance, LIS professionals/graduates, in order to adapt to changes work environments. It is further noted by Morris et al (2014) that, “technology development will not stand still and libraries will have to accommodate new system functionality as will new competitors.”

2.3.1.3.2. Increased opposition

In reality not a single functional organisation exists without its competitors. Competitors are always left, right and centre. Morris et al (2014: 5) observe that information is becoming more and more available electronically and devices to access it are more user-friendly, therefore in future, and even presently, a number of users are likely to by-pass physical libraries. For example, there are millions of electronic books that are found online e.g., Amazon.com and those books can be received in a matter of some few seconds to a minute unlike physical books that need to be delivered first. The authors point out that libraries cannot compete with a large size of online collections but that, despite this challenge, libraries are doing their best to compete successfully through their own e-book collections available in databases such as, EBSCOhost, Credo, ebrary, Netlibray and Overdrive (Morris et al, 2014: 6).

2.3.1.3.3. Demographic and social developments

Population growth is increasing dramatically provincially, nationally and even globally. South Africa Mid-year population estimates (2016:2) shows that there were 12.6% total population in Eastern Cape, 5.1% in Free States, 24.1% in Gauteng, 19.8% in KwaZulu-Natal, 10.4% in Limpopo, 7.7% in Mpumalanga and 2.1% in Northern Cape. Gauteng province is the leading province in the population size followed by KwaZulu-Natal, which is the focus of the present study. As population increases, it calls for an increase in a number of libraries that will carter for all. Morris et al (2014: 6) point out that there is an ever increasing range of social activities, meaning that public libraries have to be more creative to compete successfully. This calls for employing qualified, competent and skilled staff in libraries.

2.3.1.3.4. Financial constraints/problems and support

Not only public libraries in South Africa struggle with financial support, but all South African libraries (academic, school, public and community, special, etc.). However it is no doubt that amongst other challenges affecting SA public libraries, financial problems seemed to be a dominant daunting challenge (KLA, 2004; Witbooi, 2007; the LIS Charter 2009; Ocholla and Shongwe 2013; the LIS Charter 2014; The National Library of South Africa

2014; Morris et al, 2014; Library and Information Association of South Africa, 2015; Mphidi and Fourie, 2016). The LIS Charter (2009: 18) reports that there is no funding framework for libraries in South Africa. Morris et al (2014: 6) buttress this report in their findings, which show that there is low economic growth and vagueness in the market that led to public debt and a rise in cutting public spending universally. It is further indicated by Morris et al (2014) that a number of libraries, as a result of financial problems, typically operate with the use of volunteers just to prevent closure. Mphidi and Fourie (2016: iv) also cite budget cuts and lack of funding as some of the challenges that are still facing public libraries in South Africa.

2.4. Employment requirements in a job market

An insight on the employment requirements is crucial in each and every employment sector to understand the training needs from the education and training sectors. This section discusses some of the employment needs with respect to public library context and the entire LIS field itself.

2.4.1. Human resources

Human resource is the key to every organisation's functionality. Human resource involves workforce/staff that is capable of using the available resources wisely through applying competencies they possess to meet the needs of their clients from their working environment. Yet, there are instances whereby the human resources were revealed not to be on the right track, in terms of lack of competence required in the South African job market. The National Research Strategy (2002: 21) describes this as one of the weak points in the South African LIS market. There are great chances that the problem on human resource roots from deficiencies in the education and training systems of our LIS schools, as one of the recommendations by Ndwandwe and Onyancha (2012: 45) points out that the curriculum offered by LIS schools should be in line with what is needed in the job market. This implies that there are still some challenges being encountered in the workplace due to irrelevant or lack of the requisite skills and knowledge from workforce.

The South African Public Library and Information Services Bill (2012: 8) highlights the Organised Local Government Act, 1997. The Bill (2012) further states that the application of this act includes the national norms and standards for public library and information services. The Bill further points out that the national minimum norms and standards must provide for library human resources and staffing requirements. The Bill also adds that norms and standards play significant roles in protecting the dignity and enhancing the stature of library

representatives; they also promote the reasonable allocation of human resources. Additionally, the Bill includes guidelines for norms and standards as follows:

- Staff composition
- Remuneration of staff
- Applicable academic qualifications and training of library staff
- Conduct of staff

A proper human resource management is fruitful in that it is cost effective and, as a result, does not negatively affect organisational budget. However, there are some challenges facing the LIS sector in SA with regards to human resources. The LIS Charter (2014: 30) reveals that the LIS sector is still facing a huge challenge with regards to human resources. It is further indicated in the LIS Charter (2014) that there was a low status of the library profession and some doubts among its practitioners about their professional identity which is hampering the social and economic role of libraries in the country. The Charter also noticed that there were very few library practitioners receiving training to meet their present and future needs. The problem regarding training was also mentioned back then in the (2009) LIS Charter which pointed out that people with inappropriate skills were appointed in some professional positions in some public libraries.

The issue about skills was discussed earlier in the problem statement of this study in chapter 1. The LIS Charter (2014: 30) highlights that the national statement of LIS skills and competencies was still a stumbling block. This perhaps explains the observation in 2009 of a skills shortage whereby inappropriately skilled people ended up being appointed to posts that required well trained and professional personnel. Having a national statement of LIS skills and competencies is said to ensure the relevant and appropriate educational offerings (LIS Charter, 2014: 30). It can therefore be deduced that LIS schools need to offer competencies that will be fruitful to the LIS students or professionals in their future places of work. Appropriately, the LIS Charter (2014: 32) reveals that “LIS curricula do not always meet the needs of the contemporary professions and its constituencies.” The issue about curriculum not always meeting the needs of LIS students was also addressed in the LIS Charter (2009). This suggests that the issue about the curriculum is still problematic in most LIS schools and institutions in the country. One of the objectives of this study seeks to find out the perceptions of LIS graduates and employers about the LIS curricula.

2.4.2. Workforce skills in libraries

Every job market requires their workforce to possess a set of skills or competencies to perform the required duties. Ordinarily, skills play an immense role in assisting the workforce to complete assigned tasks accordingly and competitively. According to Gill et al (2001: 75) in the Public Library Services: IFLA/UNESCO Guidelines for Development “staff is a vitally important resource in the operation of a library.” Gill et al (2001) went on to strongly emphasise the significance of a library maintaining a well-trained and highly motivated staff in order to provide services that are satisfactory to the user community. This makes it requisite for library staff to have a set of skills and qualities such as interpersonal skills, social awareness and teamwork skills. Below are some of the qualities and skills required for public library staff as identified by Gill et al (2001).

- Positive communication as a library staff with the users of the library
- Understanding the needs of the users
- Co-operating with people and groups in the community they are serving
- Knowledge and better understanding of cultural diversity
- Understanding a library collection and how to access it
- Teamwork to provide a good library service
- Good organisational skills
- Openness, vision and imagination to new ideas as well as practices
- Capable of new developments
- Knowledge of information communication technology (ICT)

Robles (2012) defines a skill as an ability that is acquired through learning and practice for undertaking a physical and/or mental activity. They assert that competencies are a combination of skills, knowledge and attitudes of an individual to perform effectively in his/her job and they divided skills into three broad categories namely: foundation skills, vocational skills and core employability skills. The first category (foundation skills), also called basic skills, is necessary for productive functioning of the workforce in the job market and even in personal life. The second category (vocational skills/occupational skills) are skills needed for undertaking tasks and functions for a specific job. The third category is that of core employability skills which are non-vocational or non-technical skills required at work and in the society. Other employability skills are communication, problem solving and teamwork skills. Given that today’s workplace is rapidly changing due to technology, this transforms the nature of the competencies or skills required from employees. Since it cannot

be guaranteed that the skills mentioned above will remain unchanged, it is therefore imperative that the skills and competencies of the LIS professionals are continually assessed.

Workers do not always have the same experiences or qualifications, and, to top it all, their job descriptions vary. This implies that the staff's structure normally begins from senior levels and cascades down to junior positions. In the library environment, Gill et al (2001: 76) observes that there are qualified librarians, library assistants, specialist staff and support staff as the classifications of staff found in public libraries. Gill et al (2001) also reports that those considered to be qualified librarians should have obtained a degree or post-graduate course in librarianship or information studies in LIS Schools and that there is an additional category, which is the library technician or para-professional, that are said to have an intermediate level of qualifications in other countries. Gill et al (2001) further stressed the significance of continuing professional development through formal and informal means so as to ensure that staff members are up to date with current trends or developments. Additionally, Gill et al (2001) recommends that public library staff should keep close relationships with LIS schools and also be aware of the curriculum or course content offered.

2.4.3. Training of LIS professionals

Training is fundamental to the workforce as an activity of communication as well as a method of acquiring skills. Training can be provided through formal, informal and continuing education. In the library context, Gill et al (2001: 80) emphasises training as a key activity of public library. Training therefore should be part and parcel of the library budget for new systems and skills to be introduced so that members of staff are kept abreast of the requirements of their jobs. In public libraries, with a large library service, there should be the post of a 'training officer', who will be held responsible for planning and implementing a training programme (Gill et al, 2001: 80). Gill et al (2001) further note that regular and continuing training of library staff, both full-time and part-time, is extremely important so that they re-skill considering that today's workplaces change constantly and are technology, information and knowledge driven. Additionally, Gill et al (2001) recognise that training of public library staff is usually provided as a form of mentoring and contacts. This is discussed in details in section 2.4.3.1 and 2.4.3.2. Queensland Library Association (2008: 4) in the Queensland public library standards and guidelines indicates that all library workers from public libraries should receive regular training in order to keep up with the changes of this information and technological world. It is further pointed by Queensland Library Association

(2008) that there should be provision of professional development opportunities that enhance networking and conference attendance for library staff. Queensland Library Association (2008) adds that this is extremely important for the continuous improvement as well as the development of staff for better service delivery. Holt, Sawicki and Sloan, (2010:7) opine that individuals' education, training and work experience together with their innate abilities and preferences come to play in the labour market. International Labour Office (2010: 4) states that "initial training provides the core work skills, general knowledge, and industry based and professional competencies that facilitate the transition from education into the world of work." International Labour Office (2010: 2) also indicates that:

Robust training policies and systems are grounded in the characteristics and institutions of each country. Nevertheless, a number of common building blocks can be identified. A good skills development system will be able to: anticipate needed skills, engage employers and workers in decision making about training provision, maintain the quality and relevance of training, make training accessible to all sectors of society, ensure viable and equitable financing mechanisms and continuously evaluate the economic and social outcomes of training.

The American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) (2012: 10) reports that workforces require post-secondary development for success in today's workplace due to the growth in technology in a number of business segments across the globe. ASTD (2012: 10) states further that the secondary development includes formal and informal training. The post-secondary development was discovered in the United States of America in the study concerning the bridging of skills gap. DAC (2013: xii) mentioned training of the librarians as one of their important steps in their public libraries 'budget. Librarians require training, hence they are perceived to have a double agenda of teaching the information competencies and building the competencies of an ever changing world (LIS Charter, 2014: 100). It was, however, noted that the training of librarians was still a daunting challenge in SA (LIS Charter, 2014: 100). Most recently Mphidi (2016:227) noticed that library staff needs to be trained and empowered through provision of tools, training opportunities, resources, motivation and encouragement to overcome the issue of digital divide. Reddy et al (2016 ; 54) indicate that Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) made the mandate to provide training in the workplace for employees, as well as those without employment, regardless of the field or discipline, in South Africa.

2.4.3.1. Mentoring

Mentoring is a practice of training staff from public libraries. A Gill et al (2001: 81) point out that mentoring is an effective and economical method of training public library staff. Staff members that are new in the workplace normally work together with well experienced individuals who provide guidance and trains them as their mentors; the mentor acts like a leader, guiding on work and employment procedures to new members Gill et al (2001). For this purpose, a mentor should have a check-list of training and the list should be maintained to ensure proper training.

2.4.3.2. Contacts

According to Gill et al (2001: 81) contacts are more applicable to in-service training of the staff. Contacts involve conferences and short courses that need to be attended by the staff to improve their abilities for the work. Gill et al (2001) further suggests that library staff should be active members of some associations in order for them to get more ideas and also experience changes. LIASA is an example of such associations. In addition, contracts and associations allow librarians to arrange staff exchange with other libraries of the same type within and even outside the country. Hence, the LIS Charter (2009: 25) recommends that pre-service education and training must be integrated into the curricula for training of public library staff.

2.4.4. The Employment Equity Act (EEA) and Legislation guiding libraries in South Africa

The main purpose of the Employment Equity Act (EEA), No 55 of 1998 is to achieve fairness in work environments by promoting equal opportunity and fair treatment for every individual in employment (Republic of South Africa, 1998). The Act ensures that affirmative action measures are implemented to redress the disadvantages in employment experienced by particular designated groups. Section 15(2) (d) (i) of the EEA states that "affirmative action measures implemented by a designated employer must include measures to ensure the unbiased representation of suitably qualified people from designated groups in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce" (Employment Equity Act, no 55 of 1998). This implies that individuals should be employed for what they have studied for. Section 15 (2) (d) (ii) of the EEA states that "affirmative action measures implemented by a designated employer must include measures to retain and develop people from designated groups, and to implement appropriate training measures, including measures in terms of an act of parliament providing for skills development" (Employment Equity Act, no 55 of 1998).

As was discussed in section 2.4.3 (training of the LIS professionals); training of the staff is extremely important for keeping the pace with the needed skills of the present age. The Act takes active measures to assess equity in the value of work. This assessment is achieved in the following ways as identified by the Republic of South Africa (1998):

2.4.4.1. Assessing whether work is of equal value

1. In considering whether work is of equal value, the relevant jobs must be objectively assessed taking into account the following criteria:
 - The responsibility demanded of the work, including responsibility for people, finances and material.
 - The skills, qualifications, including prior learning and experience required to perform the work, whether formal or informal.
 - Physical, mental and emotional effort required to perform the work; and
 - To the extent that it is relevant, the conditions under which work is performed, including physical environment, psychological conditions, time when and geographic location where the work is performed.
2. In addition to the criteria specified in sub-regulation (1) any other factor indicating the value of the work may be taken into account in evaluating work, provided the employer shows that the factor is relevant to assessing the value of the work.
3. The assessment undertaken in terms of sub-regulations (1) and (2) must be conducted in a manner that is free from bias on grounds of race, gender or disability, any other listed ground or any arbitrary ground that is prohibited in terms of section 6(1) of the Act.
4. Despite sub-regulations (1) and (2), an employer may justify the value assigned to an employee's work by reference to the classification of a relevant job in terms of a sectorial determination made by the Minister of Labour in terms of section 55 of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997 (Act No. 75 of 1997) which applies to the employer.

The above criteria for assessing if work is of equal value or not are significant considering that it consider both the employee and the employer for fair treatment in the world of work. With regards to employees, skills, qualifications, knowledge, experience or competencies, salaries, etc. are taken into account. From the employer's side, treatment towards employees is taken into consideration in relation to the employment act. These criteria would benefit this study in reflecting the job requirements of the LIS graduates/professionals in public

libraries, being the problem being under investigation. Presented next are the factors justifying the differentiation in terms and conditions of employment from the Employment Equity Act, no 55 of 1998.

2.4.4.2. Factors justifying differentiation in terms and conditions of employment

The factors justifying differentiation in terms and conditions of employment is discussed by the Republic of South Africa (1998) as follows:

1. If employees perform work that is of equal value, a difference in terms and conditions of employment, including remuneration, is not unfair discrimination if the difference is fair and rational and is based on any one or a combination of the following grounds:
 - The individual's respective seniority or length of service.
 - The individuals' respective qualifications, ability, competence or potential above the minimum acceptable levels required for the performance of the job;
 - The individuals' respective performance, quantity or quality of work, provided that employees are equally subject to the employer's performance evaluation system, that the performance evaluation system is consistently applied;
 - Where an employee is demoted as a result of organisational restructuring or for any other legitimate reason without a reduction in pay and fixing the employee's salary at this level until the remuneration of employees in the same job category reaches this level;
 - Where an individual is employed temporarily in a position for purposes of gaining experience or training and as a result receives different remuneration or enjoys different terms and conditions of employment;
 - The existence of a shortage of relevant skill, or the market value in a particular job classification; and
 - Any other relevant factor that is not unfairly discriminatory in terms of section 6(1) of the Act.
2. A differentiation in terms and conditions of employment based on one or more grounds listed in sub-regulation (1) will be fair and rational if it is established, in accordance with section 11 of the Act that,

- Its application is not biased against an employee or group of employees based on race, gender or disability or any other ground listed in section 6(1) of the Act; and
- It is applied in a proportionate manner.

All South African library categories are subject to a legislative framework guiding their operations and management. Legislative framework impacts on the provision of the library services offered by libraries. An application of legislations may vary from country to country with respect to the library they may be subject to. It is of paramount importance that those legislations are clearly understood, more especially by those held responsible for the management of libraries. Gill et al (2001: 15) indicates that legislations are vital because they serve as an assurance of the libraries' continuance as well as their positions in government's structure. LIASA (2003: 29) states that the entire South African LIS sector operates under a framework which is guided by national acts or legislations. LIASA (2003: 29) then highlights the following national acts that govern the operations of libraries in SA:

- The National Library of South Africa Act
- The South African Library for the Blind Act
- The National Council for Libraries and Information Services Act
- The Legal Deposit Act

The Department of Arts and Culture in the LIS Charter (2009: 4) highlights the following laws and policy documents affecting the delivery of library and information services in the country:

- The White Paper on Education and Training, 1995
- The National Archives and Records Service Act, No 43 of 1996
- National Educational Policy Act, No 27 of 1996
- The White Paper on Education, 1997
- The White Paper on Higher Education, 1997
- The Higher Education Act, 1997
- The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, 1997
- The White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy, 1997
- The Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, No 177 of 1998
- The National Heritage Council Act, No 11 of 1999
- Public Finance Management Act, No 1 of 1999

- The Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, No 32 of 2000
- Provincial Library and Information Services Act, No 7 of 2001
- The Promotion of Access to Information Act, No 2 of 2002

The NLSA newsletter (2014: 10) highlights the following legislations:

- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (108 of 1996)
- Freedom of access to information
- The National Library of South Africa Act (2 of 1998)
- Amalgamation of the South African Library (Cape Town) & the State Library (Pretoria)
- The South African Library for the Blind Act (91 of 1998)
- The Legal Deposit Act (54 of 1997)
- The Copyright Act (98 of 1978)
- The National Council for Library and Information Services Act (6 of 2001)
- The Promotion of Access to Information Act (2 of 2000)
- The South African Community Library and Information Services Bill

Acts and legislations serve as the guide in the South African library operations. These Acts and laws promote fair practices in the library environment.

2.5. Job market issues

Generally, every employment sector/job market faces some limitations/gaps/challenges. This implies that there is no exception for the LIS field. This section critically discusses skills gap and changing job profile as daunting challenges experienced globally.

2.5.1. Skills gap, the global issue

Skills gap seems a daunting challenge countrywide, continentally and globally. The skills gap is not only affecting SA LIS related job markets but almost all job markets in the information world. It is no doubt that technological advancement is one of the contributory factors of skills gap from workforces in most job markets. Skills gap is defined by the integration of technology, information and various human activities. It is obvious that new developments call for new skills from workforces in the workplace. According to the Labour Market Information and Research Unit (2005: 8) skill gap/shortage/mismatch/imbalance refers to circumstances whereby existing employees lack the required skills and experiences for meeting the organisation's skills needs. Holt, Sawicki and Sloan (2010:7) understand skills gap as the gap that exists between required skills in the job market and skills possessed by

individuals. Reddy et al (2016: 87) understand skills mismatch as a number of imbalances between skills provided and skills needed in the job market or the world of work. Development Policy Research Unit (DPRU) Policy Brief Series (2007: 3) point out that the skills development in South Africa is facilitated by four important documents, which are:

- The Development Act (1998)
- The Skills Development Levies Act (1999)
- The National Skills Development Strategy (2001)
- The Human Resources Development Strategy (2001)

The DPRU Policy Brief Series (2007: 9) adds that our skills development operates under two main principles, namely: a) skills training to economically active individuals (aged 16-64), including the unemployed and extending to highly skilled professionals and b) transferability of skills training once a qualification has been achieved. Despite some supporting documents available on skills development continentally and globally, the problem of skills gap still exists. An example of skills gap is recognised in South Africa in the South African LIS sub-sector called the 'library' where it was observed that some library posts were filled with individuals who were not trained for those positions (The LIS Charter (2009: 22). In the year 2010, the policy makers, together with social partners, also noticed the gap that existed between the workforces' skills and the needs required in the labour market (Holt, Sawicki and Sloan, 2010:7). They believed that skills are significant in workplaces and the job market, in an ever and speedily changing world.

Although skills are vitally important in the job market; Holt, Sawicki and Sloan, (2010:7) notice that when an individual has too many skills than required, it becomes unrewarding in a sense that it negatively affects that particular individual's productivity, wages as well as creative ideas of the intellect which is known as innovation. Normally having too many skills to perform a job is known as over- skilfulness. In contrast, there are instances whereby individuals have very few skills to perform a job and that is understood as being under-skilled. Holt, Sawicki and Sloan (2010:7) reveal that a workplace that consists of a lot of under-skilled individuals has a negative impact on economic development, especially in developing countries like South Africa. Additionally, they attest that initial education, occupational choices as well as insufficient information based on opportunities available out there serve as very big determinants of the daunting challenge of skills mismatch in the job market. The skills mismatch was also reported in 'the need to make skills work: the cost of Ontario's skills gap Report by Stuckey, and Munro (2013: 4) in Canada; where it was noted

that skills mismatch was as a result of growth in technology, demographic changes as well as the persistent non-alignment of the job market and education system. Examining the gap between employers' skills needs and Library and Information Science Education in Zimbabwe in IFLA (2014) study was carried out to assess library and information science curricula in Zimbabwe. The study reveals the problem of curricula mismatch with labour requirements. It was further indicated in this study that "failure to address this could see graduates failing to get employment in their own profession." World Economic Forum (WEF) (2014: 5) viewed skills gap as the great gap that exists between organisation's capabilities of the current time and the skills needed to achieve goals. WEF (2014) further points out that skills gap hinders organisations from filling critical positions with knowledgeable and skilled individuals, which makes them fail to compete successfully. It was also noticed in WEF (2014) that the daunting challenge of the skills gap does not only affect individual organisations but also communities, regions, states and all nations. In this sense, one can understand that the skills gap is negatively affecting global economics, human capital development as well as business performance. It is also found that skills shortage is prominent in global economics and its crisis, and that finding skilled individuals is a challenge most employers face (WEF, 2014). In addition, WEF (2014) reports that qualifications mismatch is still a great problem. Qualifications mismatch is also reported in Human Science Research Council (HSRC) Review (2016: 25) as the ever growing concern of SA policy-makers. The HSRC review (2016:18) indicates that it is of paramount importance that all countries understand whether or not graduates from higher education institutions, such as universities and technical vocational education and training colleges (TVETs), find jobs and that if they do, what they studied should be taken into consideration in the employment.

As was earlier mentioned (LIS Charter (2009), individuals with inadequate skills were appointed for positions that required well trained workforces, the LIS Charter (2014) also witnessed the very same matter. Reddy et al (2016: 17) in 'Skills Supply and Demand in South Africa' built a picture of mismatches in the country by consulting various sources of data, despite the challenge of unavailability of survey data from enterprises, that can help to understand the nature of skills imbalances faced by employers in this particular year (2016). They further indicate that skills imbalances can come in a variety of forms. For example, when the skills of a worker do not align with the requirements of an employer and/or, if the education and training systems fail to produce the labour market required skills, then there is

a mismatch/imbalance. When the type of needed skills for a particular employment and the skills of the workforce do not match, it then turns to mismatch. When employees work in sectors they did not study for, the result is mismatch. Reddy et al (2016) identify three types of mismatches/imbalance in the South African context: first being demand mismatch, second the education supply mismatch, and third, qualification job mismatch. Hence, Reddy et al (2016) recommend for the education and training sector respectively: a) improved education and skills levels of the population; b) education and qualification levels to support highly-skilled occupations; and c) education and qualification levels to support semi-skilled occupations in the country. The table 2.3 below provides the summary of the forms of skills mismatch as identified by WEF (2014: 7):

Table 2.2: Forms of skills gaps/mismatches

Skills mismatches	
Skill shortage	Demand for a particular type of skill exceeds the supply of people with that skill at balance rates of pay.
Qualification mismatch	The level of qualification and/or the field of qualification are different from that required to perform the job effectively.
Over and/or Under qualification	The level of qualification/education is higher or lower than required to perform the job adequately.
Skill gap	The type and level of skills is different from that required to perform a particular job.
Over and/or Under-skilfulness	The level of skill is higher or lower than required to effectively perform the job.

Source: WEF (2014: 7)

2.5.2. LIS job profile and emerging professions

As today's world is defined by information and communication technologies, which are frequently changing, it is evident that many job sectors, including the LIS sector, are affected. Several studies (e.g. Ocholla and Bothma, 2007; Minishi-Majanja, 2009; International Labour Office. 2010; Ocholla and Shongwe, 2013; Shongwe, 2014; the LIS Charter, 2014) amongst others, serve as evidence that the LIS job profile and emerging professions are changing drastically. Ocholla and Bothma (2007: 2), in their study on the trends, challenges and opportunities of LIS education and training in Eastern and Southern Africa, reveal that there are rapid changes in the LIS market which are indicated by the review and revision of curricula, increased use of ICTs, amalgamation and re-orientation, expansion and closure of

some LIS schools. Minishi-Majanja (2009: 148) worked on the 'Higher Education Qualifications Framework and the changing environment of LIS education and training in South Africa' and shows that the LIS landscape is continually changing and shaped by technology, economic and other changes. She believes that in South Africa, the LIS education and training is highly influenced by developments, including new directions in higher education such as Higher Education Qualification Framework (HEQF). International Labour Office (2010: 1) points out that new professions are emerging and replacing others. Ocholla and Shongwe (2013: 35) in an analysis of the library and information science (LIS) job market in South Africa report that there is a growth in new job titles and job functions in the 21st century LIS market. This study also shows that information technology (IT) has become an essential skill to be possessed by the LIS professionals. Shongwe (2014: 2) in 'The Information Technology Influence on LIS Job Descriptions in South Africa' reveals that the introduction of IT has changed the LIS job market and the way libraries operate. The LIS Charter (2014: 101) points out that, "ICTs have changed the LIS landscape." The issue of ICTs was also mentioned in the study by Minishi-Majanja (2009). The Charter supports the view that the new environment requires most appealing service provision that need 'high level of technical and individual skills.' The Charter further points out that those emerging technologies require librarians to provide experience-based and customised services. The Charter also observes that the 21st century library environment needs professionals who possess technological skills, the ways of implementing those skills and that those skills should be diverse. In this regard, the 21st century librarian is able to link the already existing services with the new ones to meet the needs of their user communities and to change the perception of the public about the library. The Charter therefore recognised that LIS staff needs to be taught information competencies in this ever changing world. The Charter further states that since we live in a knowledge/information world, which requires new skills or re-skilling of staff, the training needs of the current generation, basically the LIS workers will require some changes in the curricula offered training and assessment. Most importantly, the Charter also indicates that, the "LIS sector has not yet developed an agreed skills statement; instead librarians are in tune with projects in other countries to formulate core competencies." Raju (2016) in the study on 'curriculum content and delivery: South African LIS education responses to a changing information landscape' addresses the strategy for meeting this dynamic information landscape. She also adds that the change of landscape for the job market requires certain necessary skills and knowledge from LIS professionals, which in turn demands that the content of the LIS curriculum and its delivery need to be in line with what is

required in the job market. Raju (2017: 4) recently worked on ‘LIS professional competency index for the higher education sector in South Africa’ and is of the view that the index is pivotal in both employers and employees for practical purposes such as improving existing skills, developing the curriculum offered and helping LIS researchers. She also opines that library and information services are shaped by the rapid development in technology. The present study will contribute positively to research work in the LIS sector with respect to curricula development in LIS schools and institutions.

2.6. LIS Curricula and Qualifications framework

Qualifications framework plays a major role in developing, classifying and recognising formal learning qualifications. Qualifications frameworks vary from country to country. African and European countries have unique frameworks for higher educational qualifications and education systems. Keevy and Higgs (2010: 690) note that “more than twenty African countries are actively engaged in qualifications framework development, including all Southern African Development Community member states and the SADC region as a whole”. The Council on Higher Education (2013: 17) highlights the following characteristics of the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF):

- Be sufficiently flexible to accommodate different types of higher education institutions and enable institutions to pursue their own curriculum goals with creativity and innovation;
- Facilitate the education of graduates who will contribute to the social, cultural and economic development of South Africa and participate successfully in the global economy and knowledge society;
- Enhance the development of a vibrant, high quality research system;
- Be compatible with international qualifications frameworks in order to ensure international recognition and comparability of standards;
- Be suitably flexible to accommodate the development of new qualification types and specialisations as the need arises;
- Be simple, clear, easy to understand and user-friendly for the higher education system and its clients;

- Facilitate qualification articulation across the higher education system and assist learners to identify potential progression routes, particularly in the context of lifelong learning; and
- Articulate with the rest of the NQF.

There are a number of qualification types falling within the NQF framework. This includes both undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications. The Council on Higher Education (2013: 18) articulates them as follows:

Undergraduate qualifications:

- Higher Certificate
- Advanced Certificate
- Diploma
- Advanced Diploma
- Bachelor's Degree

Postgraduate qualifications:

- Postgraduate Diploma
- Bachelor Honours Degree
- Master's Degree
- Professional Master's Degree
- Doctoral Degree
- Professional Doctorate

There are a number of LIS qualifications offered in South African LIS schools and institutions. Minishi-Majanja (2009: 49) points out that South African LIS Schools offer three levels of undergraduate programmes and four levels of postgraduate programmes. Minishi-Majanja (2009: 49) further states that undergraduate programmes include certificates, diplomas and bachelor's degree; whereas postgraduate programmes include postgraduate diploma, honours degree, master's degree and doctoral studies. She also notes that the naming of qualifications has to be in line with Higher Education Qualification Framework (HEQF). Minishi-Majanja (2009: 50) highlights the following LIS qualifications:

Undergraduate qualifications:

- NQF Exit Level 5: Higher Certificate (120 Credits)
- NQF Exit Level 6: Advanced Certificate (120 Credits); diploma (360 Credits)
- NQF Exit Level 7 Advanced Diploma (120 Credits)

- NQF Exit Level 8: Professional Bachelor's Degree (480 Credits)

Postgraduate qualifications:

- NQF Exit Level 8: Postgraduate Diploma (120 Credits)
- Bachelor's Honour's Degree (120 Credits)
- NQF Exit Level 9: Master's Degree (180 Credits)
- NQF Exit Level 10: Doctoral Degree (360 Credits)

It was added by IFLA (2015: 43) that there are abundant qualification offerings including undergraduate and postgraduate studies in South Africa and the African continent. IFLA (2015) brings to notice the fact that qualifications range from certificates and diplomas for para-professionals positions; then cascade to bachelor's degree as well as postgraduate diplomas with respect to the general professional positions; and honours masters and doctoral qualifications for particular specialisations and academic positions respectively.

Generally, the South African LIS qualifications are guided/shaped by the South African National Qualifications Framework (NQF). This framework also touches on the curricula offered by the LIS schools and LIS institutions. Curricula offered impacts on the job requirements of the graduates, in the sense that the curricula offered is a big determinant of whether or not an individual, after graduation, would have been equipped with the needed competencies for the job market. Nkomo (2000) in *The National Qualifications Framework and Curriculum Development* notes that qualifications frameworks have become a global phenomenon because they serve as a common standard for recognising qualifications, skills and competencies of individuals. The framework also points out that all National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) provide macro indicators of education and training despite their different designs and purposes. It is also recognised by Ensor (2003) that SAQA and other wide range of partners are responsible for the development and proper implementation of NQF in the country. The NQF framework comprises three sectors namely: higher education, general and further education and training, and trades and occupation. It is also noted that various qualifications are registered in accordance to the respective quality council, e.g., higher education council. Additionally, registered qualifications under NQF are allowed to be offered by any providers, but those providers should meet all the requirements of the quality councils.

Today's age is defined by an influx in technology which eventually demands LIS curricula revision and re-orientation in order to meet the demands of the working world. In the LIS

context, the curricula seem not to be stable, given the reports by several studies. Ocholla and Bothma (2007: 4) note that there was an increase in the integration of information technology (IT) in the LIS curricula. Minishi-Majanja (2009: 152) observes that in different universities, many topics are now being included in the curricula. Topics found in most curricula include computer literacy, ICT, hardware and software, databases, information systems and systems development. She notices that in South Africa, there was no single forum for systematic benchmarking of the LIS education and training, specifically for the curricula offered or for specific modules. Ngulube in Minishi-Majanja (2009:152) states that “there is no uniform approach to what is taught in South African LIS education and training.” IFLA (2015: 43) also recognises that some South African LIS schools have added ICT related modules/subjects to their curricula content in response to technological developments in LIS setting. Raju (2015: 168) observes that there is an increase in the integration of technology into curricula. Raju (2015: 21) recommend that the curricula content and delivery need to be in line with the required competencies to match the changing LIS landscape.

As the LIS curriculum is reported to change rapidly due to technological developments, it therefore follows that continuing education and training can play major roles in bridging the existing gap. In general, continuing education and training play pivotal roles in re-skilling the professionals in the workplace. Ocholla and Bothma (2007: 12) point out that the effectiveness and relevance of continuing education has been emphasised by LIASA. LIASA has four specific focus areas which have been highlighted by Ocholla and Bothma (2007: 12): personal development, information and communication technology and management and leadership development. The four mentioned areas have an element in tune with what the work environments demand from schools. Minishi-Majanja (2009: 153) observes that there really is a need for continuing LIS education in the South African context, so basic professional training alone does not seem to be sufficient to last for five years. She is of the opinion that there is a great need for short but very effective continuing education programmes that address specific competencies for the job market. Ezeani, Eke and Ugwu (2012) emphasised on continuing professional development since modern libraries are advancing and upgrading technologically. Ezeani, Eke and Ugwu (2012) also prefer that the introduction of technology or ICTs require improvement in skills and knowledge in the LIS profession.

Though the continuing education and training are recommended in the SA LIS schools but there are still some hindrances encountered with respect to the curricula offered. Minishi-

Majanja (2009: 156) observes that they are new emerging disciplines within the LIS sector. Those disciplines have been noted having some areas considered core competencies in LIS job market. In this sense it is evident that there is a negative influence in the curricula offered, meaning the curricula offered requires revision. In the very same year the LIS Charter (2009: 14) states that, “LIS curricula do not always meet the needs of the contemporary profession and constituencies.” Ocholla and Shongwe (2013: 44) bring into attention that there are emerging professions in the LIS market which eventually requires LIS schools to re-orient their curricula. The LIS Charter (2014: 49) suggests that the design of the curricula should be aligned with the objectives and values of emerging professional positions to attract young people to the LIS profession as this is still a stumbling block. The problems with respect to the LIS curricula do not affect only SA LIS schools and institutions but the entire African continent, and even globally. For example, the study on ‘library and information science (LIS) education and training in Kenya: emergence, evolution, challenges and opportunities’ by Rukwaro and Bii (2016) reveals that there are some changes in the curricula content as a result of meeting the needs of the job market. The study in Uganda on the inclusion of indigenous knowledge and multicultural issues in LIS Curriculum conducted by Tumuhairwe (2013) also reflect curricula changes in LIS schools and institutions.

2.7. Appraisal of the chapter

There are quite a number of related studies conducted with respect to the LIS field but none on the job requirements of LIS professionals with respect to public libraries. Ocholla (2005) has written on an analysis of the job market in Library and Information Services (LIS) in South Africa. His study focused on the market in LIS in South Africa in order to advise LIS training and education departments in SA on LIS education, training needs and career opportunities in the sector. The results show that sound education in management, information and communication technologies, searching and retrieval, and information analysis and synthesis, as well as the ability to perform practical work were still essential. His study, though focussed on the entire LIS market, is related to the present study, which focuses on the library category, specifically public library and its employment requirements, rather than opportunities. Raju (2005) wrote on the first level library and/or information science education and training in South African universities and technikons. Raju’s study aimed to examine developments in specialisation in LIS education and training in the different South African universities and technikons that offer LIS qualifications. Her study shows that there

were no changes in terms of qualifications offered. The review of literature in the present study reveals new emerging professions within the LIS field, which makes it possible to have new qualifications such as B.Technology in LIS. While B.Technology is not a new qualification in the global market, it is an emerging qualification with respect to the field of Library and Information Science. This could be one of the possible future changes envisaged by Raju (2005). Ocholla and Bothma (2007) have written on trends, challenges and opportunities for LIS education and training in Eastern and Southern Africa. Their study report that LIS schools have re-oriented their curricula to reflect drastic changes in the information world with regards to the LIS job market; new qualification programmes have been established to provide opportunities for further specialisation; and some departments have changed their names to accommodate new subjects to align themselves with their respective universities. While their study indicated that LIS schools have re-oriented their curricula, the present study has noted that the offered curricula sometimes do not meet the demands of the job market. Therefore, this study seeks to ascertain if LIS education and training sector is effectively preparing students for the job market or not.

The Library and information Services (LIS) Charter (2009) broadly covered the entire LIS market in South Africa. The LIS Charter focuses on the LIS market itself, whereas this study also focuses on individuals alone. Other related studies include the study by Ndlangamandla and Ocholla (2012) which investigated library and information management in higher education in Swaziland. The present study focuses on South Africa, specifically KZN province, with respect to job requirements of LIS graduates and public libraries. Ndwandwe and Onyancha (2012) covered the teaching and learning of information ethics in library and information science departments in South Africa. Ndwandwe's and Onyancha's study focused on the specific module "information ethics", which is not the case with this study. The most recent and very closely related study was conducted by Ocholla and Shongwe (2013) and dealt with an analysis of the library and information science (LIS) job market in South Africa. Their study shows that the public sector remains the main employer of the LIS professionals which is one of the biggest reasons for an investigation into public libraries' employment requirements. Their study did not cover each category of the LIS market (e.g. information, library, records and management, etc.) in details. Their study also discovers that information technology (IT) is the vital skill to be possessed by LIS professionals; a skill that is found to be lacking by the present study. Sinha and Pandey (2014) conducted a study on the status of job opportunities and employment of library and information science

professionals in India. Even though this is in a way similar to the present study, its focus is on job opportunities; it did not consider the challenges faced, it was done in a different location and it employed only content analysis for its data collection. The competencies of LIS professionals were investigated in the more recent study by Raju (2017) but the focus was put on the higher education sector in the country.

As the South African LIS sector is well documented, it is worth promising that the present study could shed light on job requirements and challenges of LIS professionals in public libraries in South Africa. It is also hoped that this study could assist the curriculum development by LIS schools and institutions in the country. The review of related literature has helped the researcher to have an insight into the tested methods, techniques, procedures, findings and interpretations of related studies conducted somewhere else. Table 2.3 below provides the summary of methodologies, aims and finding of related studies.

Table 2.3: Related studies/literature

Source	Aim	Methodology	Key findings	How this study builds on related ones
Ocholla (2005): in 'An analysis of the job market in Library and Information Services (LIS) in South Africa: some thoughts and empirical evidence'.	The study aimed at determining the current market in LIS in South Africa in order to advise LIS training and education departments in SA on LIS education and training needs, and career opportunities in the sector.	Content analysis was used. Sunday times, Mail and Guardian, City Press and Rapport weekly newspapers were scanned for advertisements with regards to date and allocation of advertisements; type of employer; job details; specifications; and requirements based on qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes. Scanned data was downloaded on a spreadsheet.	The results indicate that sound education in management, information and communication technologies, searching and retrieval, and information analysis and synthesis, as well as the ability to perform practical work, are still essential. Additionally, public sector, including public and academic libraries, has been found to be dominant in the sector with respect to the employment of the LIS professionals.	This study also used content analysis as commonly used method for job advertisements; however it went beyond to include interviews and questionnaires for its data collection. Sunday times and Mail and Guardian were also used adding with two regional newspapers (Ilanga and Sunday Tribune) for job advertisements.
Raju (2005): in 'First level library and/or information science education and training at South African universities and technikons:	The purpose was to examine developments in specialisation in LIS education and training in the different	Survey was used; questionnaires were distributed in 13 LIS education and training departments of universities and technikons in SA.	There were no changes in terms of qualifications offered. Merging institutions at the time did not have an effect on offered qualifications. Some changes may be expected in future.	This study also used a survey questionnaire but added interview as other survey method. Raju's study targeted LIS education and training departments whereas this study focused in public libraries respectively.

developments in specialisation’.	universities and technikons in South Africa that offer LIS qualifications.	This study drew from an empirical study that was conducted in 2002 by Raju on first level LIS qualifications at South African universities and technikons.		
Ocholla and Bothma (2007): ‘Trends, challenges and opportunities for LIS education and training in Eastern and Southern Africa’.	The purpose of this paper was to discuss the status, trends and challenges of library and information education and training in Eastern and Southern Africa.	Authors' broad experience with and exposure to LIS education has been used together with observations and literature review.	LIS schools have re-oriented their curricula to reflect drastic changes in the information world as regards the LIS job market. New qualification programmes have been established to provide opportunities for further specialisation. Some departments have changed their names to accommodate new subjects to align themselves with their respective universities.	The present study also reviewed literature but did not include observations, instead conducted, interviews with assistant directors, scanned newspapers for job advertisements and distributed questionnaires to LIS graduates to gather data.
Ndlangamandla and Ocholla (2012): ‘Library and Information Management higher education in Swaziland: a feasibility study’.	The study aim was to investigate the feasibility of providing Library and Information Management (LIM) education and training locally in Swaziland.	The study used both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Questionnaires, interviews (semi-structured) and content analysis covering 2005-2008 job advertisements were used as study	The prospective entrants, personnel, employers and the training institutions supported the higher education in LIM within the country. Content analysis of job advertisements produced low results, which suggested low feasibility, but only if the expectation is that job advertisements for a profession would run every day in a local newspaper. Employers in LIM put more emphasis on the availability of jobs in the local	Most used methods are more similar except for the observation in Ndlangamandla’s and Ocholla’s study and that their study investigated the feasibility of providing Library and Information Management education, whereas the present study basically focuses on the employment requirements and challenges in public libraries.

		methods. Observation was also used to check the capability of education institutions to host LIM higher education.	market and highlighted several positive indicators of a growing market in this profession.	
Ndwandwe and Onyancha (2012): 'Teaching and Learning of Information Ethics in Library and Information Science Departments/Schools in South Africa'.	The aim of the study was to investigate the nature and level of information ethics education in Library and Information science Department in South Africa.	Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used through a survey and content analysis. Emailed questionnaires were used to collect data from the Heads of LIS departments.	Most LIS Departments taught information ethics in the content of other modules and not as a stand-alone module. In the LIS Departments that offered a stand-alone information ethics module, the module was offered in the second level of study as the realisation that second year students are seniors and would like information ethics module. It was also found that the stand-alone information ethics modules were only offered by LIS Departments. The study also reveals that there was an extent of diversity, with each LIS Department offering its own version of information ethics.	This study used same methods however, added the interview method for its data collection.
Ocholla and Shongwe (2013): 'An analysis of the library and information science (LIS) job market in South Africa'.	The study aimed at analysing the LIS job market trends in South Africa through a literature review and a newspaper survey of LIS job	The study reviewed literature and used content analysis of the newspaper from 2009-2012 for LIS job related job advertisements in SA.	It was found that the public sector remains the main employer of the LIS professionals. There are new emerging professions within the LIS sector. Information technology (IT) has been noticed to be the vital skill to be possessed by LIS professionals. The study could assist in the curricula re-	This study went beyond reviewing literature and content analyses to include questionnaires and interviews to understand public library employment requirement exclusively.

	advertisements		orientation.	
McClelland (2014): ‘What Exactly Do You Do Here? Marketing-Related Jobs in Public and Academic Libraries’.	The study aimed at helping library directors and managers understand the current landscape of marketing jobs in libraries.	Content analysis was used on the job listings from the American Library Association (ALA) Job List.	The findings revealed that 37% of job listings included marketing-related content and 11% of those listings also included stated experience or training in the marketing field.	McClelland’s study was conducted in different location but also used content analysis to understand marketing related jobs in libraries through content analysis. In the present study content analysis was used with interviews and questionnaires to get much broader picture on the problem investigated.
Sinha and Pandey (2014) ‘Status of job opportunities and employment of library and information science professionals in India: an analysis of job advertisements’.	The study aimed to identify and assess the job opportunities for the professionally qualified LIS professionals in the area of Library and Information Science.	Qualitative research methods were used to conduct this study. Data from related newspapers were scanned dating from January to December 2011.	Many universities have been offering LIS education at different levels (BLIS, MLIS, and M.Phil. /Ph.D. levels), however the number of posts for teaching positions were quite published in very less numbers. It was also found that production of fresh graduates are more in comparison to the number of jobs available in the LIS job market which creates a serious problems for the LIS Professionals to in searching suitable jobs for themselves.	This study also used qualitative research approach. However also collected some of the quantitative data from the respondents. This implies that both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used in this study.

2.8. Summary

The review of literature has significantly provided the foundation for the research work on the job requirements of LIS professionals in the public library context. The literature review helped to clarify some aspects of the study that were briefly discussed in chapter one of the dissertation. The review of literature also showed the skills gap in different sectors of the economy including the LIS field. It appears that South African job market normally experiences problems with regards to inappropriately skilled individuals and staff shortage. Another issue

discovered relates to the change of the LIS landscape. There appear to be new emerging professions within the LIS market which eventually demand curriculum revision and re-orientation; which is a process itself. Throughout the literature, it appears that a LIS curriculum is not always meeting the demands of the job market. A general feeling is that curriculum offered needs to be revised on a regular basis in order to keep up with the job market trends and demands by producing well equipped and highly competent LIS professionals. On the other hand, LIS job market is reported to be changing rapidly due to technological trends and developments. Above all, evidence from literature also reveals several challenges facing public libraries and LIS professionals; including a lack of well trained staff, staff shortage, lack of funding, and the major concern being the use and management of ICTs. Identified concerns, issues and challenges are addressed in chapter 5 where the findings of the study are discussed. The next chapter discusses how the entire study was carried out in terms of the methods and procedures used.

CHAPTER THREE:

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The two preceding chapters discussed findings from the literature. Chapter one provided the background to the phenomenon of interest (job requirements and challenges of LIS graduates in public libraries). Greater insight into the definitions as well as an analysis of literature was provided in chapter two. Limited details on the methodology used to carry out the entire study were highlighted in chapter one. This chapter addresses how the research on job requirements and challenges of LIS graduates in public libraries in KwaZulu-Natal province was carried out. This is relevant for the replication of the study. The adopted research methods, techniques and procedures in the present study were informed by some related studies (such as Ocholla, 2001; Ocholla, 2005; Raju, 2005; Ndlangamandla and Ocholla, 2012; Ndwandwe and Onyancha, 2012; Ocholla and Shongwe, 2013, Mphidi, 2016, Strand, 2016) to mention but a few. The chapter begins by explaining what is meant by research methodology. Then the discussion moves to the chapter discusses research paradigms, the selected paradigm and the rationale. Research approach, research methods, population of the study and sampling procedure were also presented. This will be followed by explanation on the procedure for data collection and research instruments. Finally, the chapter dovetails into data analysis and ethical considerations and concludes with the summary of the chapter.

3.2. Research methodology

Research methodology is generally understood as how a research is going to be carried out. In literature, research methodology is understood and defined in several ways. Struwig and Stead (2001) define research methodology as a well-planned systematic process used by a researcher to gather and analyse data in order to arrive at a solution to a problem. Kothari (2004: 8) is of the view that research methodology is a systematic way of solving a research problem. According to Pandey and Pandey (2015: 18) research methodology/design is a plan that is followed in completing a study. Everyday techniques like observing, understanding, asking and so on, but used in a systematic way to collect and analyse data is perceived to be research methodology (Flick, 2015: 270). Research methodology comprises various elements. These elements include philosophical underpinnings/paradigms, approaches, methods, sampling, data collection instruments, data analysis and other elements (Kumar, 1999;

Kothari, 2004; Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2006; Williman, 2011; Creswell, 2014; Maree, 2016). Below is an attempt at describing research methodology elements for the present study.

3.2.1. Research Paradigm

Words such as worldviews, philosophical foundations/underpinnings and perspectives are used interchangeably with the term ‘research paradigms’ in research. A paradigm is a way of viewing the social world (Kothari, 2004; Creswell, 2014; Maree, 2016). Choosing an appropriate paradigm for a study still brings some confusion in research; hence, the suggestion that adoption of a paradigm depends on a research problem. Perhaps the confusion is because there are quite a number of worldviews used in research and they are constantly changing resulting in paradigm shift as developments emerge in research. For example, an introduction of post-modernism. Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006:6) identify positivist, interpretivist and constructivist paradigms. Bryman (2012) enumerates positivism, post-positivism, realism, interpretivism and pragmatism paradigms. Creswell (2014:6) identifies four worldviews/paradigms which are positivism, constructivism, transformative and pragmatism. Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006:40) understands paradigm to be a system of interconnected ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions. Bryman (2012) defines a research paradigm as a set of beliefs based on the influence brought forth by a particular discipline on the phenomenon to be studied, carrying out of the research until the final interpretations and research report writing. Neuman (2014: 96) is of the view that research paradigm is an organising framework for theory and research that entails basic traditions, some key issues, models shaping good research and accurate methods for getting answers. Research paradigm is a set of beliefs about major aspects of reality which leads to a particular world view (Marre, 2016: 52). It is further indicated by Marre (2016: 52) that, paradigms serve as the lens or organising principles by which reality is interpreted. Table 3.1 provides types of paradigms along with the approaches informed, sampling as well as the instruments for data collection.

Table 3.1: Research paradigms

Paradigm/ philosophical underpinning/ worldview	Definition and attributes	Approach informed	Sampling	Methods/designs	Instruments
Positivism	Social world can be objectively observed and tested. The world around us is real, therefore human beings can find out about the realities of it. Only objective and observable facts can be the basis for science	Quantitative	Probability sampling (systematic, cluster, panel, stratified and simple random sampling)	Surveys	Questionnaires, content analysis
Interpretivism/ constructivism/ social constructivist relativism/ idealism/ constructionism	The view of the world human beings see around them is as a result of their mind creation. People seek understanding of the world in which they live and work.	Qualitative	Non-probability e.g. accidental, purposive, quota, snowball and target sampling	unstructured interviews, participant observation	Interviews, content analysis, observations, self- study, ethnography
Pragmatism	Arises as a result of actions, situations and consequences instead of original conditions.	Mixed methods	Probability and non-probability sampling	Surveys, content analysis	Interviews, questionnaires, observations

Post-positivism/ neo-positivism	The world is inexhaustible	Both qualitative and quantitative	Probability and non- probability sampling	Surveys, content analysis	Interviews, questionnaires, observations, content analysis
<p style="text-align: center;">Sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006) • Walliman (2011). • Prathapan (2014) • Creswell (2014) • Neuman (2014) • Maree (2016). 					

The list of the highlighted worldviews from Table 3.1 is not exhaustive but reflects the most used paradigms in most research projects. Pickard as cited by Mphidi and Fourie (2016: 96) indicates that positivism, post-positivism and interpretivism are popular and commonly used research paradigms in the information and communication related fields. From above presented worldviews, post-positivism/neo-positivism was adopted for the present study and thus discussed below.

3.2.1.1. Post-positivism

This study used post-positivism hence adopted the triangulation of qualitative and quantitative research approaches in data collection and analysis levels. As believed in research that if a researcher wants to fully analyse the studied phenomenon, it is good to support one approach with another to easily tackle a research problem. As suggested by Prathapan (2014: 45) through post-positivism, data can be collected using both qualitative and quantitative methods that complement each other to get an in-depth understanding of the research problem while moving closer to the truth. The use of post-positivism in the present study is informed by Mphidi (2016) whose study triangulated both qualitative and quantitative methods in data collection and analysis level to understand the role of public libraries to bridge the digital divide. The use of post-positivism was rational for this study, as it allowed the researcher to show relationships from different data sets (public libraries and job advertisements) of the study. Post-positivism is not ontologically dogmatic like positivism paradigm and as such helped the researcher to have an in-depth understanding of the nature of job requirements with focus on different population groups. Hence, the data collected was both qualitative and quantitative in nature. Interview was used as the instrument for the collection of qualitative data while questionnaire was used for the collection of quantitative data. These enabled us to understand the skills possessed by LIS graduates and the challenges they face in the course of their everyday duties. Data from the content analysis helped to obtain information on the competencies required by the public libraries for each advertised post.

Post-positivism works a lot like pragmatism, but the difference lies in the fact that pragmatism mixes methods right from the beginning of a research project and throughout; whereas post-positivism uses both qualitative and quantitative approaches in data collection and analysis level in most studies (Creswell, 2014: 11). On the other hand, post-positivism is more or less the same as post-modernism in the sense that they both believe that reality has several sides. The post-positivism paradigm holds a belief that the world is inexhaustible (Prathapan, 2014: 45). This implies that post-positivists realise that the world and experiences are too complex and abundant. Prathapan (2014) further indicates that post-positivism holds a belief that reality is influenced by context instead of the constructed existing meaning of its being in a vacuum. In this manner, post-positivists can be understood as the ones who search and establish the valid and reliable evidence through the existence of the phenomena. This paradigm has some principles that lay emphasis on the meaning from collected data and how

new knowledge can be created. According to Maree (2016: 59) post-positivism believes that reality has many aspects, is subjective in nature and mentally constructed by human beings. Maree (2016: 59) points out that post-positivism is frequently used in describing an approach to research where large amounts of qualitative data are normally categorised to produce quantitative data to be analysed using statistical methods. For example, the current study has two sides of the qualitative data, which was obtained through interviews and content analysis. Prathapan (2014: 14) states that when using a post-positivism paradigm, a researcher has a freedom of conducting research as opposed to other paradigms like positivism whereby a researcher has to follow some strict guidelines when conducting research. This implies that a researcher is placed in a key position in post-positivism. Prathapan (2014: 45) highlights the following attributes of post-positivism:

- Research is considered to be broad rather than specialised.
- Theory and practice are parallel, there is no way there can be kept separate.
- The motivations and commitment of the researcher are significant to the originality of the research.
- The belief that research is only concerned with data collecting techniques and categorising information is currently considered to be inadequate.

3.3. Research approaches

Research approaches involve plans and techniques for research that consist of steps of assumptions to meticulous ways of collecting, analysing and interpreting data (Creswell, 2014: 3). There are two popular and fundamental research approaches: qualitative and quantitative research approaches (Kothari, 2004: 5). Currently, scholars identify three well-known approaches (qualitative, quantitative and mixed) in research and each approach is appropriate for different types of research projects. The adoption of a research approach is highly dependent on the nature of the research problem of the study (Williman, 2011; Creswell, 2014). This study used both quantitative and qualitative approaches as presented in section 3.3.1 and 3.3.2.

3.3.1. Qualitative approach

Qualitative approach is commonly understood as an approach that deals with words instead of numbers and was used in this study to address the following objectives:

- a) To establish the perceptions of employers and LIS graduates on job requirements of the sector;
- b) To find out if LIS curriculum offered by LIS schools in the province meets the job requirements and functions of public libraries in KZN; and
- c) To determine the challenges faced by LIS graduates regarding their functions/duties in the work place.

According to Flick (2015: 11) the qualitative research approach is conducted in a natural setting and that helps get an in-depth understanding on why individuals behave the way they do. This is achieved through interpreting and making sense of the phenomenon of interest. Qualitative research is not modelled on measurements and normally selects its participants purposively (Flick, 2015: 11). Participating assistant directors from the regional library depots were purposively selected in this study to ensure that they are all represented properly. This research approach significantly answered questions that would have been impossible to answer if the study only dwelled only on the quantitative perspective (Prathapan, 2014: 43). Creswell (2014: 183) notes that the qualitative approach relies more on text, as the data from interviews and qualitative part of content analysis for the study were analysed in themes and subheadings.

Each approach has its strengths and weaknesses that act as deciding factors to the researcher on tackling a main research question successfully. According to Flick (2015: 12) qualitative research possesses the strength of an in-depth and exact analysis of limited cases that can be produced. This can be achieved when participants have the freedom to determine what is relevant to them and to present it in a given environment. Using qualitative approach in this study played a significant role in accessing information, such as participant's motives, opinions and feelings from interviews that could not be expressed entirely in numbers. Furthermore, qualitative research brought richness, openness and flexibility to this study.

Despite the strengths of this approach, there are attendant weaknesses. Flick (2015: 13) indicates that data analysis in qualitative research consumes time. Another limitation by Flick (2015) is that the results cannot be generalised to the wider population. This is one of the limitations of the present study because the findings cannot be generalised to the whole country. In addition, Flick (2015: 13) points out that qualitative research may impinge into the lives as well as the secretive grounds of the participants.

3.3.2. Quantitative approach

In general, the quantitative research approach deals with numbers and interprets its data using graphs, charts and tables as done in this study. Quantitative research is a systematic process that is objective in nature, as it uses numerical data from a specific subgroup of a population in order to generalise the findings to the entire studied population (Struwig and Stead, 2001: 4; Maree, 2016: 162). In this study, quantifiable data was obtained through soliciting for responses to questionnaires given to employed LIS graduates from five regional library depots and centre public libraries. Findings were thereafter generalised to all employed LIS graduates in public libraries in the province (KZN). Maree (2016: 162) states that quantitative research approach makes use of surveys in most cases; and the present study used the survey method through questionnaire and interviews. Generally, data collection methods in a quantitative approach are more structured compared to the qualitative approach. Hence, structured questionnaires were used to collect data from LIS professionals/ graduates in this study. Using quantitative methodology eliminated research bias and was more reliable in the present study.

Like the qualitative research approach, quantitative research approach has advantages and disadvantages. According to flick (2015: 12) one big advantage of the quantitative research is allowing a study of a large number of cases in a very short period of time. Flick (2015) further indicates that results can be more generalisable when using this approach. However, in spite of the strengths of this approach, there are still weaknesses to contend with. One limitation pointed out by Flick (2015: 12) is that the richness of data to be analysed in quantitative research approach is usually reduced as a result of the way the data is collected; for example, limiting responses from the respondents. In this study, such limitation was found from the low response rate from employed LIS graduates in regional library depots, where 15 research questionnaires were distributed and 9 were returned and some questions were not answered. This may be due to the reason that some respondents were not around during data collection, therefore questionnaires were left with the superiors of their respective working station/section. On the other hand, respondents have different interpretations of asked questions, so these could be the possible reasons for this set of respondents to pose highlighted limitations. Another limitation for this approach is that, “aspects that are studied are not necessarily the relevant aspects for participants and the context of the meanings linked to what is studied cannot be sufficiently taken into account” (Flick, 2015: 12). Moreover quantitative approach sometimes lacks the deeper meaning of some qualitative approach.

3.3.3. Mixed approach

Mixed method research is a third approach which Maree (2016: 312) defines as an approach that builds on both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Creswell (2014: 4) indicates that this approach combines both qualitative and quantitative data using different designs that involve worldviews and theoretical frameworks. Creswell (2014) explains further that there is a huge belief regarding this approach, which is that combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches provides the deepest understanding of a research problem than a single approach could. Maree (2016: 313) defines mixed method research as a research approach for collecting, analysing and integrating both qualitative and quantitative data at some points of a research process within a single study. Maree (2016) adds that numeric and textual information is collected using this approach to understand research questions in a study.

The approach chosen for this study

This study employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Using both quantitative and qualitative approaches is in line with the adoption of the post-positivist perspective/paradigm. Both approaches helped in getting in-depth understanding of job requirements as well as the challenges facing LIS graduates in KwaZulu-Natal provincial public libraries. Specifically, the first population group (LIS graduates) provided quantitative data; the second population group (assistant directors) provided qualitative data; the third population group (newspapers) provided both qualitative and quantitative data. Creswell (2014) indicates that variables are related to answer a particular question in quantitative research. In the present study, the related question is what are the job functions and requirements of the public libraries based on the qualifications, knowledge, skills and attitudes of LIS graduates? This question seeks to examine the relationship between job functions and requirements of public libraries (independent variable) and LIS graduates/professionals (dependent variable). LIS graduates are thus the dependent variables in the study in a sense that their job functions and requirements highly depend on what public libraries require from them in terms of qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes. Public libraries are independent variables because they are the ones that determine the job requirements from those they recruit (LIS graduates/professionals). Independent variables are variables that influence the outcomes (the controlled variable), whereas dependent variables are those that depend on the independent variables or they are the variables being tested using the independent variables (Creswell, 2014: 52). The study used cross-sectional quantitative designs because all data was

collected at one point in time. Qualitative and quantitative approaches are not mutually exclusive but complements in this study (Weyers, 2011: 163); Wilson in Flick (2015: 216) also note that qualitative and quantitative research approaches are complementary rather than competitive methods. Nevertheless each approach has its own strengths as well as weaknesses that the other does not; therefore using them together in the present study has played a significant role in yielding good results. The next section presents the research methods adopted for this study.

3.4. Research method

A research method is almost the same as a research instrument, but a research instrument is an actual tool that is used to collect data while the method is commonly understood as a way or technique that a researcher follows to arrive at the solution to a problem; but there is still a problem with differentiating between a research method and a research instrument. Kara (2012) defines a research method as systematic investigation in order to find facts and collect information to improve knowledge. Rajasekar, Philominathan and Chinnathambi (2013:5) point out that research method helps the researchers collect samples, data and most importantly find solutions to problems. According to Neuman (2014), a research method is a technique applied for collecting data in research. Data is collected using different data collection methods such as focus groups, observations, content analysis, surveys, etc. but that highly depends on the research problem under investigation. Some research methods can be used either for qualitative or quantitative research such as content analysis. This study used content analysis and survey method. The choice of the adopted methods depended largely on the aim of this study, which was to investigate the job requirements and challenges of LIS graduates in public libraries in KZN. The discussion of the methods used is presented in section 3.4.1 and 3.4.2.

3.4.1. Content analysis

As indicated above (section 3.4) one of the used research methods was content analysis, due to the fact that the nature of the collected data from the newspapers (Sunday Times; Ilanga; Mail and Guardian; and Sunday Tribune) are focused on job requirements in terms of qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes and required this method. The use of content analysis in the present study was informed by few related studies e.g. Raju (2005); Ocholla (2007); Ocholla and Bothma (2007); Ngulube, Mokwatlo and Ndwandwe (2009); Reeves and Hahn (2010); Ocholla and Shongwe (2013); Ndwandwe and Onyancha (2012);

Ocholla and Ndlangamandla (2012). Flick (2015) and Maree (2016) observe that content analysis is the method of analysing textual material of any kind. It is further pointed by Flick (2015) that the main goal of the content analysis is to classify the content of texts through an allocation of statements, words and sentences into a system of particular categories such as, categorising the data from the newspapers into themes and sub-headings in the data interpretation and analysis.

There is a qualitative and quantitative version of content analysis (Neuman, 2006: 323 and Flick 2015: 164). Neuman (2006: 323) points out that, in quantitative content analysis, there is an objective and systematic counting as a recording standards used in order to come up with statistical analysis of the symbolic content in a particular text. Flick (2015: 164) states that emphasis is put more on the meaning rather than on quantification when using content analysis. In this study, the meaning was generated through analysing data in themes and sub-headings focusing on experience, qualifications, knowledge, skills and attitudes as job requirements in LIS advertisements from the selected newspapers. Little quantification was put on job specifications like LIS job titles advertised per newspaper. On the other hand, quantitative content analysis is “often used to analyse newspaper articles” (Flick, 2015: 165). Normally in quantitative content analysis, certain words are counted to know how often they appear in a text. The present study used both qualitative and quantitative content analysis to analyse LIS job adverts that appeared on the Sunday Times, Ilanga, Mail and Guardian, and Sunday Tribune newspapers.

Content analysis, like other methods has some merits and demerits. One benefit of the quantitative content analysis is that a researcher can analyse voluminous data with it. Another benefit is that procedures can be standardised to a great degree (Flick, 2015: 166). Flick (2015) further points out that it is possible to calculate frequencies and distributions of statements, words, sentences, attitudes and so forth using content analysis. Despite the strengths, Flick (2015: 166) states that, there is always someone who rules the analysis of certain cases from the scratch and that stands as a limitation when using a content analysis in a study. Additionally, the researcher using content analysis may misinterpret the collected data, and that is one huge limitation. The present study used both content analysis and the survey method and that helped to strengthen the methods.

3.4.2. Survey method

Survey method is a technique that commonly uses questionnaire and interviews as data collection instruments in most research studies, such as the current study. Pandey and Pandey (2015: 84) state that, a survey method involves a process of gathering quantitative facts about the social aspect of a particular community structure and activities. Survey is considered to be the most and widely used method of collecting data from individuals (William, 2006). In this study, survey was used to assess the status of job requirements and challenges of LIS graduates in public libraries in the province. Surveys can be conducted in various ways, e.g., through telephone calls, mail, interviews, questionnaires (Struwig and Stead, 2001: 86-88; Maree, 2016: 174). Maree (2016: 174) highlights two main attributes of the survey method. The first attribute is that samples are usually big. Secondly, numerous variables are measured and multiple hypotheses are tested. Pandey and Pandey (2015:87) identify the following strengths of the survey method:

- Survey method is considered an important method in collecting data relating to particular social problems.
- This method involves a close relationship between researcher and respondents.
- Objectivity is high.
- Application of the survey method is universal.

While, there are merits of the survey methods, there are some demerits as well. Pandey and Pandey (2015: 88) highlight the following demerits of the survey method:

- Survey method is expensive and time consuming.
- There is personal bias which may affect the results.
- Flexibility is lacking in this method.
- It is only useful for recent problems.

Using the survey in the present study allowed for the generalisation of the findings. In the present study the survey method was carried out using questionnaires which were administered to LIS graduates in KwaZulu-Natal provincial public libraries. On the other hand, interviews as an instrument of survey was conducted with assistant directors of the regional library depots in the province.

3.5. Study population and sample

Generally, a population includes all the elements meeting selection criteria for a group to be studied or investigated and it is where a sub-group called a sample is taken. Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006: 563) indicate that a population is a larger pool of cases whereby a sample is drawn. Kara (2012: 73) terms population as a well-defined collection of objects or people sharing similar characteristics. Targeted population is outlined as the entire group of people or objects where a researcher is interested in drawing and/or generalising his/her conclusions (Maree, 2016). This study targeted three (3) population groups which are: four (4) newspapers (Sunday Times; Ilanga; Mail and Guardian; and Sunday Tribune newspapers); five (5) assistant directors; and fifty eight (58) LIS graduates/professionals.

a) Newspapers

Four newspapers were the first population group for this study. Purposive sampling technique grounded under a non-probability sampling was used to select the four newspapers for job advertisements. Content analysis schedule (see appendix C) was used as data collection tool. Purposive sampling technique is a technique whereby “a researcher selects what he/she thinks is typical sample based on specialist knowledge” (Williman 2006: 52). Secondary data was obtained by scanning four newspapers (the Sunday Times; Ilanga; Mail and Guardian; and Sunday Tribune) for job advertisements from January 2015 to December 2017. The Sunday Times and Mail and Guardian newspapers were purposively selected for their national reach, high circulation, high readership and popularity as a medium through which companies advertise. The Sunday Times newspaper was used in the study by Ocholla and Shongwe (2013) citing its popularity and widespread readership in South Africa to the tune of about 3.24 million people in a week. Ilanga and Sunday Tribune were selected due to the fact that most local municipalities use it as their major platform for public library job positions in the province. This is also in view of the fact that the libraries are mostly built in rural areas in the bid to address previous inequalities and Ilanga is an old newspaper that is widely read in the rural communities; so if the posts get advertised there, it will be easier for local people to know about them.

b) Assistant directors

Five Assistant Directors (ADs), representing all five regional library depots in accordance to the structure of (KwaZulu-Natal) provincial public libraries formed the second population

group and they were selected using a purposive sampling technique. Interview schedule was the data collection instrument for this population (see appendix D). ADs were selected due to their specific knowledge about public library work environment. Assistant directors have the main role of providing professional support to public libraries. Professional support involves working with local municipalities to carry out recruitment processes of library staff, providing training and constantly monitoring progress and quality of public library service delivery. On the other hand, assistant directors can determine the responsibilities of LIS graduates/professionals because they are decision makers and ultimate judges of the library; and thus more knowledgeable in their field.

c) LIS graduates

There were 58 employed LIS graduates selected from both regional library depots and their centre public libraries. There was no sample drawn with respect to the LIS graduates as articulated by several scholars (e.g. Gay, 1996; Nueman, 2000; Ngulube, 2005) that there is no point in sampling population less than 100. For Kalusopa and Ngulube (2011: 132), taking an entire population is called census. Related studies, e.g. Ndwandwe (2009); Kalusopa and Ngulube (2011) did not sample but studied the entire population. LIS graduates were selected because they were in a better position to articulate their challenges in relation to the competencies they possess for their everyday duties. The instrument/data collection tool used for LIS graduates was the questionnaire (see appendix E). All research instruments used in the present study are discussed in details in section 3.7. Figure 3.1 and table 3.2 present the study sets of data (primary and secondary).

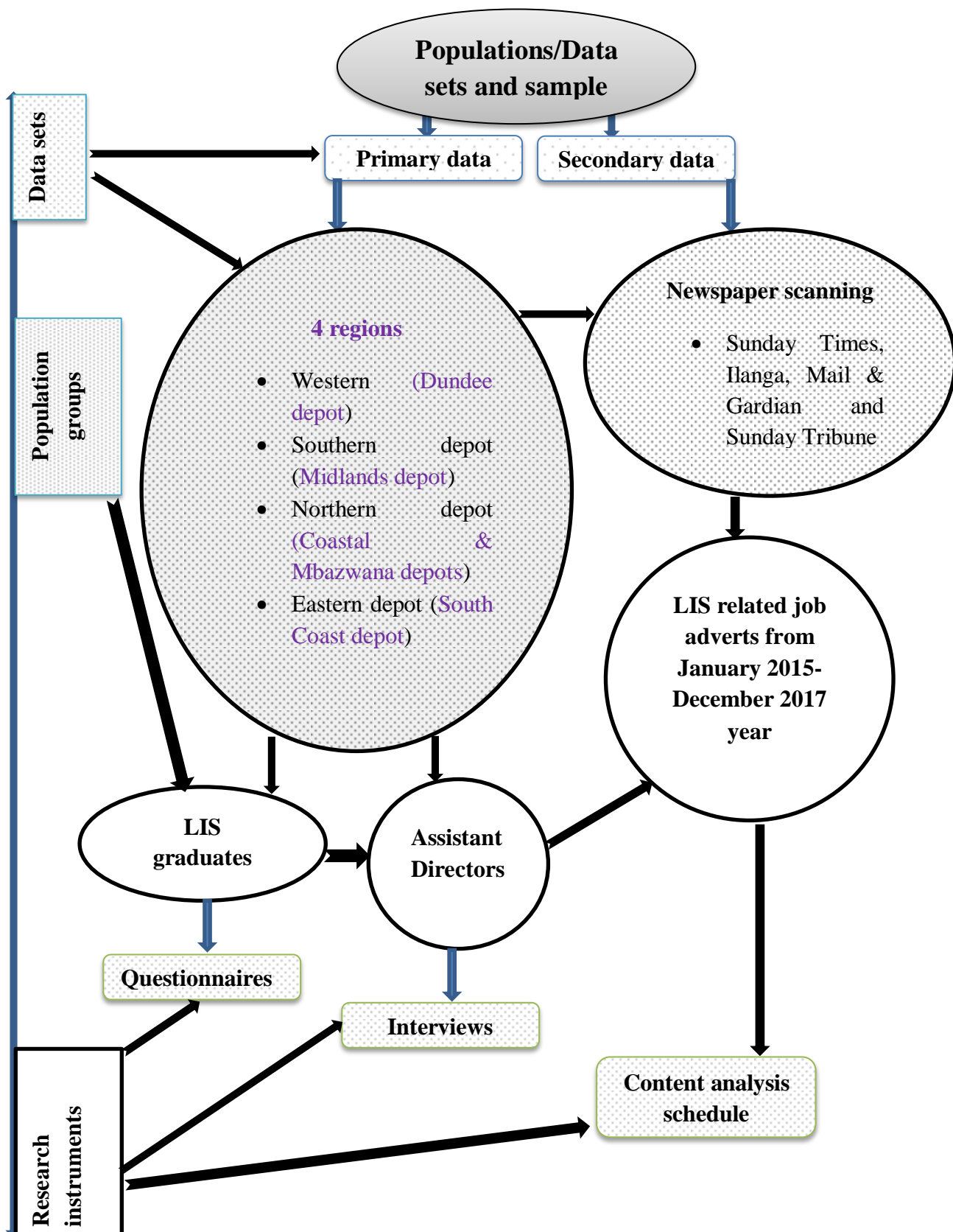


Figure 3. 1: Population of the study

Table 3.2: Centre public libraries

Centre public library name	Municipality	Depot
Ladysmith public library	Alfred Duma	Dundee
Richards Bay public library	UMhlatuze	Coastal
Bessie Head public library	Msunduzi	Midlands
Westville public library	EThekwini	South Coast

Source: Field data (2017)

As revealed in figure 3.1 and table 3.2 the study targeted two sets of data (primary and secondary data). KZN public libraries are managed within five regional library depots namely: Dundee depot (Western region), Coastal depot (Northern region), South Coast depot (Eastern region), Midlands depot (Southern region) and Mbazwana depot (Northern region) (DAC Budget speech, 2016). Data was obtained from all five (5) regional library depots and four (4) centre public libraries representing each regional library depot in the province (see table 3.2). However, Mbazwana regional library depot has no centre public library it consists of only standard libraries, thus only the depot participated. In each of the regions, two population groups, the assistant directors and LIS graduates were sampled to obtain primary data.

3.6. Data collection and procedures

There is quite a number of research instruments used to collect data from the sampled population. The adoption of a research tool depends on the nature of the research, hence each tool has its own unique advantages and disadvantages over another. According to Kumar (2014: 380) a research instrument is anything that acts as a means for collecting information for a study, like interviews/interview guides, questionnaires, field diaries, notes on field observations and collected information from secondary notes. Research instruments are measurement tools that are designed specifically to collect data on a given topic of study (Neuman, 2016). According to Kothari (2004), Walliman (2011), Kara (2012) and Prathapan (2014) methods of data collection include direct observation, personal interview, forms, schedules or questionnaires, documented sources of data, case study methods, telephone interviews, mail questionnaires and other methods. Three research instruments of data collection were used in this study: interviews, questionnaires and document/content analysis. Employing three different instruments in this single study has successfully tackled the main research problem from different angles. All three (3) adopted instruments/tools were

previously used in the related studies of Ndlangamandla and Ocholla (2012), Ndwandwe and Onyancha (2012) and Ocholla and Shongwe (2013) to mention but a few. The detailed discussion of the employed tools for the present study is presented in section 3.7.1, 3.7.2 and 3.7.3.

As indicated above, there are several tools/instruments that can be used to collect data. Kumar (1999: 132) indicates two major approaches for gathering data on a particular problem: primary and secondary methods. Prathapan (2014: 114) states that, primary data is normally collected during the actual course of experiment. Prathapan (2014) further states that secondary data is collected in advance and that is vitally important for the background of a study. Primary data for this study was gathered from LIS graduates through questionnaires and from assistant directors through interviews. The secondary data was collected using content analysis by scanning the Sunday Times; Ilanga; Mail and Guardian; and Sunday Tribune newspapers. Figure 3.2 is a schematic representation of methods of data collection by Kumar (2011).

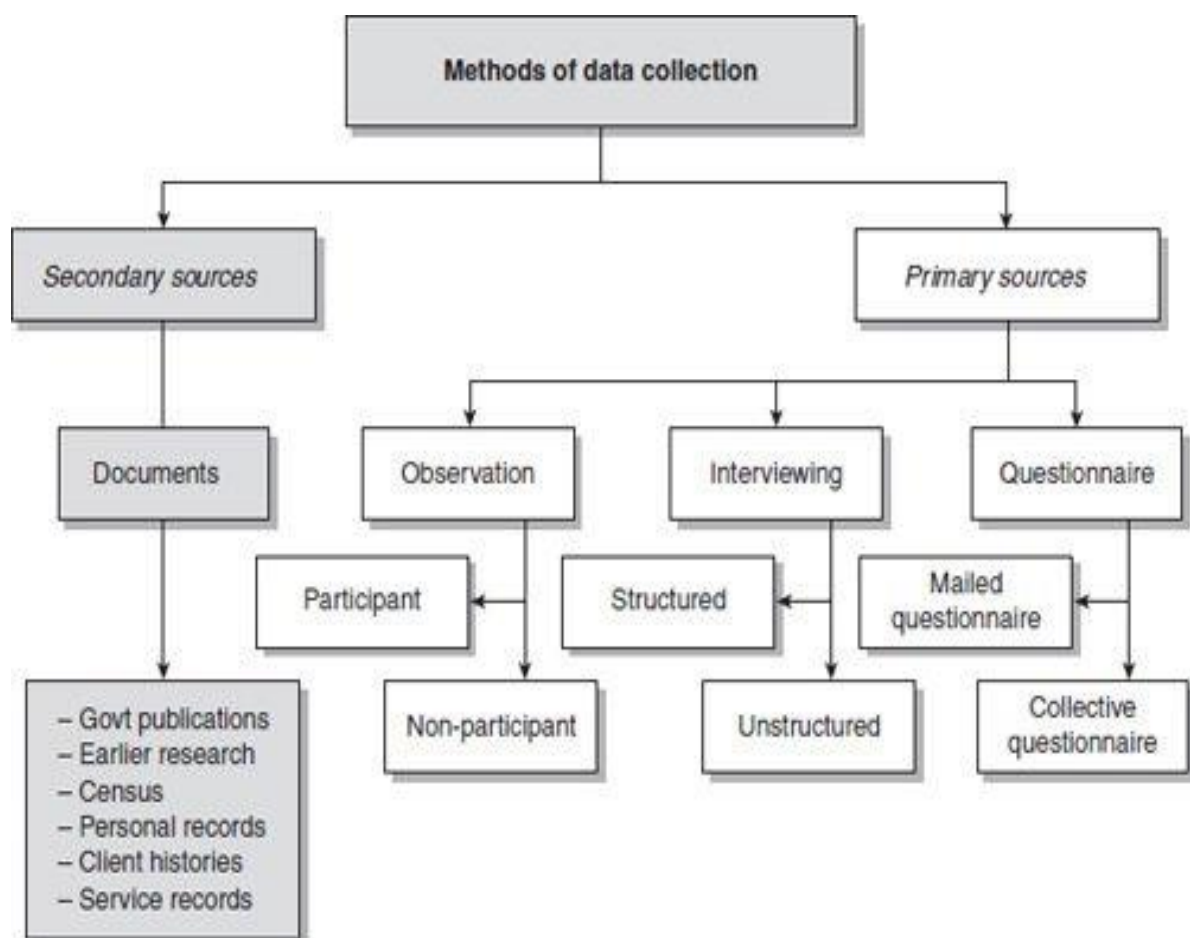


Figure 3. 2: Research instruments

Source: Kumar (2011)

The present study did not necessarily use all the methods presented in figure 3.2 above for its data collection. Instead, content analysis was used to collect secondary data from newspapers, interview was the instrument for primary data collection from assistant directors, and questionnaires were administered to collect primary data from LIS graduates.

3.6.1. Interview method

In research, interview is generally understood as a method that involves a face to face interaction between a researcher and a participant from whom information is to be collected. Interview is the verbal conversation between two people with the sole purpose of collecting relevant and valid information for the purpose of the study or research (Neuman, 2014; Prathapan, 2014; Kumar, 2014). This study used semi-structured interviews to get answers from assistant directors of regional library depots in the province (KZN). This type of interview (semi-structured) is a form of inquiry that combines a set of open questions that prompt discussions, with the opportunity for the interviewer to further explore particular themes or responses (Maree, 2016). The interviews covered the structured and unstructured sections with standardised and open type questions. Assistant directors from regional library depots are the ultimate determinants of operations in the public libraries. At the outset of conducting each interview, the researcher introduced himself and gave the briefing of the study. After the introduction and briefing, the permission to record the interviews was requested before each interview began. Interviews were used in related studies. For instance, Ndlangamandla and Ocholla (2012) in their study on library and information management in higher education in Swaziland; Mphidi (2016) in the work, strategy for South African public libraries to bridge the digital divide and by Strand (2016) on the role of public libraries in the alleviation of information inequality and poverty in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Using semi-structured interviews in the present study gave the researcher the opportunity to ask add-on questions (Kumar, 2014: 177). The researcher was also able to clarify ambiguous questions to the respondents. In addition, semi-structured interviews, owing to the flexible nature played an immense role in intensively and extensively exploring the problem.

There are structured, unstructured and semi-structured interviews (Prathapan, 2014: 115; Kumar, 2015: 176). According to Prathapan (2014: 115) structured interview consists of a schedule, a standardised way of questioning as well as techniques for recording. Kumar

(2014: 178) observes that structured interview is characterised by predetermined questions that are asked as stated in the interview schedule. Kumar (2014) further points out that unstructured and semi-structured interview are more flexible given their structure, contents, question wording and order.

Prathapan (2014: 116) brings to attention that interviews have some merits and that an interview is advantageous in the sense that a number of content errors can be concealed. This implies that interviews create little room for any form of misinterpretation or misunderstanding of the questions asked, as the interviewer is always present to give clarity. Interviews are relatively cheap and efficient to conduct since they are limited to a group of population. Although there are some advantages of using interviews, there are shortcomings to bear in mind. One disadvantage is that respondents may sometimes give inadequate information if conversation is open (Prathapan, 2014: 116). Furthermore, there may be research bias which may eventually affect the collected data. There are some skills required from the researcher when conducting an interview (Kumar, 2014: 177). There are different types of interviews in line with a suitable name given in a particular discipline. Walliman (2011: 99) mentions three types of interviews, namely: structured, unstructured and semi-structured interviews. These are discussed below.

- Structured interviews: these interviews consist of standardised questions that are being read out by the interviewer in line with an interview schedule. Usually, answers are in closed format.
- Unstructured interviews: consist of a flexible format and have no closed format questions.
- Semi-structured interview: covers structured and unstructured sections with standardised and open type questions.

Prathapan (2014: 116) highlights the following attributes of interview:

- It involves a very close interaction between two or more people having a dialogue.
- There is always a certain object, for example, knowing ideas of others.
- There is a primary linkage between individuals.
- This method is mostly used in collecting data for business and economic related problems.
- Interview method is very flexible.
- In-depth information is gained through this method (interview).

- Non-response rate is very low.

3.6.2. Questionnaire

Questionnaires use a set of organised questions in a particular format designed to specifically get answers from individuals or the participants. Collecting data from sample population using more than one research method can be beneficial in research. Flick (2015: 270) defines a questionnaire as the list of questions that is presented to every participant in a research study in the same way, either written or oral. Prathapan (2014: 116) observes that in a questionnaire a researcher prepares a set of questions in a particular order then approaches the respondents with the set questions in printed form. Questionnaires can be divided into four categories; structured questionnaires, unstructured questionnaires, mixed questionnaire and disguised-type questionnaires (Prathapan, 2014: 116).

- **Structured questionnaire:** in a structured questionnaire, responses are given in a fixed response category, such as YES/NO seeking questions.
- **Unstructured questionnaire:** unstructured questionnaires vary from the structured questionnaire in a sense that questions given are not in a fixed response categories. It is not always the case that every question is presented using the same words. In addition there is flexibility in answering questions.
- **Disguised-type questionnaire:** this questionnaire consists of direct questions.

Kothari in Prathapan (2014: 117) outlines the benefits/advantages of the questionnaire method:

- It is relatively cheap in spite of the large population.
- It can be easily distributed geographically in a wide proportion.
- It gives sufficient time to respondents to answer questions in the manner that gives sense.
- It is easy to reach even scarce respondents in a convenient way.
- It can use large sample size and results can be more reliable.

Kumar (2014: 181) identifies the following advantages of questionnaire:

- **It is less expensive:** in a questionnaire there is no interviewing of respondents taking place, therefore it saves time, human and financial resources.

- There are greater chances of anonymity: there is no person-to-person interaction and that enhances anonymity. Even if sensitive questions are asked, it is still possible to get accurate information.

Despite the advantages of the questionnaire method; there are several disadvantages as highlighted by Prathapan (2014: 117):

- Respondents may not return the questionnaire or can return it not fully answered.
- Questionnaires require well learned and cooperative people.
- Respondents can sometimes provide ambiguous answers.
- The subjectivity of the respondents can affect the answer marked by them.

Kumar (2014: 181) highlights the following limitations of the questionnaire:

- Limited application: questionnaire requires population that is able to read and write. It does not accommodate young people, very old and handicapped individuals.
- Questionnaire has greater chances of low response rate: some respondents do not return questionnaires and that eventually affect the sampled population and results may not be representative of the entire population.
- Self-selecting bias: there is a self-selection bias in questionnaire; hence it is not always the case that everyone given a questionnaire returns it.
- There is a lack of opportunity to clarify issues: if it happens that respondents do not understand questions, it is difficult for them to get clarifications since it is rare that they get in touch with the researcher.

The nature of data collected from LIS graduates/professionals called for the use of questionnaires in this study. Open-ended and close ended questions from a simple designed and printed questionnaire were self-administered to this sample group. Some questionnaires were left under the care of selected colleagues for LIS professionals that were not around during the questionnaire distribution. The questionnaire consisted of 29 questions that covered biographical information as well as the perceptions on the job requirements, LIS curricula and challenges they are facing based on their job functions. LIS graduates, from their experiences in their respective everyday duties, were in better positions to identify the challenges they are facing with respect to their competencies: academic qualification, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes. The questionnaires were distributed and collected after two weeks (10 working days) from LIS graduates employed in five regional library

depots. Then, the questionnaires administered to LIS graduates from centre public libraries were collected on the same day to minimise the low response rate that occurred when the questionnaires were administered in the regional library depots. This significantly helped to minimise costs.

3.6.3. Document / Content analysis schedule

Content analysis is also called document analysis. “Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents. The materials can be in print or electronic formats (computer-based and Internet-transmitted), (Kothari, 2004; Glenn, 2009; Walliman, 2011). In this study, content analysis involved LIS job advertisements placed in Sunday Times; Ilanga; Mail and Guardian; and Sunday Tribune newspapers from January 2015 to December 2017. The advertisements were scanned and analysed for details on date of the advertisement, job details, functions/duties/responsibilities and requirements in terms of qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes. Job requirements that were required from the advertised LIS jobs were analysed to get the main focus areas in LIS education and training that will match public library workplaces. Content analysis seem to be popular in related studies (e.g. Ndlangamandla and Ocholla, 2012; Ocholla and Shongwe, 2013; Ndwandwe and Onyancha, 2012) in successfully determining job trends, LIS education and training needs, as well as the entire LIS job market’ requirements in the country.

3.7. Data collection

A research design adopted by a study determines the data to be collected and how is it going to be collected (Maree, 2016). Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used in collecting data for this study. Data was collected using content analysis schedules, interviews and questionnaires. The content analysis schedule (see appendix C) was used to collect qualitative data on job requirements of the public libraries by scanning newspapers with focus on qualifications, knowledge, skills and attitudes of LIS graduates in public libraries. The interviews (see appendix D) were conducted to collect qualitative data from assistant directors of the regional library depots in the province. The Questionnaires (refer to appendix E) were used to collect quantitative data from the employed LIS graduates from both centre public libraries and regional library depots.

3.8. Data presentation and analysis

Data is normally analysed so that the data collected can be understood and interpreted meaningfully for the purpose of solving the research problem. Williman (2011) states that analysis of data can be done for measuring, examining relationships, testing hypothesis, constructing concepts and theories, exploring, explaining and other reasons. Williman (2011: 86) points out that analysis of data can be done to determine trends, track progression and replicate results in order to come up with a strong case for a particular problem. Maree (2016) outlines data analysis as the process whereby data is evaluated by applying analytical and logical techniques in order to examine each component of the provided data. Williman (2006) refers to data analysis as a process of studying and transforming data with an intention of making new discoveries on useful information and supporting decision making. Data analysis method depends on the type of research question or problem statement posed from the beginning of the research study (Williman, 2006). For instance, what are job requirements and challenges of LIS graduates in KZN public libraries?

As was mentioned in section 3.7 (research instruments), data is collected using various tools, so the analysis depends on the tool used. Analysis of data varies for primary and secondary data. The nature of the collected data for this study called for both quantitative and qualitative analyses. Primary data from LIS graduates gathered through questionnaires was analysed in both qualitative and quantitative manner using tables, charts and graphs. In some questions, responses were compiled and transformed to numerical values. The second primary data from assistant directors obtained through semi-structured interviews was analysed qualitatively according to themes and subheadings as well as transcriptions. Content analysis as a widely used analytic technique for analysing newspaper articles (Flick, 2015: 164) and it was used to collect and analyse the secondary data from newspapers quantitatively and qualitatively through themes and tables. Walliman (2011: 86) mentions content analysis as one of the suitable methods for analysing data from secondary sources.

3.9. Reliability and validity in research

According to Morse et al (2002:14) “without rigour, research is worthless, it becomes fiction, and loses its utility therefore; all research must have true value, applicability, consistency, and neutrality in order to be considered worthwhile.” Hence, a great deal of attention is applied to reliability and validity in all research methods. In general, reliability refers to the

consistency of the measurement while validity refers to if the measurement measures what it is supposed to measure. Maree (2016: 238) indicates that the reliability of a research instrument means that if the same instrument is given to different respondents from the same population the results should be the same. Maree (2016) further points out that “reliability is the extent to which a measuring instrument is repeatable and consistent”. Validity of a research instrument measures what it is supposed to measure (Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2006; Creswell, 2014; Maree, 2016). Maree (2016: 239) emphasise that validity is sometimes problematic in human sciences since research instruments need to measure some human emotions.

In the context of this study, the value of reliability and validity was ensured in the findings by collecting data using different research instruments (content analysis, interviews and questionnaires) from different population groups (newspapers, assistant directors and LIS graduates). Collecting data from different population groups increased the value of reliability as a result of which the problem under investigation was tackled using more than one angle. The study applied triangulation at both data collection and analysis levels. Research questions were concise as one attribute of good research questions is to avoid ambiguity in research questions asked. Respondents were assured of confidentiality, so that they respond freely without fear of being identified. This contributed to reliable and valid responses.

3.10. Ethical considerations

Ethics is the broad philosophical study of moral values and rules which act as a motivation based on the ideas of right and wrong which is derived from morals (Rautenbach, Bekker, and Goolam, 2010). Prathapan (2014: 233) notes that research ethics are cornerstone of an effective and meaningful research. Prathapan (2014) views ethics as principles of conduct that is being followed by scientists in their professional undertakings. It includes institutional regulations such as norms and values that help in planning, implying and regulating scientific activity (research). Research ethics actually covers the entire research process. Prathapan (2014: 234) points out that a researcher has more responsibility in the direction of the society. And that ethics also concerns the internal links between the researchers as well as other people. The author highlights the following as significance of ethics in research:

Scientific honesty: researcher should not commit scientific frauds like; fabrication, trimming, destroying, fudging and misrepresenting data.

Carefulness: a researcher should make sure there are no grammatical errors and avoid negligence.

Intellectual freedom: a researcher is granted a chance to track for new ideas and can criticise old ones.

Openness: a research project should always be open to criticism. Research should be shared universally.

The principle of credit: credit should be given to the work of other writers or authors and there should be no plagiarism because it is a serious offense and against the law.

The document from the University of Zululand “policy and procedures on research ethics” (2016) provides information on ethical issues to be followed by any researcher conducting his/her research in the institution. The document discusses the plagiarism acts that need to be prevented to avoid harm to individual participants, physical or emotionally. Confidentiality and informed consent issues are discussed in the University’s policy and procedures document. A proper letter needs to be sent to respondents and it is the researcher’s duty to make sure that it is being sent. The researcher should ensure that every guideline is followed in a proper manner for a good study. I therefore declare that I have followed each and every guideline mentioned in the policy document for the study.

This study ensured and addressed the ethical issues through the following ways:

- The permission to carry out the entire study was granted by the University of Zululand Research Ethics Committee. Ethical clearance valid for a two year period was given to the researcher as a permission to carry out the investigation. Research instruments were checked by the committee to ensure that all questions are in line with principles of ethics.
- A motivational letter seeking for permission to carry out the study was written by the research supervisor and sent to all five (5) library depots in the province in order to reach the respective library heads/managers as well as the LIS graduates.
- Consent forms were developed for participants in the interviews and questionnaires. The forms provided spaces to be signed by the participants during interviews and questionnaires administration.

- The issue of confidentiality and participants' anonymity was ensured through the coding of responses from the participants.
- The researcher has ensured that there is no falsification, fabrication or any misconduct in the interpretation of the collected data. This ensured the issue of trustworthiness and verification in this research.

3.11. Summary

This chapter has shed light on the research methods, designs, techniques and procedures used in this study. There were some encountered limitations and challenges in this study, as is the case with most successful studies in research. Fortunately, they were not in a manner that could significantly affect the findings or hinder the success of the entire study. They could instead be potentially useful in future studies in the LIS field. During the course of this investigation, using questionnaires to gather data from LIS graduates was significant; however, honesty was not assured; the understanding and interpretations of questions asked varied for respondents; there were unanswered questions; and a low response rate. As with any data collection tool, interviews also have some limitations. Interviews require that more knowledgeable and experienced people should be selected to participate. Hence, in this study, interviews were conducted with only five assistant directors, representing each regional library depot in the province. This was due to the fact that assistant directors are well experienced and more knowledgeable about the public library.

The first challenge of this study emanated from the fact that the job advertisements in the newspapers were scanned manually. Physical newspapers were used to understand the nature and trends of job requirements of public libraries, despite the fact that it has become a common trend for most companies to save costs by advertising via online sources. This implies that some jobs adverts may not appear in the physical newspapers scanned. However, the fact remains that most public libraries still prefer physical media like newspapers to address previous inequalities (particularly Ilanga newspaper). This notwithstanding, it is worth noting that because online sources are regularly updated, it could have been difficult to trace job adverts as far back as 2015, in order to get the complete picture of the employment requirements. The study addressed this limitation by scanning more than one newspaper (Sunday times; Ilanga; Mail and guardian; and Sunday tribune) for job adverts. Also, the researcher used data from other two populations groups viz, assistant directions (interviews)

and LIS graduates/professionals (questionnaires) to compliment the result from the newspaper scanning.

The second challenge has to do with survey as one of the methods employed in the study. Survey became a shortcoming in the sense that the researcher could not conduct a survey of all the public libraries in South Africa due to insufficient project funding and time constraints. This is the reason why the researcher selected the assistant directors representing all five regional library depots of the KZN provincial public library services. The assistant directors are considered the ultimate judges of the public libraries, and are responsible for providing professional support. Using more than one method in a single study is believed to have complimentary advantages, such as using the content analysis of the job advertisements in addition to conducting interviews in order to get a broader picture of the public library job market requirements. The next chapter critically discusses the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the gathered data. Table 3.3 below represents a methodological dashboard of this study.

Outline of the Study Objectives in relation to the Methodology

Table 3.3: Outline of the Study Objectives in Relation to the Methodology

Research objectives (RO)	Research questions (RQ)	Research paradigm and Research approach (RP&RA)	Research design/ Research method (RD/RM)	Data collection instrument (DC)	Chapters
To determine the job functions and requirements of the public libraries focusing on qualifications, knowledge, skills and attitudes of LIS graduates in public libraries through newspaper scanning.	What are job functions and requirements of LIS graduates in public libraries based on qualifications, knowledge, skills and attitudes?	Post-positivism paradigm, qualitative approach	Content analysis	Content analysis schedule	Chapter 2, 4,5 and 6
To find out the perceptions of employers and LIS graduates on job requirements of the sector.	What are the perceptions of employers and LIS graduates on job requirements of the sector?	Post-positivism paradigm, qualitative and quantitative approaches	Survey	Interviews and questionnaires	Chapter 4, 5 and 6
To find out the perceptions of LIS graduates and employers about the LIS curriculum.	What are the perceptions of LIS graduates and employers about the LIS curriculum?	Post-positivism paradigm, qualitative and quantitative approaches	Survey	Interviews and questionnaires	Chapter 4, 5 and 6
To determine the challenges facing LIS graduates regarding their functions/duties in the work place.	What challenges are facing LIS graduates with regards to their functions in the workplace?	Post-positivism paradigm, quantitative approach	Survey	Questionnaires	Chapter 4, 5 and 6

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.1. Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the methods, procedures and techniques on how the entire study was carried out (research methodology). This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the gathered data from its three sampled population groups (newspapers, library depots assistant directors and LIS graduates) in order to understand the job requirements and challenges of LIS graduates/professionals in public libraries in the province (KZN). Both the assistant directors and LIS graduates that participated studied from various LIS institutions: Durban University of Technology, University of KwaZulu-Natal, University of Zululand and Walter Sisulu University formerly University of Transkei. To address the problem under investigation, the study collected both qualitative and quantitative data from Sunday times, Ilanga, Mail and Guardian and Sunday Tribune newspapers covering a three year period (from January 2015 to December 2017) through newspaper scanning. Quantitative data was gathered from LIS graduates through questionnaires while qualitative data from library depots assistant directors were obtained through interviews. As KZN provincial public libraries are structured according to regional library depots, both LIS graduates and library depots assistant directors were selected from all five respective regional library depots in the province. Other employed LIS graduates were selected from centre public libraries. From the 10 earlier highlighted recognisable higher education institutions offering professional LIS qualifications in the country, the study participants were from four (4) institutions namely: Durban University of Technology (DUT), University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), University of Zululand (Unizulu) and Walter Sisulu University, formerly University of Transkei. Collected data is presented and analysed according to sample units or population groups as follows:

- a) Secondary data from newspaper scanning
- b) Primary data from assistant directors of the regional library depots
- c) Primary data from LIS graduates

4.2. Data from newspaper scanning

As explained in chapter 3 (section 3.5 and figure 3.1), the first population group of the participants were the newspapers which provided the secondary data. This data was collected using newspaper scanning guide (see appendix: C). The Sunday Times weekly newspaper, known for national reach, huge readership and high circulation in the country was initially used as a single source of LIS job advertisements for the present study. The scanning of the LIS job advertisements solely focused on public library job positions, exclusively those that required a tertiary LIS qualification. The LIS job advertisements in the 'career' section of the newspaper were traced. Data for LIS jobs advertisements from January 2015 to December 2017 with a sole purpose of tracing more recent LIS job advertisements in the provincial public libraries exclusively was collected. The collected data was analysed and interpreted using content analysis method (Kothari, 2004; Glenn, 2009; Walliman, 2011). The searching of LIS jobs was done manually/retrospectively. The newspaper for LIS job advertisements from three institutions, which are: the University of Zululand Library (KwaDlangezwa), Don Africana Central Reference library (Durban) and Bessie Head public library (Pietermaritzburg) was scanned. The University of Zululand library and Don Africana Central Reference library did not have all issues of the newspaper, except for the Bessie Head library. Bessie Head library had duplicates for the issues of the newspaper that were out for binding during the period of the study. Unfortunately, the Sunday Times newspaper did not yield sufficient results with respect to the provincial public libraries LIS job adverts. As a result, Ilanga; Mail and Guardian; and Sunday Tribune newspapers were added. Ilanga and Sunday Tribune are known for regional reach whereas Mail and Guardian almost resembles the Sunday Times newspaper through its high readership, national reach and high circulation in the country. The Mail and Guardian newspaper did not advertise any LIS job from the provincial public libraries instead it advertised a number of academic jobs. Like the Sunday Times newspaper, Sunday Tribune newspaper advertised very few LIS job positions. Amongst all, Ilanga newspaper had more job adverts. This is a true reflection of what more than ten library managers confirmed that their job advertisements from public libraries are being most advertised by their local Municipalities through Ilanga newspaper amongst other newspapers and other platforms of job advertisements. This also takes us back to the assertion that libraries are mostly built in rural areas as a way of addressing previous inequalities. Ilanga is an old newspaper that is widely read in the rural communities; so if the posts get advertised there, it will be easier for local people to know about them.

Very few jobs were advertised by the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC); least by the National Research Foundation (NRF); and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. All respective job details covering a three year span (from January 2015 to December 2017) were recorded in the computer through newspaper scanning guide which was created using a Microsoft Word file. Job advertisements appeared in all years. However, most jobs were advertised in the year 2015 and 2017 and less in year 2016. The results from all four newspapers are presented in Table 4.1 below:

Table 4.1: Job Advertisements

	Year				
Newspaper	2015	2016	2017	Total No of job adverts	Percentage (%)
Sunday Times	9	1	1	11	15%
Ilanga	25	5	28	58	78%
Mail and Guardian	0	0	0	0	0%
Sunday Tribune	2	2	1	5	7%
Total No of duplicates	10	1	2	13	18%
Total No without duplicates	26	7	28	61	82%

Out of 74 LIS job advertisements in a three year period (from January 2015 to December 2017), it was found that the highest number of job positions were advertised by Ilanga newspaper (58; 78%), followed by Sunday Times (11; 15%) and the minimum by Sunday Tribune (5; 7%). It is worth noting that each year, one can find LIS job advertisements in Ilanga newspaper and therefore could be considered to be the best medium for advertisements of LIS job opportunities and employment in the provincial public libraries. Out of 74 LIS job adverts, 36 LIS job adverts appeared in year 2015, 8 appeared in year 2016; and 30 in year 2017. In 2015, out of 36 LIS job adverts 9 were duplicates. In 2016, out of 8 LIS job adverts 1 was a duplicate. In 2017, out of 30 LIS job adverts, 1 was a duplicate.

4.2.1. Advertised job titles

The following are job titles that were advertised in the three year period (January 2015 to December 2017), organised from the most advertised job titles to the least advertised:

Table 4.2: Advertised Titles

Job title	Total No of job adverts	Percentage (%)
Librarian	28	39%
Library assistant	15	20%
Internship programmes	13	18%
Cyber cadet/library computer assistant	7	9%
Assistant manager	3	4%
Assistant librarian	2	3%
Deputy manager	1	1%
General assistant/library worker	1	1%
Library intern	1	1%
Library manager	1	1%
Senior librarian	1	1%
Deputy head	1	1%

Table 4.2 presents the diverse public library positions that can be filled by the holders of an LIS tertiary qualification, even though the required job experience varies. For example, positions like librarian, library assistant and assistant librarian normally require a one to three years of work experience. General library worker and internships require no work experience. Amongst other job titles, librarian position was most advertised (39%), followed by library assistant position (20%), then internship programmes (18%) and cyber cadet/library computer assistant position (9%). Other positions were advertised thrice and less. The advertised job titles come in different levels of management in the public library environment. Next, are advertised job titles in their respective managerial positions in the public library environment in line with their requirements.

4.2.2. Job requirements/competencies of advertised jobs in line with their managerial levels in public libraries

Public libraries, like any other organisations classify their library staff duties or functions into three broad categories of managerial levels: top level, middle level and low level management. At each managerial level, each library staff has to carry out various functions,

duties and roles depending on his/her respective level of management, as well as the competencies he/she possesses. The levels of management of public library staff is in line with their rankings as employees. Their ranking is categorised into four broad categories, which are: professional, semi-professional, non-professional and support staff. South African Local Government Association (SALGA) grades the municipalities as a result of this; municipalities determine the public library managerial positions depending on a number of public libraries a particular municipality has. SALGA website (www.salga.org.za) indicates that SALGA is an association that plays an immense role in assisting the municipalities in terms of service delivery to their respective communities. The website further indicates that this association, apart from been a knowledge and information-sharing centre, acts as an employer body and involves in capacity building. The more the number of libraries in a municipality, the higher the chances of the library having all managerial positions. For example, in large public libraries, library managers, deputy librarians, librarians, and senior librarians are usually found and placed in top level management, also called the professionals. Tables 4.3, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6 present the advertised job titles in line with their job requirements or competencies (qualifications, experience, skills, knowledge and attitudes) with respect to different levels of management in a public library environment.

a) Top management / Administrative level

Table 4. 3: Top Management Public Library Job Requirements

Managerial level and advertised job titles	Requirements / Competencies					Salary structure
	Qualifications	Experience in years	Skills	Knowledge	Attitudes	
Top management (library manager, deputy manager, deputy head)	B.Bibl degree/ National Diploma in Library Science or equivalent qualification	2-5 years relevant experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good office administration, planning and organisational skills. • Excellent communication skills (written and verbal). • Good interpersonal relations. • Computer literacy (MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of public service legislation and prescripts applicable to Government, including systems and procedures. • Knowledge of the PFMA. • Knowledge of integrated electronic library and information systems, reference and other information sources. • Knowledge of project management, research and policy development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good work ethics, honesty, reliability and teamwork. • Creative and motivated 	R306 837.69-R627 000 pa

The top management level consists of those job titles which require those who possess B.Bibl degree, Library and Information Science degree as well as other equivalent degrees from other disciplines. Top management possessions need a work experience of at least 2 years and above. Top level managers are also referred to as administrators and as a result, they require skills and knowledge that allow them to do more planning, organising, thinking, policy development/making and decision making in public libraries. Most of their skills are conceptual and less technical

and they can therefore be considered the backbones of a library. Their attitudes such as being creative, ability to work in a team and reliability determine the success and failure of service delivery to user communities in a library. Salary structure varies depending on the size of the public library, public library type and its location, working experience as well the qualification one possesses, but it normally starts from R300 000 per annum.

b) Middle management/Executive

Table 4. 4: Middle Level Management Public Library Job Requirements

Managerial level and advertised job titles	Requirements / Competencies					Salary structure
	Qualifications	Experience in years	Skills	Knowledge	Attitudes	
Middle management (<i>assistant manager, senior librarian, librarian</i>)	appropriate 3 year tertiary qualification, majoring in Library and Information Science / B.Bibl degree	2-3 years library experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good office administration, planning and organisational skills. • Good communication skills (written and verbal). • Computer literacy (MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound knowledge of public library administrative procedures and services. • Knowledge of public service legislation and prescripts applicable to Government, including systems and procedures. • Broad knowledge and interest in reading. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive attitude. • Self-motivated. 	R170 248.4 5-R327 126pa

Like top management, middle level managers' positions require B.Bibl degree, Library and Information Science degree and a 3 year qualification which is diploma in Library Science with a minimum of 2 to 3 years of library work experience. Middle management level skills

and knowledge allow them to communicate and co-ordinate with the top and low level managers. Their skills and knowledge also allow them to plan and organise. However, they are more of managerial and technical procedures and less conceptual compared to those in the top management. Like the top management, middle management salary is also determined by the size, type and location of a library. Their salary begins from R170 000 per annum to the minimum salary of the top level management positions.

c) Low level management/Supervisory/Operative/First-line managers

Table 4. 5: Low Level Management Public Library Job Requirements

Managerial level and advertised job titles	Requirements / Competencies					Salary structure
	Qualifications	Experience in years	Skills	Knowledge	Attitudes	
Low level management (assistant librarian, cyber cadet)	Library Degree / National Diploma in Library Science / Matric or Grade 12 and CompTIA accredited A+ Certificate	1-2 years in library environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good verbal and written communication skills. • Hard/provable/technical and practical skills. • Computer skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and experience of computers, word processing, internet and email. • Basic understanding of maintaining and troubleshooting windows 7 operating system software, PC and printer hardware (working on window 8.1 will be an advantage). 	Willingness to work according to set library hours, including Saturdays	*R125 043.52- R225 434.04 pa

Low level management positions require those with library degree, diploma or certificate in library and information science with at least one year library working experience. Low level management positions require more technical skills and knowledge as well as communication skills.

Their attitudes require a committed individual in working additional library hours. The type, size and location of library are big determinants of every library position salary structure like other managerial levels in a library setting.

d) Internships and other positions

Table 4. 6: Internships and Other Positions Public Library Job Requirements

Managerial level and advertised job titles	Requirements / Competencies					Salary structure
	Qualifications	Experience	Skills	Knowledge	Attitudes	
Other (<i>library assistant, internships, general assistant/ library worker, library intern</i>)	Grade 12 / Library degree	0-1 year in a library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good communication skills. • Computer literacy. 			R30 000-R103 44.00pa

Only the library assistant position identified the qualification, experience and some skills but the rest job titles (internships, library worker and library intern) did not. Internship positions usually indicate the field of study e.g. Library and Information Science and also the age restriction, normally candidates must not be above 35 years of age. This may be due to the fact that these job positions are normally for providing better library work experience to LIS professionals. Their salary structure begins from only R30 000 per annum or around R3 000 per month.

4.3. Data from assistant directors of regional library depots in the province

As explained in chapter 3 (section 3.5 and figure 3.1), the second group of the participants were assistant directors from the regional library depots in the province. The data from this population was gathered through an interview (see appendix: D). Semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect data from five assistant directors (ADs) following the structure of the provincial public libraries as they are structured according to regional library depots in the province. It is the duty of assistant directors from regional library depots to ensure that they provide professional support to all public libraries in the province. All assistant directors from five regional library depots in the province participated in the study. A mobile cell phone was used to record each interview after seeking participant's permission to be part of the study. Careful notes were taken from each interview to increase the reliability of information obtained. The collected data is presented according to themes and sub-headings derived from the research objectives and questions of the study. The recorded data was transcribed to ensure that each interviewee's details were captured correctly. Transcription of data was used in related studies by Mphidi (2016) and Strand (2016). In this section, data is presented according to biographical details; perceptions on job functions and requirements of employed LIS graduates; perceptions regarding LIS curricula offered by SA LIS schools; and perceptions on the challenges facing employed LIS graduates with respect to their competencies (skills, knowledge, attitudes, experiences, qualifications) and job requirements.

4.3.1. General information

The data presented in this section provide general information about the provincial regional library depots as well as the main/centre public libraries that participated in the study. This information was collected with respect to the number of public libraries being serviced by each respective regional library depot and its municipality. Data is presented in Tables 4.7 and 4.8 below.

Table 4. 7: KZN Regional Library Depots

Region	Depot	Municipality	No of public libraries
Western	Dundee	Endumeni	35
Northern	Coastal	EThekwini	60
Eastern	South Coast	EThekwini	38
Southern	Midlands	Msunduzi	49
Northern	Mbazwana	UMhlabuyalingana	11
Total			193

Table 4. 8: Centre Public Libraries

Centre public library name	Municipality	Depot
Ladysmith public library	Alfred Duma	Dundee
Richards Bay public library	UMhlathuze	Coastal
Bessie Head public library	Msunduzi	Midlands
Westville public library	EThekwini	South Coast

The Coastal regional library depot situated in Northern region under eThekwini municipality has the largest number of public libraries (60), followed by Midlands with 49, South Coast 38 and Dundee with 35. Mbazwana has the lowest number of public libraries, standing only with 11. Each regional library depot has a number of standard and centre/bigger libraries. Table 4.8 presents centre public libraries that participated in the study. Mbazwana regional library depot has no centre/bigger public library, therefore did not participate.

4.3.2. Biographical details

4.3.2.1. Work details

4.3.2.1.1. Work experience

All interviewed respondents held assistant director's position from their respective regional library depot. The respondents were asked to indicate their years of working experience as assistant directors from their respective regional library depots. Out of the five participants, three had 10 years of work experience as assistant directors; one had 5 and the other one had 6.

4.3.2.1.2. Other positions / job titles

This section sought to determine other positions or job titles that were held by the respondents before becoming assistant directors of their respective regional library depots. Out of five participants, two had worked as librarians before becoming assistant directors, whereas the rest of the participants have not worked in other positions at the institutions included in the study.

4.3.2.2. Educational qualifications

4.3.2.2.1. Academic and professional qualifications

This section sought to determine both academic and professional qualifications for assistant directors as they oversee public libraries' functioning in the province. Three respondents had Honours in Library and Information Science, one had Masters in Sociology and the other one had B. Technology in Library and Information Science and Diploma in Project Management as academic qualifications. From the three holders of the Honours in Library and Information Science degree, one respondent also held a Skills Development Certificate as a professional qualification. The holder of B. Technology in Library and Information Science also held a Diploma in Archives as a professional qualification. The rest of the respondents did not have any other professional qualifications apart from their academic qualifications.

4.3.2.2.2. Fundamental skills needed for managerial positions

It was necessary to identify and understand the fundamental skills of the assistant directors as they can determine the responsibilities of LIS graduates/professionals; they are decision makers, ultimate judges of the library working world and also more knowledgeable in their field. Above all, the assistant director's main role is to provide professional support to the public libraries. Professional support involves, working with local municipalities to carry out recruitment processes of library staff, providing training and constantly monitoring progress and quality of public library service delivery. All five respondents articulated the following skills as fundamental to the managerial position as an AD of the regional library depot:

- Management skills
- Computer literacy skills
- Good interpersonal skills
- Good public relations skills
- Financial management skills
- Human resources management skills

- Presentation skills
- Report writing
- Research methods/planning
- Supervisory skills
- Leadership skills
- Customer relations
- Strategic planning
- Marketing skills
- Promotional skills
- Policy development

4.3.3. Perceptions on job functions and requirements of employed LIS graduates

4.3.3.1. Public library positions for those with an LIS degree

The respondents were asked to identify the positions/job titles that can be filled with the holders of an LIS degree in the public library. Librarian, library assistant and assistant librarian are positions that can be filled with those with an LIS degree. These three positions were confirmed by all five ADs. Their response is in line with the data obtained from LIS job advertisements from the newspaper scanning whereby a librarian position has been most advertised with 39%, followed by library assistant post by 20%.

4.3.3.2. Minimal work experience

It was therefore necessary to indicate the minimal years of work experience for the holders of the LIS degree. All respondents indicated that a holder of an LIS degree should at least have 1 to 3 years of relevant experience. One respondent brought to attention that each municipality provides the minimum years of work experience required from LIS graduates on public libraries' job advertisements.

4.3.3.4. Mismatch and job requirements

It is of paramount importance to identify the loopholes with respect to LIS graduates competencies and their everyday duties in public libraries. There are several mismatches as identified by the respondents in public libraries with regards to LIS graduates competencies and their everyday duties. The respondents have confirmed the knowledge, skills and qualification mismatch from both fresh and already employed LIS graduates in the library environment. Below are mismatches/ gaps identified and their elaboration.

a) Knowledge and skills gap

The respondents identified three types of knowledge and skills gap in the public library environment, namely: library marketing and promotions, customer service, ICT knowledge and skills and customer relations skills. Two respondents indicated that technical skills seem to pose the greatest challenge as a result of today's workplace being defined by technological advancements. One respondent felt that library marketing and promotions' skills are sometimes lacking in some LIS graduates, however this depends on the LIS School attended and the curricula delivery mode. The respondent further indicated that a customer relations skill is sometimes a bit challenging, but emphasised that it highly depends on one's personality. "A customer is always right"; however some LIS professionals take their negative attitudes and practice them in the workplace. Therefore, some short courses or job trainings can be potentially useful to equip them with supervisory skills, more especially the fresh graduates.

b) Qualification mismatch specifically in the "Information Science degree"

Two of the five respondents felt that most of the modules do not talk to what is actually happening in the public library environment. For example, there are no cataloguing and classification modules in the Information Science degree at the University of Zululand which focuses on Information Retrieval (IR) instead. LIS graduates from the Information Science degree have modules which are more on Information Technology as a result of which IR has a component of classification while lacking an element of cataloguing which is considered core to LIS services. It is therefore sometimes difficult to shortlist a candidate with an Information Science degree in public library except for a cyber-cadet position. This deprives some of the graduates' of employment opportunities in the public library environment. The preference goes to those with four years Library and Information Science degree with cataloguing and classification modules which are core to librarianship. According to the majority of the respondents, "most graduates revealing such mismatch come from the University of Zululand." Below are the responses from the first and third respondents based on qualification mismatch:

Selected responses to the interview question: Have you ever noticed any mismatch in knowledge and skills between what the job requires in the library and what the LIS graduates know?

- **R1:** *We have noticed a qualification mismatch while working with the fresh graduates. The challenge is more from the holders of a three year degree (Information Science). This has been more challenging in a sense that it has been even difficult to short list them. Most of their modules possibly 80% do not talk to what is happening in the library. Sometimes employers may overlook the graduate's qualification and hire that particular graduate only to find that you need to take that person from the scratch as if it a person with only matric. But if you give that person an internet café within the library he/she does perfectly well.*
- **R3:** *You know what seems to be a challenge at the moment is the Information Science degree that is offered by the University of Zululand. The challenge is basically in public libraries because the public library environment requires full classification and cataloguing modules. As we acquire library material you need skills for cataloguing and classify library material. It looks like there is a little bit that students learn relating to cataloguing and classification. This challenge deprives some of the graduates the employment opportunities. It is different though because there are other institutions that are calling it Information Science degree but they have cataloguing and classification throughout the years; so "Ongoye" I think they decided to cut it short although it really required in public libraries.*

4.3.3.5. A need for new skills, knowledge and attitudes from LIS graduates

The respondents were asked to indicate if employed LIS graduates do need some new competencies (skills, knowledge and attitudes) to perform their everyday duties satisfactorily in public libraries. As indicated above (section 4.3.3.4) there are still some gaps from LIS graduates with regards to their competencies and their everyday duties. All respondents have affirmed that LIS graduates do need some new knowledge, skills and attitudes to perform their job functions satisfactorily. The respondents have identified the following skills and knowledge as needed by LIS graduates in the public libraries:

- Technical knowledge and skills.
- Both knowledge and skills on cataloguing and classification.

- Supervisory skills.

Selected response on the interview question: Do you think LIS professionals need some new knowledge, skills and attitudes to perform their job functions satisfactorily?

- **R2:** *Yes, they need new attitudes. We are living in the 21st century; libraries are no longer only about issuing and returning books. You have to align yourself with a national development plans. Speak to what is going on. We need to make impact to the society, so if you are going to sit and wait to issue and return books what impact are you doing? At the end of the day we are serving the community, we need to have programs that link to the national development agenda 2063, Cape Town declaration that helps to change the mind-set of a librarian.*

4.3.3.6. Responses on opinions on the ways of acquiring knowledge, skills and attitudes

Table 4. 9: Suggestions on the Ways of Acquiring Needed Competencies

Participant	Response
Respondent 1	<i>I think the only thing that can be done when it happens that they get employed is to provide the job training. Although, It takes time for a person even in the job to adapt because it is like you are taking somebody from a different qualification and putting them on the librarianship.</i>
Respondent 5	<i>Through training, your manager or your supervisor accesses you through looking at the skills you have as well as your strong points and weak points. That is where they see the gap and how you perform your duties either appropriately or not.</i>
Respondent 4	<i>Through training and workshops.</i>
Respondent 3	<i>Through workshops, seminars, conferences where someone would present a research paper and through mind-set.</i>
Respondent 2	<i>Those who are already employed would need training other than anything else. As some of the modules that are core of the librarianship are missing, so it would be more of training other than workshops.</i>

All five (5) respondents strongly favoured job training as the best way of acquiring some new knowledge, skills and attitudes in the public library. The respondents also confirmed workshops, seminars and conferences as means for acquiring these competencies.

4.3.4. Perceptions regarding LIS curricula offered by SA LIS schools

a) Noted LIS curricula inadequacies

This section sought to determine the perceptions on the LIS curricula offered by LIS schools. The respondents' responses are in line with the competencies of LIS graduates as well as their everyday functions to identify the inadequacies from the offered curricula. The majority of respondents have confirmed that the curricula offered by LIS schools are not sufficient to meet the demands of LIS graduates everyday duties in public libraries. One respondent noted that LIS schools' curricula sometimes struggle to keep up with the changes in technological advancements, such as including some technological modules in the LIS curricula. Two respondents indicated that Information Science degree from other institutions lacks cataloguing and classification modules, citing the "University of Zululand". Two respondents indicated that this result into LIS graduates lack of knowledge and skills in cataloguing and classifying library materials. Other respondents felt that the curricula content dwells much on the theoretical part and lacks practicality. One respondent indicated that the offered curricula from LIS schools are sufficient. The respondent further stated that it depends on the LIS School attended as well as the curriculum delivery mode.

b) Ways to rectify noted inadequacies

In the light of the noted inadequacies, one respondent felt that career guidance and counselling are of paramount importance before someone commits him/herself towards pursuing the career to rectify the inadequacies. Other respondent expressed that, Higher Education Institutions offering a librarianship career should communicate their curricula with libraries through the province so that information is readily available to those who come to the libraries. Two respondents stated that there should be a clear distinction between Information Science and Library and Information Science degrees because these are two different degrees at the end of the day. Additionally, the respondents noted that LIS institutions need to re-look and revise the modules for each degree e.g. Information Science and Library and Information Science degree.

4.3.5. Challenges facing LIS graduates and how to overcome them

4.3.5.1. Challenges

This section sought to determine the challenges of employed LIS graduates in public libraries. The challenges were aligned with the LIS graduates' competencies and their everyday duties/functions. The respondents articulated the challenges as follows:

- Lack of practical knowledge and experience.
- Lack of supervisory and communication skills from fresh graduates.
- Lack of technical knowledge and skills.
- Classification and cataloguing skills for the holders of an Information Science degree is lacking.
- Under qualification-in terms of level 7 and 8, especially when one is employed by the government as per DBSA.

4.3.5.2. How to overcome the challenges

In response to the highlighted challenges, the respondents were asked to suggest ways of overcoming them. The following are respondents' suggestions:

- "Internship is the key for fresh graduates".
- Providing job training for those already in the workplace.
- Taking short courses related to an LIS degree, e.g. a certificate.
- LIS institutions need to make a clear emphasis with respect to the degrees offered.
- LIS schools to communicate their curricula with libraries throughout the province.
- LIS institutions also need to, where necessary, repackage their curricula to align with LIS job market.

4.4. Data from LIS graduates from both regional library depots and centre public libraries

As explained in chapter 3 (section 3.5 and figure 3.1), the third group of the participants were LIS graduates from the regional library depots and centre public libraries in the province. The data from this population group was collected through soliciting questionnaires (see appendix: E). A total of 58 survey questionnaires were administered to all employed LIS graduates/professionals from their respective work stations. The questionnaires were physically distributed by the researcher in each regional library depot (Dundee, Mbazwana, Midlands, Coastal and South Coast depots) as well as centre public libraries representing

each respective depot in the province (Ladysmith, Westville, Richards Bay and Bessie Head public library). Mbazwana centre public library did not participate as a result none is available, only the regional library depot participated. During questionnaire distribution some of the LIS professionals were not in their respective workplaces, therefore the questionnaires were left under the care of selected colleagues for those absent. The respondents were given a two weeks period (10 working days) to complete the questionnaires. Some respondents managed to finish in time but some failed to do so, therefore the period was extended for those who failed to finish on time and that caused a huge delay in the analysis of the data gathered from questionnaires. The delayed questionnaires were then scanned and emailed to the researcher. Out of fifty eight (58) issued questionnaires, thirty seven (37) questionnaires (N=37) were returned, giving a 64% return rate and considered adequate for analysis, since it is above 50% (Neuman, 2000).

The next section provides general information on five regional library depots and the centre public libraries that participated in this study. Centre public libraries that participated were from four depots namely Dundee, Midlands, Coastal and South Coast depots except for the Mbazwana depot because it consists of only the standard libraries and there is no centre or bigger public library under it. Table 4.10 presents the number of questionnaires as well as the percentage of response rate per participated depot and public libraries.

Table 4.10: Participation and Response Rate

Library depots and centre public libraries	No of targeted participants N=58	No of participants responded N=37
Dundee depot	3	3
Coastal depot	3	1
South Coast depot	3	0
Midlands depot	4	4
Mbazwana depot	2	2
Ladysmith public library	6	4
Richards Bay public library	8	2
Bessie Head public library	26	19
Westville public library	3	2
Total	58	37

Table 4.10 presents all five regional library depots and four centre public libraries, where both assistant directors and LIS graduates were selected to participate in the study. Out of the four centre public libraries that participated, Bessie Head public library had the largest share due to the fact that the centre public libraries are not equal in size, do not have the same number of staff members and the academic qualifications of the staff differ. The other three centre public libraries had most staff members with grade 12/matric certificate, which was not the interest of the present study. Bessie Head public library had most (26) employed staff members with LIS tertiary qualifications, which is the qualification of interest to this study, and all were sampled. Out of the 26 that were selected, only 19 participated.

4.4.1. Biographical details

4.4.1.1. Job titles

This section sought to determine each participant's current position/job title in his/her respective workplace. The data is presented in figure 4.1.

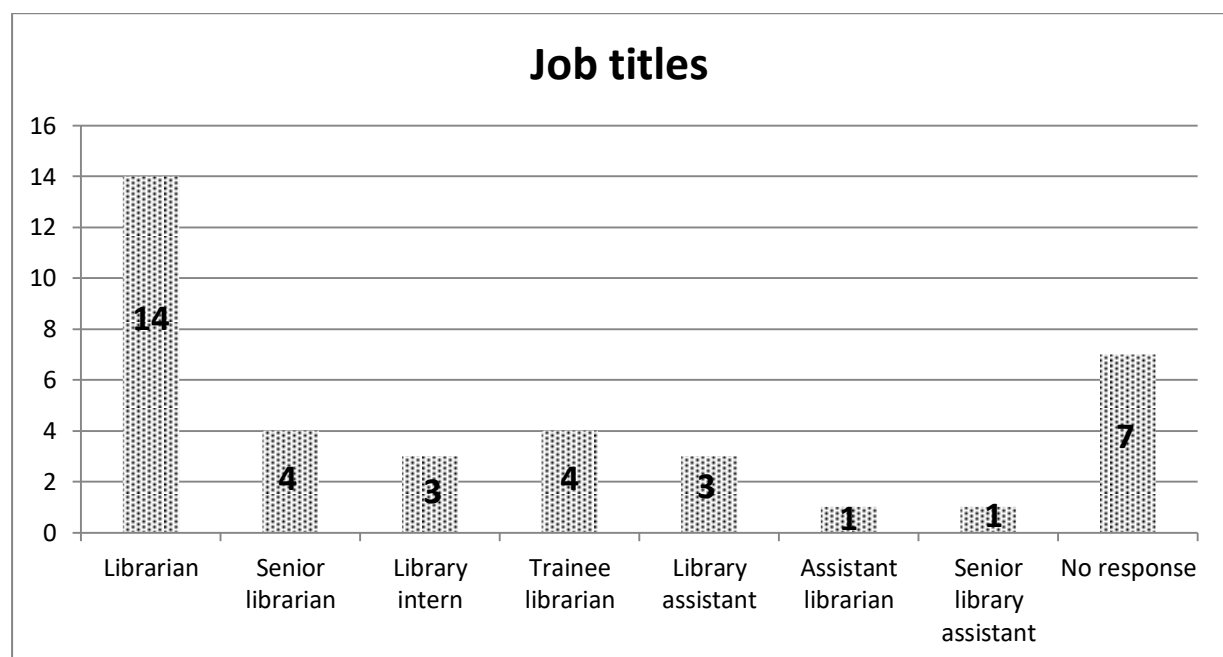


Figure 4. 1: Job Titles

Out of 37 respondents, 14 (38%) held a librarian position and was most advertised. 4 (11%) for senior librarian and trainee librarian positions, 3 (8%) for library intern and library assistant, 1 (3%) for both assistant librarian and senior library assistant and 7 (19%) did not

respond. Librarian position has been most advertised and that matches the findings from the newspaper scanning whereby a librarian was also most advertised by 39% (28 job positions).

4.4.2. Perceptions on job functions and requirements of employed LIS graduates

4.4.2.1. Academic qualifications

It was necessary to determine the employed LIS graduates/professionals' academic qualifications. The results are shown in Figure 4.2.

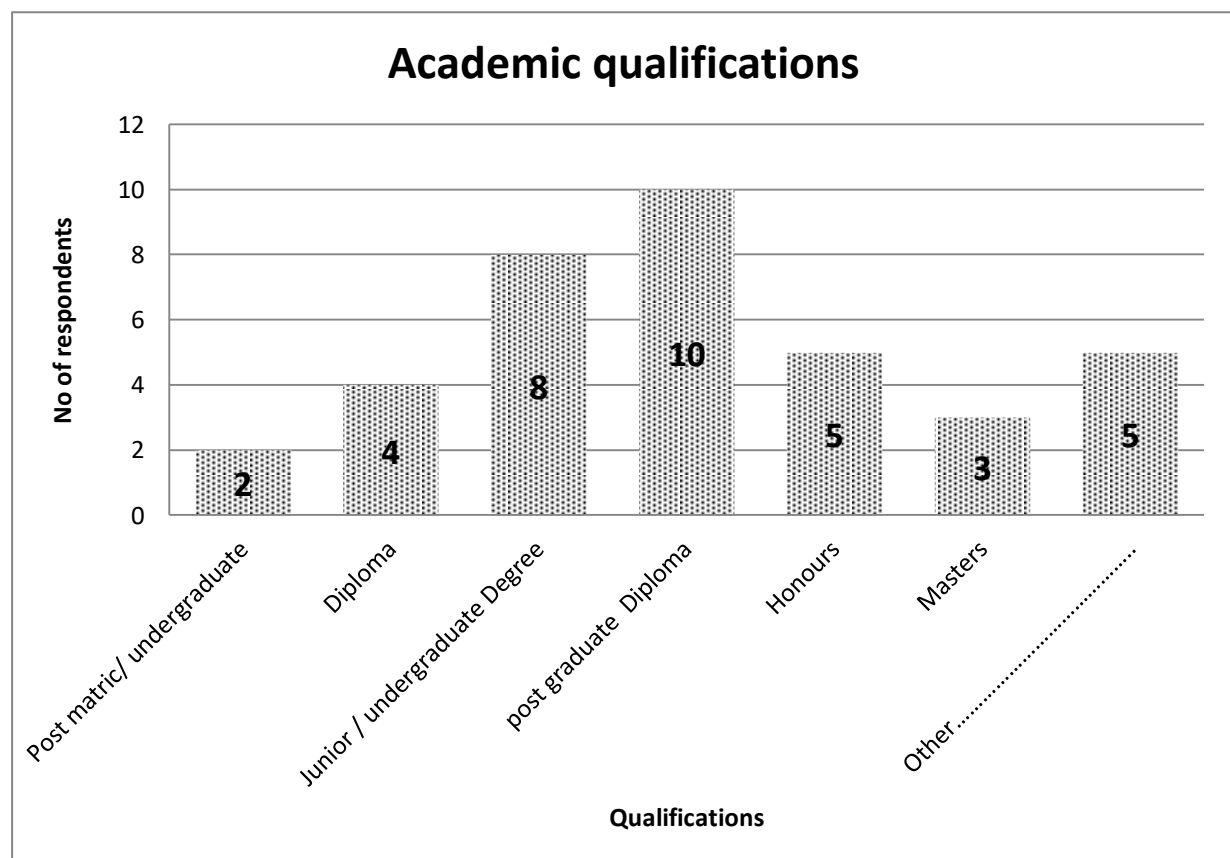


Figure 4. 2: Academic qualifications

The results indicate the larger number (10=27%) is for the holders of the postgraduate Diploma, followed by junior/undergraduate degree (8= 22%) LIS qualification amongst other academic qualifications presented. The least number indicates the holders of the post matric as well as masters. 5 (14%) others represent the holders of the B. Technology in Library Science which could be representing new emerging professions within the LIS field. B.Technology is not entirely a new qualification in the global market, but it is an emerging qualification within the LIS job market.

4.4.2.2. Gap between LIS job and academic qualification

The respondents were asked to determine if they have ever noticed any gap between their current jobs and academic qualification. Results are shown in Figure 4.3.

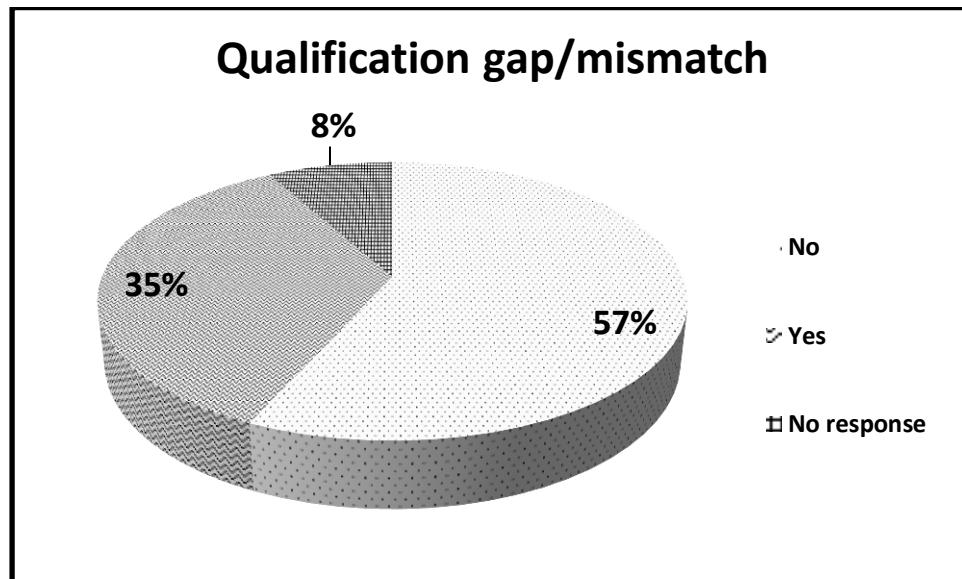


Figure 4. 3: Qualification gap

Out of 37 respondents, 21 (57%) did not notice any gap in their current jobs and academic qualifications, 13 (35%) have noticed the gap and 3 (8%) did not respond. Although the gap has been indicated by the minority (35%), one can deduce that there seem to be a gap between employed LIS professionals in the public library with regards to their academic qualifications.

a) Nature of the qualification gap

It was necessary to identify the nature of the qualification gap/mismatch as noticed by 35% of the respondents from their respective job titles. The nature of the qualification gap was identified as over and under qualification. Out of 13 (35%) respondents who felt a gap between their academic qualifications and their everyday functions, 3 (8%) felt an under-qualification, 4 (10%) felt over-qualification and 6 (17%) felt both (Over and under qualification).

4.4.2.3. Work experience

Respondents were asked to determine the work experience in their current jobs. The results are presented in Figure 4.4.



Figure 4. 4: Work experience

The majority of respondents 15 (41%) had 7 or more years of library work experience, followed by 1 to 3 years by 13 (35%).

4.4.2.4. Knowledge

The respondents were asked to determine the knowledge they have as identified by Gill et al (2001) in The Public Library Services: IFLA/UNESCO Guidelines for Development using a likert scale. Results are shown in Table 4.11.

Table 4. 11: Types of Knowledge and its Levels

Knowledge	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
Knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity	2	1	21	12
Knowledge of the material that forms the library's collection and how to access it			16	21
Knowledge of information and communications technology		3	20	13
An understanding of and sympathy with the principles of public service		3	21	12

Most participants vouched for knowledge of the material that forms the library's collection and how to access it. Other knowledge types have been indicated to be in a good and excellent state. Identified knowledge types have been obtained while studying and in the workplace. Out of 37 participants, 33 (89%) believed to have acquired identified knowledge

(both when studying and in the work place), 3 (8%) in the work place and 1 (3%) while studying.

4.4.2.5. Other knowledge

In addition to above identified knowledge types, the respondents have articulated to possess the following knowledge types:

Table 4. 12: Other Knowledge

Other Knowledge	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Cataloguing and classification	9	24%
Knowledge of library promotion	8	22%
Knowledge of collection development	6	16%
Knowledge of managing records (digital and physical)	4	11%
Creating a work-centred environment in order to encourage the open sharing and use of all forms of knowledge	3	8%
Knowledge of Batho Pele principles		5%
Library marketing and advocacy	2	5%
Knowledge of literacy skills	2	5%
Problem solving skills	2	5%
Logical thinking and attention to details	2	5%
Knowledge of trade exhibitions and conferences	2	5%
Systems management (PALS, SLIMS)	2	5%
Knowledge of the business environment	1	3%
Knowledge of managing library staff	1	3%
Importance of social cohesion through libraries	1	3%
Knowledge of work delegation	1	3%
Knowledge of managing library facilities to be available for patrons	1	3%
Performing extensive needs analysis	1	3%
Literacy and access to information	1	3%
Ethical code of information access	1	3%
Sustainable goals development	1	3%
Limitations and advantages in South Africa reading	1	3%
Knowledge of ergonomics (Health, safety awareness, maintenance of building and environment)	1	3%
Promotion of information access act	1	3%
Knowledge of report writing	1	3%

4.4.2.6. Skills

The respondents were asked to determine the skills they have as identified by Gill et al (2001) in the Public Library Services: IFLA/UNESCO Guidelines for Development using a likert scale. Results are shown in table 4.10.

Table 4. 13: types of skills and its levels

Skills	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
The ability to communicate positively with people		2	16	19
The ability to understand the needs of users		1	16	20
The ability to co-operate with individuals and groups in the community		3	17	16
The ability to work with others in providing an effective library service			13	23
Organisational skills, with the flexibility to identify and implement changes	1	2	18	14
Imagination, vision and openness to new ideas and practice		5	16	15
Readiness to change methods of working to meet new situations	1	3	16	16

The majority of respondents, 24 (65%), indicated to have obtained the identified skills in both ways (while pursuing studies and in the work place), 12 (32%) in the work place and 1 (3%) while pursuing the studies.

4.4.2.7. Other skills

Apart from identified skills, the respondents were asked to identify other skills they have. The respondents highlighted skills as follows:

Table 4. 14: Other skills

Other skills	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Technical/computer skills	13	35%
Cataloguing and classification skills	6	16%
Research skills	6	16%
Management skills	5	14%
Interpersonal skills	3	8%
Problem solving skills	2	5%
Information literacy/retrieval	2	5%
Library promotion and marketing	2	5%
Administrative skills	1	3%
Project management	1	3%
Supervisory skills	1	3%
Records management skills	1	3%
Time management	1	3%
Presentation skills	1	3%
Library promotion	1	3%
Using world share system and millennium	1	3%
Interacting with public/presentations	1	3%
End-user focused service improvement	1	3%
Skills of implementing work policies and applying rules	1	3%
Skills of managing bibliographic records	1	3%
Ability to multi-task	1	3%

4.4.2.8. A need for new skills

This section sought to determine if there is a need for new skills from employed LIS professionals in the public library. The results are presented in Figure 4.5.

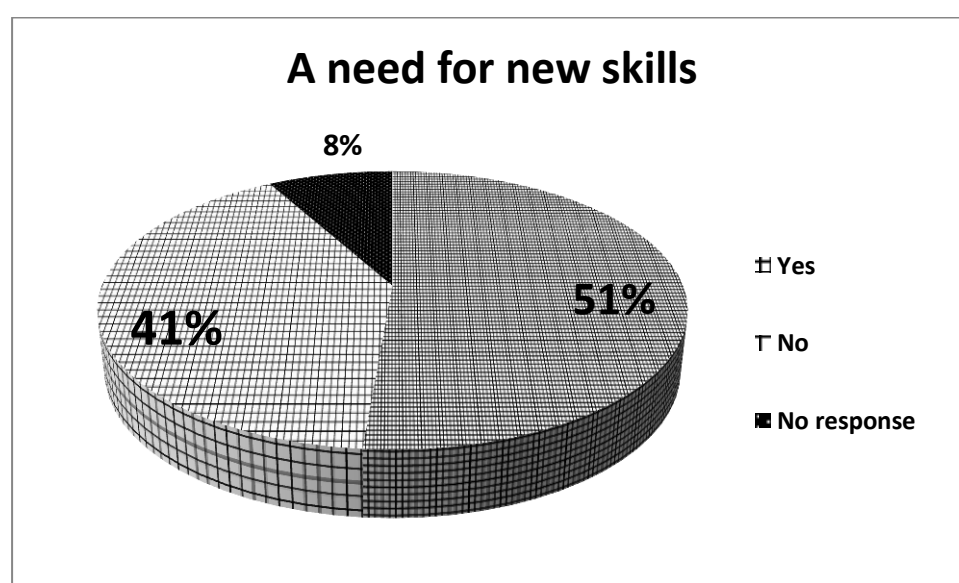


Figure 4. 5: A need for new skills

Out of 37 respondents, 19 (51%) strongly favoured the need for new skills in their current jobs, 15 (41%) felt no need for new skills, 3 (8%) did not respond. The need for new skills seems to be common with all the years of work experience of the respondents. The respondents articulated the needed skills as follows:

Table 4. 15: Needed skills

Needed skills	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Computer/ICT skills	6	16%
Cataloguing and classification skills	4	11%
Conservation and preservation skills	3	8%
Sign language skills/Skills for dealing with patrons having special needs like blinds and deaf	2	5%
Event/project management skills	2	5%
Acquisition skills	1	3%
Collection development skills	1	3%
Leadership skills	1	3%
Web and graphic design	1	3%
Digitisation	1	3%
Management skills	1	3%
Problem solving	1	3%
Library outreach ideas	1	3%

4.4.2.10. Ways of acquiring needed skills

As indicated (section 4.4.2.8), there is a need for new skills. The participants were then asked to recommend the ways of acquiring the aforementioned skills in the workplace. The results are shown in Figure 4.6.

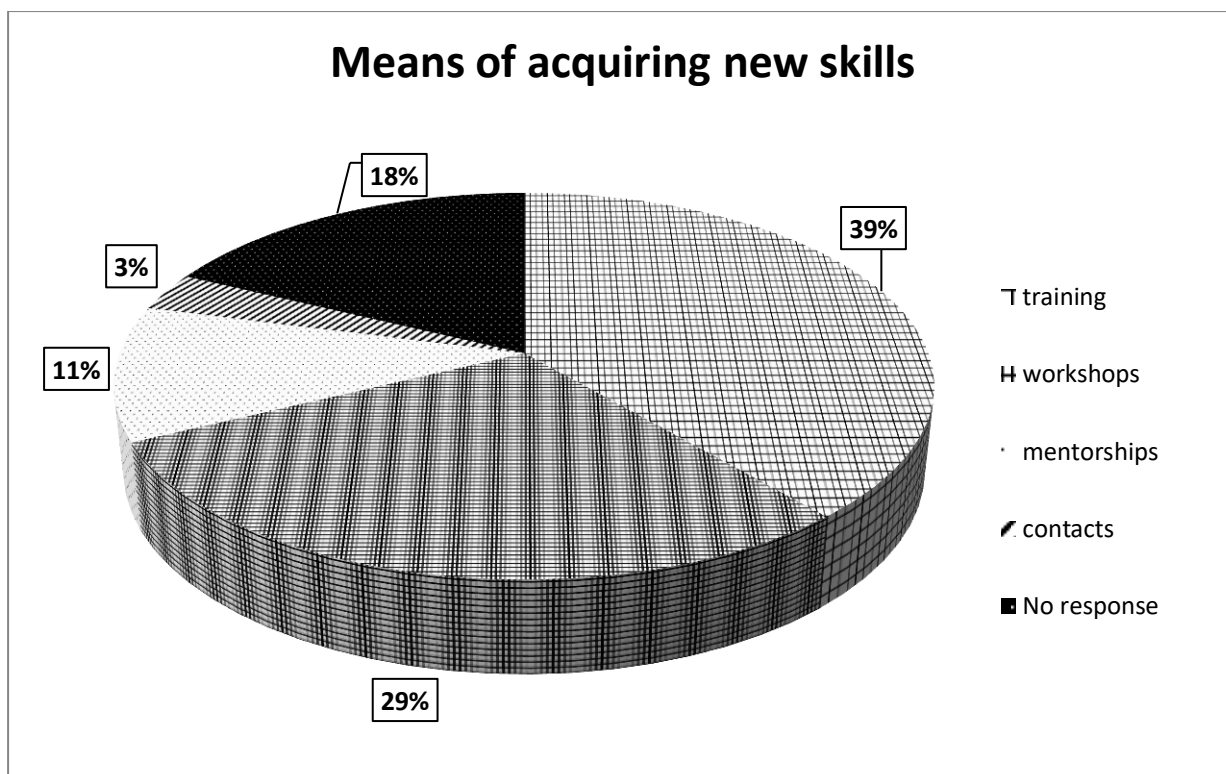


Figure 4. 6: Means for acquiring new skills

Amongst other means of acquiring needed skills, training is highly favoured (39%) as the best way to acquire needed skills in the work place. This matches with the response from the data collected from the assistant directors of the regional library depots in the province, where all respondents supported job training above all other means. 18% presents did not see a need for new skills, whereas the rest of the percentages reflect other means of acquiring needed skills by employed LIS professionals in public libraries.

4.4.2.11. Responsible person for addressing skills

The respondents were asked to indicate a person who can be held responsible for addressing the skills needed by employed LIS professionals. The respondents articulated the following:

Table 4. 16: Responsible Person for Addressing Needed Skills

Responsible person	Percentage (%)
Employer	59%
The library and relevant stakeholders e.g. DAC, LIASA	19%
LIS institutions/universities	5%
Human Resource and municipality	5%

4.4.2.12. Skills gap

The respondents were asked to indicate if they have ever noticed any skills gap from their respective employment stations in relation to their everyday duties. Results are presented in Figure 4.7.

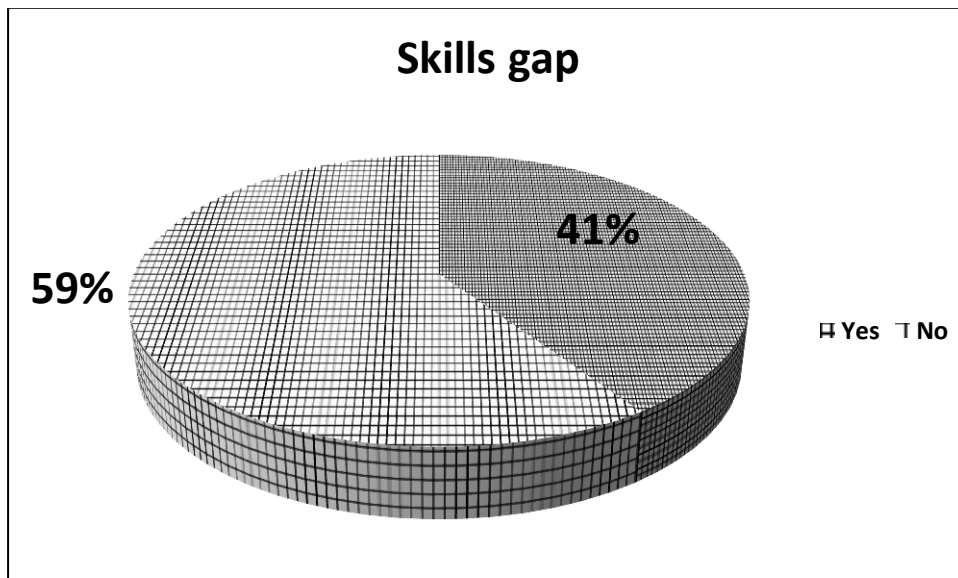


Figure 4. 7: Skills gap

From 37 respondents, 22 (59%) did not notice any skills gap/mismatch whereas 15 (41%) have noticed skills gap. The nature of the skills gap was identified as under and over-skilfulness. Out of 15 (41%) respondents, 9 (25%) noticed they are under-skilled, 3 (8%) are over-skilled and 4 (11%) felt it was both (under and over-skilled).

4.4.2.13. Attitudes

The respondents were asked to determine the attitudes they have identified in Table 4.11 using a likert scale. Results are shown in Table 4.17.

Table 4. 17: Attitudes and its Levels

Attitudes	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
Work under pressure		6	22	9
Working independently		3	15	17
Working extended hours e.g. weekends and evenings	3	7	19	7
Team work			14	20
Accuracy		2	15	17
Creativity		8	14	14
Innovativeness		8	13	14
Confidence		2	17	16
Energetic		3	15	17
Loyalty			10	24
Well organised		3	17	14
Passion for development		1	17	17
Self-managing		1	16	15
Disciplined		2	14	20

The majority of respondent purported to possess excellent and good attitudes. Out 37 (64%) respondents, 14 (38%) indicated to have acquired identified attitudes when both studying and in the workplace, 12 (32%) in the workplace and 1 (3%) while studying. These results indicate that most attitudes are acquired in both ways.

4.4.2.14. Other attitudes

Apart from identified attitudes, the respondents have highlighted that they possess the following attitudes:

Table 4. 18: Other Attitudes

Attitudes	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Honesty/trustworthiness	3	8%
positivity	3	8%
Flexibility/adaptability	3	8%
Time-management/punctuality	2	5%
Reliable	1	3%
Patience	1	3%
Eager to learn	1	3%
Good work ethics	1	3%
humbleness	1	3%
Considerate and understanding	1	3%
Respect for others	1	3%
Open minded	1	3%
Pro-activeness	1	3%
Considerate	1	3%
Committed	1	3%
Helpfulness	1	3%
Enthusiasm	1	3%
Innovative	1	3%
Appreciation/gratefulness	1	3%
Exemplary	1	3%
Acknowledging	1	3%
Initiative	1	3%
Goal oriented	1	3%
Passionate	1	3%
Handle and resolve conflict	1	3%
Professionalism	1	3%

4.4.2.15. A need for new attitudes

The respondents were asked to indicate if they see any need for new attitudes from their workplaces. The results are presented in Figure 4.8.

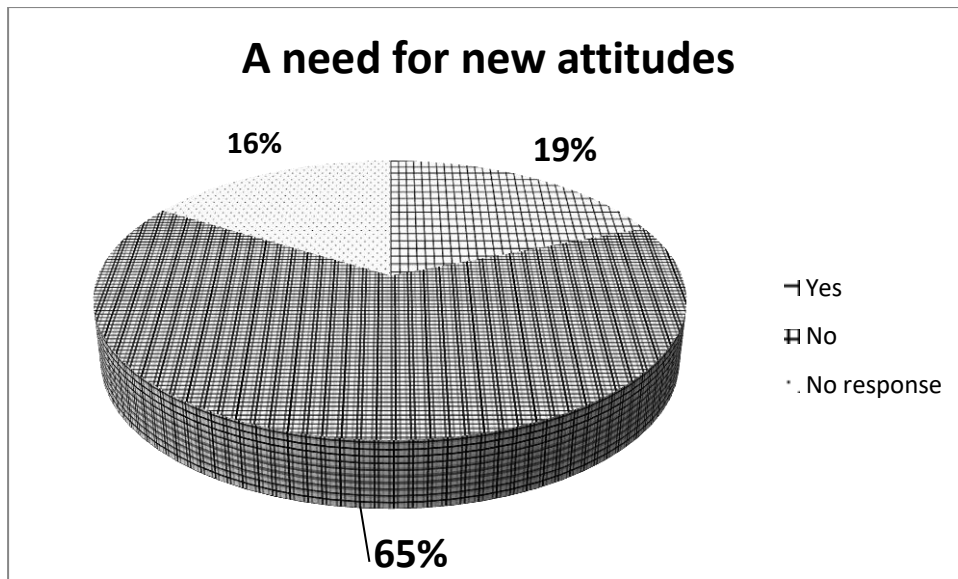


Figure 4. 8: A need for new attitudes

From 37 respondents, 24 (65%) did not see a need for new attitudes in their respective workplaces, 7 (19%) saw the need and 6 (16%) did not respond. This results show that there is less need for new attitudes as one of the job requirements of employed LIS graduates in the public libraries.

4.4.3. Perceptions regarding LIS curricula offered by SA LIS schools

4.4.3.1. Theory and practice

Participants were asked to indicate if the theory and practice offered during their degrees have empowered them to execute their job functions effectively or not. The results are presented in Figure 4.9.

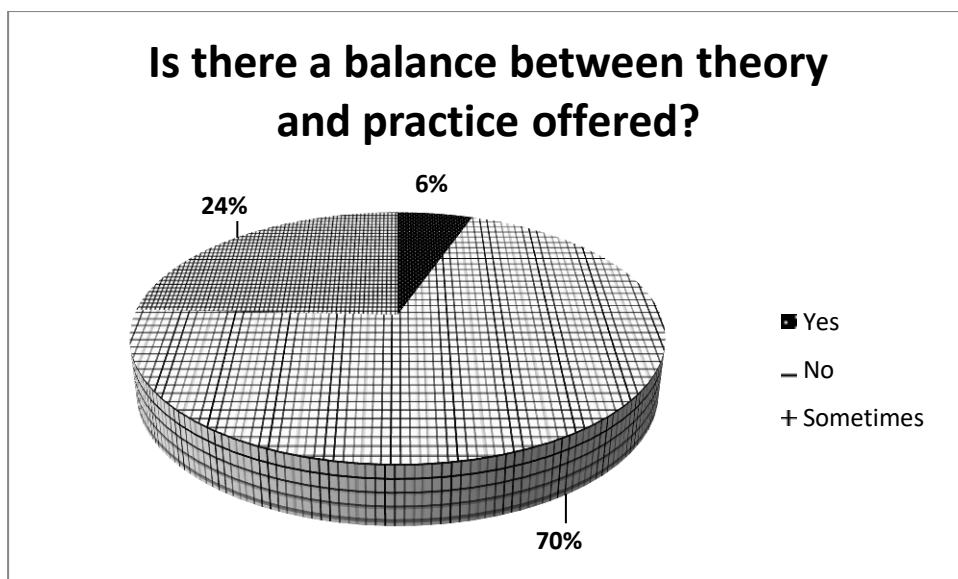


Figure 4. 9: Balance between theory and practice

Out of 37 respondents, 26 (70%) indicated that the offered curriculum was not well balanced in terms of theory and practice (most of the modules are more on the theoretical aspect of the course and are lacking in the practical aspect), 9 (24%) sometimes saw a balance and 2 (6%) did see the balance.

4.4.3.2. Balancing theory and practice

Suggestions for balancing theory and practice were obtained from 9 (24%) (Sometimes) and 2 (6%) (No) respondents. The respondents suggested more practical exposure/in-house training as essential to familiarise students with what is expected in the workplace.

4.4.3.3. Curricula revision

This section sought to determine if employed LIS professionals see any need for curricula revision by their previous institutions of learning. The results are shown in Figure 4.10.

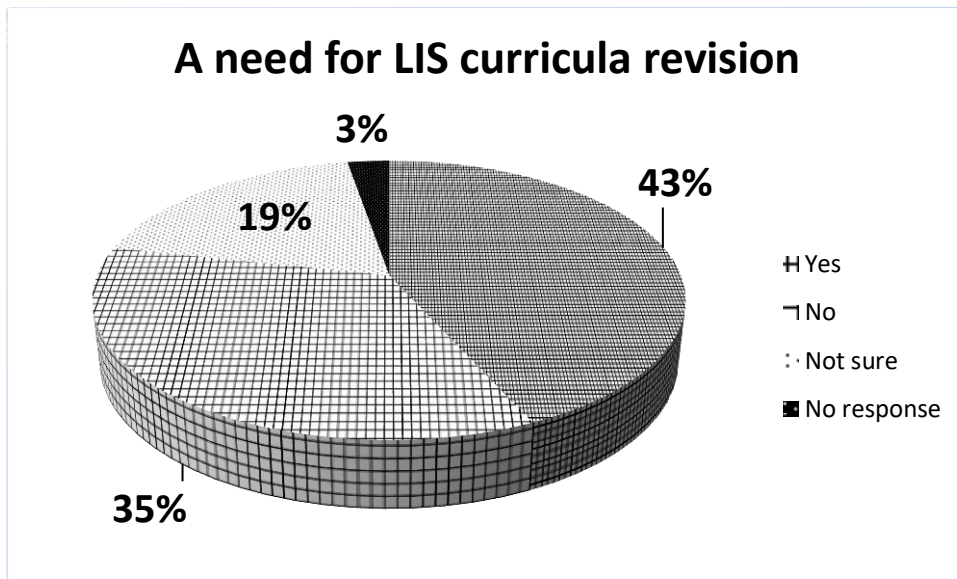


Figure 4. 10: A need for curricula revision

Out of 37 participants, 16 (43%) recognised a need for LIS curricula revision by their previous institutions of learning, 13 (35%) did not, 7 (19%) not sure and 1 (%) did not respond.

4.4.3.4. Curricula development

Suggestions for curricula development were sought from the respondents who felt the need for LIS curricula revision 16 (43%). The suggestions from the respondents were as follows:

- More focus should be on the practical aspect of the job “Unizulu”. Practical exposure promotes individual knowledge by exposing students to the work environment and gives them enough time to gain more knowledge.
- Pay more attention to Information Science registered students as much as it is happening with the Library and Information Science students.
- Curriculum developers should work hand in hand with LIASA as well as KZN public library services to ensure that the curriculum is in line with the requirements of the profession in the workplace.
- A course to bridge the gap between professional library staff and library assistants is crucial to the effective and efficient monitoring of the library and information sector.
- Properly teach records management in institutions; lack of this as resulted in the huge gap between records management and the workplace.

- Remove less relevant modules from the curriculum offered because some of the first year modules are not that relevant like the module on the history of libraries “Unizulu”.
- Some elective modules are just a repetition of what LIS departments teach, for example ‘introduction to research’ from Psychology should not be registered “Unizulu”.
- Curriculum can add more learned skills on customer/user profiling and care.
- Incorporate reading for leisure because it creates an awareness of authors, subjects, junior literature.
- Managerial skills to be emphasised at further levels of study.
- Financial controls of budgets.
- Acts of municipalities-MFMA.
- Political studies at local government level.
- ICT and records management skills.
- Sign language should be added to the LIS curriculum for users with specialised needs.
- For Information Science students, there should be a particular section they fall under, in the public library environment since there are more computer related modules, e.g. they can be information system managers, cataloguers.
- As technology is developing, it will be wise to have information technology modules that will be updated each year.
- More of staff managing should be included in the curriculum.

4.4.4. Challenges facing LIS graduates and how to overcome them

This section sought to determine the challenges facing employed LIS professionals/graduates in relation to their everyday functions and their competencies and suggesting some possible ways to overcome the encountered challenges. The respondents have highlighted quite a number of challenges as follows:

4.4.4.1. Challenges

a) Challenges related to academic qualifications:

- Lack of qualification recognition and experience.
- Available vacancies requiring LIS qualification are limited.

- Some key elements of a librarianship are not covered in the curriculum offered resulting into difficulties in completing some given tasks.
- Lending systems are mostly foreign.
- LIS qualification is lacking recognition and individual promotions.
- Salary structures.
- Little less of practical exposure, everything seems new sometimes in the workplace.
- Academic qualification does not give all necessary skills needed in the workplace. For example, supervisory skills, reporting skills, customer care skills, advocacy skills, marketing skills and user care are lacking.
- Most of the offered modules are more theory-based.

b) Challenges related to lack of work experience:

- Struggling to be employed and difficult professional growth/promotion.
- Lack of ability to perform some duties.
- Difficulties in executing some given tasks.
- Lack of an understanding of outreach programmes and library promotion ideas.
- Difficulty of using different systems of cataloguing as they are regularly changing, e.g. Libwin, SLIMS, Millennium, wildcat.
- Lack of decision making skills.
- Lacks of understanding of some cataloguing terminologies.

c) Challenges related to lack of knowledge:

- Difficulty in utilising technological equipment.
- Lack of innovative ideas in the workplace.
- Lack of standardisation of procedures and guidelines.
- Lack of practical knowledge leading to difficulties in performing some duties effectively.
- Migration of systems causes difficulties in dealing with existing records.
- Work ethics normally clash with some of the day to day activities when dealing with patrons.
- Sharing tacit knowledge amongst staff members.
- Political challenges.
- Hardships in building maintenance.
- Balancing academic knowledge and practical knowledge is difficult.

- Lack of local government skills and knowledge.
- d) Challenges related to skills gap/mismatch:**
 - A lack of effective communication with different patrons of the library.
 - Lack of implementation of new ideas.
 - Difficulty in communicating with disabled patrons, e.g. visually handicapped and the deaf.
 - Difficulty in allocating tasks to the workforce.
 - Lack of local government skills and knowledge.
- e) Challenges related to attitudes:**
 - Being labelled as being arrogant.
 - Difficult to monitor staff, but not impossible.
 - Battling with rude patrons.
 - Dealing with staff members to make them understand the pressure of working extended hours.
 - Individual attitudes that make working in a team difficult.
 - Feeling isolated from other staff members.
 - Procedures sometimes deny staff innovativeness.

4.4.4.2. How to overcome the encountered challenges

In response to the highlighted challenges of LIS graduates' competencies in terms of qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes, it was necessary to solicit for suggestions to overcome them. The respondents have articulated the following suggestions:

- Coordination and co-operation between the professional body (LIASA) and the LIS departments in LIS schools and institutions.
- Provision of training, workshops and skills development programmes.
- Provision of in-service training for fresh graduates to get them familiar with the workplace.
- Volunteering by graduates to get themselves familiar with the library work.
- Higher Education Institutions offering an LIS qualification should collaborate with librarians while developing their curricula because librarians are in better positions to articulate what is necessary to be taught as required in the library as a workplace.
- Institutional support through funding of work facilities.
- Extension of internship programmes to at least 3 years, since most advertised posts from libraries require such length of work experience.

- Working one on one to gain more skills.
- Enforcing strict rules and regulations in the workplace, e.g. tea and lunch times.
- Regular curricula revision to match international standard.
- Revising the curricula to focus on the practical aspect of working in public libraries/ more practical exposure to students while pursuing their studies.
- Short terms courses in knowledge sharing.
- Academic courses on developments such as technology and world views.
- Every candidate should be subjected to practical test before being employed.

4.5. Summary

This chapter presented the analysis of data from three data sets: newspapers form the first data set, assistance director the second and LIS graduates the third data set. The presentation of findings was in accordance with the objectives of the study as follows:

- To determine the job requirements of the public libraries focusing on qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes of LIS graduates in public libraries through newspaper scanning.
- To find out the perceptions of employers and LIS graduates on job requirements of the sector.
- To find out the perceptions of employers and LIS graduates about the LIS curriculum.
- To determine the challenges facing LIS graduates regarding their functions/duties in the work place.

Regarding job requirements of the public library sector, four newspapers covering a three year period (2015-2017) were scanned for job advertisements. Job requirements solely focused on academic qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes. In terms of academic qualifications, half (50%) of the jobs that is 25 of 74 jobs, required a grade 12/ matric certificate, unfortunately it is not a tertiary qualification which may be viewed as a qualification gap/mismatch. In terms of work experience, all jobs required a certain amount of the previous work experience except for that of a library worker, deputy head and internships. However the majority (85%) of job positions required a 1-3 years of library work experience.

In terms of knowledge requirements, not all jobs (e.g. library worker and internships) specified the required knowledge. Although, the job advertisements that indicated the

required knowledge specified the following: sound knowledge of public library administrative procedures and services; knowledge of public service legislation and prescripts applicable to Government, including systems and procedures; basic understanding of maintaining and troubleshooting Windows XP operating system software, PC and printer hardware; broad knowledge and interest in reading and knowledge of working with SLIMS programme. The results also established a strong need for generic skills, particularly communication and computer skills. Other skills required included good organisation, office administration and planning skills.

Regarding the perceptions on job requirements of the sector, the findings, as articulated by assistant directors, established skills and knowledge gap in library marketing and promotions, customer service and technical/ICT skills. The results also revealed a qualification gap from the holders of information science degree. Throughout the findings, the assistant directors indicated a need for technical knowledge and skills; knowledge and skills of cataloguing and classification as well as supervisory skills from employed LIS graduates. Job training and workshops were perceived to be the best and possible ways for acquiring needed competencies/employability skills.

The results from employed LIS graduates indicated a qualification gap; however the gap was insignificant (35%). The findings also established the need for new skills (51%) including computer skills and cataloguing and classification as the most required skills. Job training and workshops were highly favoured which confirms the results from the assistant directors. The results also indicated a significance of skills gap by (41%). The need for new attitude was insignificant (19%); however personal traits such as honesty, positivity and flexibility were required in the job advertisements.

The results from both assistance directors and LIS graduates confirm curricula inadequacies which could result into some employed LIS graduates not performing job functions satisfactorily. According to assistant directors, LIS curricula sometimes fail to keep up with the latest developments in technology. On the other hand, information science degree lacks core modules of librarianship. The results from LIS graduates also revealed a lack of balance between theory and practice (70%) and therefore, the need for curriculum revision (43%) was suggested.

The findings have been significant in determining the employment requirements of the LIS professionals in public libraries. Yet, it appears that LIS graduates still face several

challenges such as lack of technical knowledge and skills; knowledge and skills of cataloguing and classification; and proper/excellent communication skills. Other challenges included the use of ICTs. The results suggest job training, short courses and involvement of stakeholders like LIASA and LIS curricula revision. Identified key issues were addressed in the present chapter and the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter reflects on the key findings that emerged from the interpretation and analysis of the data (chapter 4) from the three population groups (newspapers, assistant directors and LIS graduates) in determining job requirements and challenges of LIS graduates in public libraries. In the present chapter, the discussion of findings is linked with the three population groups, literature and theory where applicable. To get more understanding and broader picture of the problem explored, the following research questions were set and investigated:

1. What are job requirements of LIS graduates in public libraries based on qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes?
2. What are the perceptions of employers and LIS graduates on job requirements of the sector?
3. What are the perceptions of LIS graduates and employers about the LIS curriculum?
4. What are the challenges facing LIS graduates with regards to their functions and the competencies they possess?

5.2. What are job requirements of LIS graduates in public libraries based on qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes?

There are different definitions of what job requirements are. The understanding of the term ‘job requirement’ normally depends on the context of use. Chen and Eriksson (2009) view job requirements as necessary skills for performing a particular job. Yadav and Bankar (2016) view job requirements as employability skills. Raju (2017) refers to job requirements as competencies. In this context, job requirements are based on the needed qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes of LIS graduates; where qualifications refers to an LIS professional qualification, work experience refers to needed minimum of work experience for job positions, knowledge refers to an awareness and understanding of a subject area specifically in the public library context, skills refer to expertise to carry out tasks, and attitudes refer to personal attributes/traits. To understand the nature of job requirements for LIS graduates from public libraries, two national newspapers (Sunday Times and Mail and

Guardian) and two regional newspapers (Ilanga and Sunday Tribune) were scanned for job advertisements covering a three year period, from January 2015 to December 2017. The minimum requirements for public library jobs are usually determined by the library manager, municipal manager and the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC). Amongst the four newspapers scanned, Ilanga had a higher number (78%) of the job advertisements. Newspapers were the first data set from three targeted population groups.

Results from newspaper scanning revealed one major concern which is in line with Grade 12 qualification, which is not a tertiary qualification. Grade 12 was required in half of the advertised jobs (50%) of 74 job adverts analysed. Such gap (qualification gap) could be related to the problem of the study discussed earlier in chapter one (section 1.4) where it was indicated that inappropriately skilled or unqualified candidates were placed in professional positions in some libraries. During data collection, the researcher also observed that from participated centre public libraries only one public library (Bessie Head) was dominated by the holders of an LIS professional qualification but the rest had most staff members who were holders of a grade 12 (matric certificate). Such results regarding a grade 12 or matric being required in most advertised job positions in public libraries is in contradiction with the results from the assistance directors (second data set), who stated that public library positions ranging from a librarian, assistant librarian and library assistant should be filled by holders of an LIS professional qualification. On the other hand, this contradicts with one element of the core competency theory which is the theory used in the present study. This element is competence which Gupta (2013) articulates as a “set of closely related abilities, commitments, knowledge and skills” that are essential for performing job functions satisfactorily in a workplace. An individual with requisite capabilities as highlighted by Gupta (2013), for example, an LIS graduate/professional, is more likely to perform duties more satisfactorily than a holder of a grade 12 with limited knowledge, skills and abilities for professional work environment, public libraries in particular. Such results could mean that the earlier highlighted gap regarding inappropriately skilled or unqualified professionals does exist in public libraries and therefore, stakeholders involved in public libraries (such as LIASA and DAC) should take such issue into consideration. Nevertheless, the researcher only did a retrospective scanning of job advertisements and did not include online sources which may result into some job advertisements not appearing in the scanned newspapers.

Tables 4.3, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6 in the previous chapter presented required competencies from 74 job advertisements on different managerial levels in the public library context. A thorough

look at different competencies presented along with their job titles in each managerial level, makes it obvious that core competency theorists could consider such highlighted competencies to be the relevant competencies required in the public library workplace. Amongst other competencies, 1 to 3 years of library work experience (85%) was really required. The results also reflected a strong need for generic skills such as computer literacy skills (75%), good communication, administration, planning and organising skills (26%). The results also indicated a necessity for sound knowledge of public library administrative procedures and services (21%); knowledge of public service legislation and prescripts applicable to government, including systems and procedures (18%); basic understanding of maintaining and troubleshooting Windows XP operating system software, PC and printer hardware (13%); broad knowledge and interest in reading (13%); and knowledge of working with SLIMS programme (13%). From the identified required competencies, positive communication skills, organisational skills and ICT skills and knowledge were noted in related studies to be essential competencies for public, academic libraries and other sectors within the LIS sector (Gill et al, 2001; Ocholla and Shongwe, 2013; Raju, 2016; Raju, 2017). Highlighted competencies are essential in a librarianship profession and could also be considered for curriculum development in meeting the demands of the public library job market.

5.3. What are the perceptions of employers and LIS graduates on job requirements of the sector?

Perceptions regarding job requirements were obtained from the second population group of respondents (assistant directors) and third population group (LIS professionals/ graduates). In this context, perceptions refer to an understanding and interpretation of the required set of abilities and capabilities of LIS graduates by public libraries. To determine employers and LIS graduates' perceptions, qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes were investigated which was significant in identifying existing gaps and understanding the commonalities and contradictions between job advertisements, employers (assistant directors) and LIS graduates. Several concerns arose. Out of five respondents from the interviews, two pointed out a qualification gap which was associated with the holders of a three year Information Science degree. The degree was said to lack the core modules of librarianship which are cataloguing and classification modules. The respondents articulated that

Information Science degree seems to put more focus on the Information Retrieval modules than on cataloguing and classification. Unlike the interview results, the views from LIS graduates (questionnaires) were different. 57% of the respondents did not see a qualification gap; however there was significant gap as indicated by 35% of respondents as discussed in chapter 4 (section 4.4.2.2). On the other hand, the first data set (newspaper scanning), revealed a qualification gap where most advertised job positions (50%) required a matric which is not a professional qualification. Amongst other gaps/mismatches in chapter two (Table 2.3), World Economic Organisation (2014) notes a qualification gap in the workplace but not specifically in the LIS field. Reddy et al (2016) also note several gaps, including a qualification gap, with respect to the workplaces in the South African context.

There seem to be a contradiction between qualification gap identified from newspaper scanning (grade 12) and interviews (information science degree); however, the gap identified by assistant directors from the interviews implies that re-curriculation would be quite significant in addressing the gap. This correlates with the results from responses to questionnaires by LIS graduates whereby it was noted that there is a need for curricula revision (43%), see chapter 4 (Figure 4.11). In particular, on the qualification gap identified from newspaper scanning (grade 12), a need for involvement of stakeholders such as LIASA and DAC could be suggested to address such issues in public libraries.

Another concern relates to lack of knowledge in cataloguing and classification which are core modules of librarianship as reflected in related studies (Ocholla and Ocholla 2013, Ocholla 2014; Ocholla and Shongwe 2013) on cataloguing and classification education, and also a lack of ICT knowledge. The results from interviews have revealed that employed LIS professionals/graduates, holders of the Information Science degree, seem to lack knowledge of cataloguing and classification, which are core competencies of librarianship as already addressed in section 5.2 of the present chapter. These results are consistent with the results from questionnaires whereby only 24% of 37 respondents had knowledge in cataloguing and classification. Related studies such as Ocholla and Shongwe (2013) on their analysis of the library and information science (LIS) job market in South Africa indicate that the knowledge of cataloguing and classification is one of the essential knowledge required in the library. Their study further indicates collection development, electronic resources, library systems, teaching or training, report writing, abstracting and indexing, AACR2, LCSH, MARC21, Dspace, digital asset management system(s), LC rule interpretation, metadata schema, SABINET, OCLC, integrated library systems, USMARC, bibliographic formats, UNICON,

SACat, WorldCat, OPAC, RDA, library Web 2.0, millennium system, and INNOPAC as other essential knowledge, skills and abilities required. However, the results from newspaper scanning in the present study indicated a strong need for the sound knowledge of public library administrative procedures and services (21%); knowledge of public service legislation and prescripts applicable to government, including systems and procedures (18%); basic understanding of maintaining and troubleshooting Windows XP operating system software, PC and printer hardware (13%); broad knowledge and interest in reading (13%); and knowledge of working with SLIMS programme (13%) in most advertised jobs as indicated in chapter 4 (section 4.2.2). Amongst identified knowledge types from the newspapers, the knowledge of working with SLIMS programme confirms Raju (2016) results in her core competencies in LIS education: professional, generic and personal competencies for the higher education LIS sector. Nevertheless, Raju (2016) further indicates knowledge of scholarly electronic information resources (including databases and search engines); knowledge of open access initiatives; knowledge of emerging technologies, standards, and best practices relating to digital repository, discovery and preservation activities; knowledge of research methodology and research data (quantitative and/or qualitative); knowledge of intellectual property and copyright issues; knowledge of new technologies and their use in scholarly communication; knowledge of content management and preservation systems; and other different knowledge types that are required in an academic sector. This suggests that the knowledge requirements between public library environment and academic vary.

The results from assistant directors (interviews) revealed a skills gap in relation to cataloguing and classification, library marketing and promotions, customer service, technical and customer relations skills. In literature, skills gap was identified earlier in the problem of the study (chapter one), in which LIS Charter (2009) and LIS Charter (2014) point out that inadequately or inappropriately trained people were appointed to positions for which they are not equipped. Similar problem was observed by Reddy et al (2016) where skills imbalances were noted to be faced by employers in the workplace in South Africa. Their study achieved this by consulting various sources of data and they identified demand mismatch, education supply mismatch and even a qualification job mismatch. Skills gap correlates with the findings from LIS graduates (questionnaires), where 41% of respondents indicated a skills gap. Then, 51% of respondents indicated a need for new skills, with computer/ICT skills (16%); cataloguing and classification skills (11%); and conservation and preservation skills (8%) highlighted as most needed skills. It is unfortunate that computer/ICT skills has been

noted by assistant directors (interviews) to be lacking but needed by LIS graduates. However, there was a high demand (75%) for such skills from the results of the newspaper scanning, which could be considered as a core competency for public library workplace. Although 41% (15) respondents indicated a skills gap, 59% (22) did not notice a gap. In line with the highlighted needed skills, it implies that there should be some possible channels to acquire needed skills and other competencies in the workplace as articulated in chapter four (section 4.4.2.10). Job training was highly recommended by both assistant directors (four out of five respondents) and LIS graduates (39%), followed by workshops with 29%. In chapter two, section 2.4.3 training, in particular, was noted by several studies such as Gill et al (2001) in *The Public Library Services: IFLA/UNESCO Guidelines for Development* and Queensland Library Association (2008) to be important in the workplace, in helping staff to re-skill in order to adapt to new developments in the work place. DAC (2013) and Mphidi and Fourie (2016) indicate that training is crucial for each and every workforce in the library context.

5.4. What are the perceptions of employers and LIS graduates about the LIS curriculum?

The results regarding perceptions specifically on the LIS curricula offered were also obtained from the same respondents (assistant directors and LIS graduates) as in section 5.4 above. Curriculum typically refers to academic contents and its delivery mode and also the knowledge and skills that are expected to be gained by students from education and training institutions like the university. Chu (2006) in Mugwisi, Jiyane and Knoetze (2015) views LIS curriculum as “what is being offered to train librarians and information professionals who will not only acquire the essential knowledge and skills to become qualified personnel in the field, but also meet the challenges brought about by the ever changing information society.” The perceptions regarding the LIS curricula have been immensely important in determining whether the LIS education and training sector effectively prepares LIS professionals for the workplace by applying the core competency theory, which was previously used in related studies by Raju (2016) and Raju (2017) in the academic sector in South Africa. The results from four of five assistant directors indicated that LIS curricula do not always meet the demands of the LIS job market. The reasons for this are identified in chapter four (section 4.3.4). The respondents also suggested some possible ways for rectifying identified inadequacies of LIS curricula as discussed in section 4.3.4 in the preceding chapter. These results confirm the results from the LIS graduates (questionnaires) in which 70% of

respondents did not see a balance between theory and practice offered in the LIS institutions and most respondents (43%) saw a need for curricula revision. The respondents further provided suggestions on possible ways for curriculum development which were provided in section 4.4.3.4 in chapter four. However, 35% of respondents did not see a need for curricula revision.

The results from literature also confirm the findings from two participated population groups (assistant directors and LIS graduates) regarding LIS curricula imbalances and inadequacies. Most related studies in chapter two (section 2.9) identify technology as the major contributory factor towards the LIS curricula imbalances. Minishi-Majanja (2009) notes ICT as one topic that was encompassed in the LIS curricula in different universities. Her study also found out that in South Africa, there was no single forum for systematic benchmarking of the LIS education and training and this could sometimes be a cause of the curricula imbalances. Ngulube in Minishi-Majanja (2009) notes no uniformity in South African LIS education and training. On the other hand, the study by Ocholla and Shongwe (2013: 44) brought to light the fact that there were emerging professions in the LIS market which eventually require LIS schools to revise their curriculum. Re-orientation of the curriculum is a process on its own and cannot be achieved quite easily. This could be a possible reason for imbalances. IFLA (2015: 43) recognised that some South African LIS schools have added ICT related modules/subjects in their curricula, in response to technological developments in the LIS setting. Raju (2015: 168) observes an increased integration of technology in the LIS curricula. The study by Shongwe (2014) indicates that technology has changed the LIS landscape as well as the way libraries operate. Such findings also emerged in the studies conducted in Kenya by Rukwaro and Bii (2016) and in Uganda by Tumuhairwe (2013) amongst others. In the light of the reported imbalances in the LIS curricula brought by technology, it could be suggested that LIS institutions should keep up with the latest trends and developments brought by technology through curricula revision. On the other hand, LIS institutions can work collaboratively with public libraries as the potential employers of the LIS professionals so that they could produce effective and competent candidates for the job market.

5.5. What are the challenges facing LIS graduates with regards to their job functions and the competencies they possess?

There are a number of challenges facing LIS graduates in public libraries with respect to their everyday duties and the competencies they possess as noted by both assistant directors and LIS graduates. Various challenges were articulated by the assistant directors in section 4.3.5.1 and by LIS graduates in section 4.4.4 from the preceding chapter. Amongst other highlighted challenges, the use and management of ICTs and LIS institutions dwelling much on the theoretical aspect of the curriculum offered were cited as the major challenges. The problem on the use and management of ICTs confirms the observations made by LIS Charter (2009: 21) where it was indicated that “74% of public libraries are not connected and 65% rely on manual systems for routine management and administration.” While a lack of ICT skills was noted as one of the major challenges facing employed LIS graduates and public libraries themselves, it is no doubt that they are core competencies for public libraries and also have a high demand (75%) in the job advertisements (first data set). Similar obstacles were also noted by related studies in public libraries and other categories forming the broader LIS job market e.g. Kansas Library Association (KLA) (2004); Witbooi (2007); the LIS Charter (2009); Ocholla and Shongwe (2013); the LIS Charter (2014); the National Library of South Africa (2014); Morris et al (2014); Library and Information Association of South Africa (2015); Mphidi and Fourie (2016). A lack of communication skills by fresh graduates, supervisory skills and lack of practical knowledge were other cited challenges. More practical exposure during studying, job training and co-ordination between LIS institutions, libraries and stakeholders involved (LIASA and DAC) were voiced constantly as possible suggestions for overcoming challenges made by respondents. More similar recommendations were made by LIS Charter (2014: 61) as stated that “pre-service education and training should incorporate the aspects of the changing role of the public library into the curriculum, and continuing education should be made available to all staff on a regular basis so that they are able to keep up with technology, as well as changes in the environment” in response to challenges facing public libraries.

5.6. Summary

In conclusion, this chapter has shed light on the employability skills of the LIS graduates in terms of academic qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes required by

public libraries. Observably, some competencies/job requirements are common for different sectors of the LIS market (e.g. academic, records management, library and others) whereas some vary. This has led to some salient issues being revealed in the discussion of findings obtained from content analysis (job advertisements), interviews (assistant directors), questionnaires (LIS graduates) as well as the literature reviewed.

First, the study revealed a strong demand for generic skills, particularly computer literacy and communication skills for most public library jobs. However, the results from both interviews and questionnaires indicated a knowledge and skills gap in terms of cataloguing and classification as well as technical knowledge from employed LIS graduates/professionals. The results established a need for new skills including communication, technical, cataloguing and classification skills, which can be acquired through job training and workshops.

Second, the respondents have noticed a mismatch between qualification and job requirements. Qualification mismatch was associated with an information science degree due to lack of the core modules of librarianship. Qualification gap was also noted in literature by Reddy et al (2016). Stakeholders involved (LIASA and DAC) in libraries should be involved to address such issues in the public library workplace. Third, there seems to be no balance between theory and practice, thus requiring curriculum review and more practical exposure.

Finally, employed LIS professionals/graduates face several challenges including a lack of knowledge and skills of cataloguing and classification as well as the use and management of information communication technologies (ICTs). The use of ICTs has also been identified, from extant literature, as a challenge facing different job markets. The next chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of this study.

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the findings of the study. This chapter summarises, concludes and suggests recommendations from the findings based on job requirements and challenges of LIS graduates in public libraries in KZN, South Africa. To get an insight to the problem investigated, four newspapers (Sunday Times, Mail and Guardian, Ilanga and Sunday Tribune) covering a three year period (2015-2017) were scanned for job advertisements (content analysis); semi-structured interviews were conducted with five assistant directors; and structured questionnaires were administered to 58 LIS graduates/professionals. The study's conclusions and recommendations have been made in relation to the following objectives that were set:

- To determine the job functions and requirements of the public libraries focusing on qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes of LIS graduates in public libraries through newspaper scanning.
- To find out the perceptions of employers and LIS graduates on job requirements of the sector.
- To find out the perceptions of employers and LIS graduates about the LIS curriculum.
- To determine the challenges facing LIS graduates regarding their functions/duties in the workplace.

6.2. Summary of findings by research objectives (RO) and research questions (RQ)

This section provides summary of findings based on research objectives of the study.

6.2.1. Job functions and requirements of the public libraries in terms of qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes of LIS graduates in public libraries

Job requirements of the public library based on qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes were determined by scanning four newspapers (Sunday Times; Ilanga; Mail and Guardian and Sunday Tribune) covering a three year period (2015-2017) to get more recent public library jobs. 74 job advertisements were obtained. Ilanga newspaper ran the highest

number (78%) of job advertisements as a result of its being widely and commonly read in rural communities and it is said to be used to address previous inequalities. It is worth noting that the job advertisements significantly determined the public library market requirements. Above and over, it gave an insight to existing gap regarding qualification which was discussed in the preceding chapter, section 5.2 in correlation with the data obtained from employed LIS professionals from both regional library depots and their centre public libraries (questionnaires) and assistant directors representing all five regional library depots in the KZN province (interviews). Although the qualification gap was revealed by all three data sets, it varied in a sense that first data set (newspapers) showed a grade 12 qualification which was in high demand (50%) in most advertised jobs; second data set (assistant directors) revealed a gap in the Information Science degree which lacks core modules (cataloguing and classification) of librarianship; and third data set (LIS graduates/professionals) indicated both under and over qualification. It has also been noted to be a common trend for most organisations/companies not to advertise their jobs in a traditional media like newspapers which may eventually result in some job positions not appearing in the newspapers scanned. Scanning job advertisements is believed to be the best approach for determining job requirements and trends of a particular job market; however it cannot be guaranteed to entirely give an insight into the actual job market. Therefore, using different approaches (content analysis, interviews and questionnaires) in this study, has significantly given a broad picture of the job requirements of public libraries that will bridge existing gap in the everyday functions of employed LIS professionals/graduates.

6.2.2. Perceptions of employers and LIS graduates on job requirements of the sector

The understanding and interpretation of the public library job requirements from assistant directors and LIS graduates/professionals were necessary to confirm the results obtained from job advertisements. The results from both assistant directors and LIS graduates confirmed that there was a qualification gap. Qualification gap was associated with a lack of cataloguing and classification, which are core modules of librarianship as reflected in related studies (Ocholla and Ocholla 2013, Ocholla 2014; Ocholla and Shongwe 2013) on cataloguing and classification education; over and under qualification; qualification recognition and promotion. In terms of work experience, the results from assistant directors suggested a need for one to three years of library work experience. This also correlates with the results from job advertisements, where 1-3 years of library work experience was required in 85% of the

advertised jobs. The results from both population groups revealed a knowledge and skills gap relating to: computer skills, knowledge and skills in cataloguing and classification, management skills, supervisory as well as research skills. A lack of such knowledge and skills from employed LIS graduates confirms the results from the study by Katuli-Munyoro and Mutula (2016) on “Employability Skills Gap: Library and Information Science Education and Training in Zimbabwe”. The authors noticed that Library and Information Science (LIS) education and training programmes were criticised for producing graduates without the requisite skills to perform right away in their first jobs. Katuli-Munyoro and Mutula further outline that the development of work-ready graduates is hampered and constrained by: the existing discrepancy between high-level policy positions and operational behaviour, different perspectives among LIS employers and faculties on what higher education stands for, lack of mutual partnerships among key stakeholders, constant changes in the LIS field and resource inadequacies. Job training is perceived to be the best way of acquiring needed competencies in a workplace, followed by practical exposure while studying to gain both soft and hard skills as well as the knowledge of field work. Employers, public libraries in particular and relevant stakeholders e.g. DAC, LIASA, LIS educators, SALGA are responsible for addressing issues regarding the lack of requisite competencies in the library job market.

6.2.3. Perceptions of employers and LIS graduates about the LIS curriculum

It was necessary to examine the LIS curricula being offered in order to determine if it is in line with the demands of the public library context. There was a strong feeling from both assistant directors and LIS graduates that the LIS curriculum is not always meeting the demands of the library as a workplace, which is the case with related studies by Ocholla (2007); Minishi-Majanja (2009); LIS Charter (2009); LIS charter (2014). 70% of the participants from LIS graduates (questionnaires) saw an imbalance between theory and practice from the LIS curricula offered which could result into LIS education not producing job-ready graduates. The noted curricula inadequacies were related to technological developments as also noted by Ocholla (2007); Minishi-Majanja (2009); Ocholla and Shongwe (2013) and Shongwe (2014). Technological advances always require curricula revision and re-orientation. Another inadequacy was in line with the Information Science degree, which revealed a lack in the core competencies of librarianship, cataloguing and classification modules, from the University of Zululand. The findings also revealed a lack of practical aspect from the offered curricula in some LIS schools results into students facing

difficulties in the real world of work. 43% of results from questionnaires suggested a need for curricula revision.

6.2.4. Challenges facing LIS graduates regarding their functions/duties and competencies in the work place

The findings of the study showed several new challenges as well as common/already existing challenges noted in few related studies (Kansas Library Association, 2004; Witbooi, 2007; the LIS Charter 2009; Ocholla and Shongwe 2013; the LIS Charter 2014; the National Library of South Africa, 2014; Morris et al, 2014; Library and Information Association of South Africa, 2015; Mphidi and Fourie, 2016) as discussed in chapters 2, 4 and 5 of this study. Noted challenges are in line with employed LIS graduates/professionals' competencies in terms of qualification, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes and their everyday duties in the public library environment. A lack of both knowledge and skills of cataloguing and classification, practical knowledge as well as qualification gap were noted as new and biggest challenges. Other challenges were cited in chapter 4 (section 4.3.5 and 4.4.4). Common challenges included a lack of technical knowledge and skills and proper communication skills.

6.3. Conclusions

From the findings of the study, it can be concluded that this study has met and successfully answered its research objectives and questions. The conclusions are arranged according to the set objectives of the study as follows:

6.3.1. To determine the job functions and requirements of the public libraries.

The study has noted some common and new job requirements of the public libraries. The study noted a strong demand for generic skills, particularly computer literacy and communication skills, which are the common requirements for most categories of the LIS sector and even other sectors of the global economy. However, knowledge requirements seem to vary. The study established a strong need for knowledge of public library administrative procedures and services as well as the knowledge of public service legislation and prescripts applicable to Government, including systems and procedures. It was found that the library work experience of 1-3 years was really required. Grade 12/matric certificate being required for half of the jobs posed a qualification gap hence, since it is not a tertiary qualification,

whereas public libraries should have well trained and equipped workforce who will keep up with the demands of the unfolding knowledge society while meeting the needs of the library patrons. It was also found that personal competencies/attributes like working under pressure and library extended hours were strongly recommended, however there were considered less significant by both LIS graduates and assistant directors.

6.3.2. To find out the perceptions of employers and LIS graduates on job requirements of the sector.

The results of the study also showed a need for new knowledge and skills: technical knowledge and skills, cataloguing and classification and supervisory skills. However, the results of the study showed that there is a skill gap in terms of library marketing and promotions; customer service; technical knowledge and skills; and customer relations skills. Evidently, there is a need for job training to help candidates acquire new needed skills or re-skill. Information science degree has been noted to be lacking the core modules of librarianship, resulting into a qualification gap.

6.3.3. To find out the perceptions of employers and LIS graduates about the LIS curriculum.

The study established that there is no balance between theory and practice from offered curricula. Noted imbalance has to do with the LIS curriculum/education; the distinction in curricula and delivery varies from institution to institution. For example, Information Science degree from some LIS schools like the University of Zululand has been noted to lack the element of cataloguing and classification. The result also shed light on lack of practical in the LIS and IS courses, which dwell more on the theoretical aspect of the courses. A lack of balance between theory and practice was noted to be the result of the drastic changes in technology, which sometimes make it difficult to accommodate some of the technological aspects in the curriculum content. Noted imbalances from the curricula call for curriculum review and revision, as well as the setting of a uniform standard in LIS curricula. This was earlier reported by Minish-Majanja (2009). South African LIS schools have no uniform standard for their curricula.

6.3.4. To determine the challenges facing LIS graduates regarding their functions/duties in the work place.

Employed LIS graduates have been noted to be facing several challenges in line with competencies they possess and their day to day activities. The study found a lack of

knowledge and skills of cataloguing and classification from the holders of information science degree. Also lack of good communication skills, supervisory skills, use and management of ICTs and a lack of qualification recognition and promotion are discovered to be other daunting challenges.

6.4. Recommendations

In light of the study's findings, suggestions/recommendations were solicited from assistant directors and LIS professionals. The recommendations were offered with respect to the following subheadings:

- Curriculum development
- Possible ways to overcome encountered challenges
- Further studies

6.4.1. Curriculum development

Since the study found LIS curriculum to be insufficient in a manner that it could not always meet the demands of the workplace, it is recommended that there is regular curriculum review and revision in order to meet the rapidly changing information access and user needs by involving relevant stake holders. This could be achieved through collaboration between curriculum developers, LIASA and KZN public library services. This is to ensure that the curriculum is repackaged in line with the requirements of the profession in the workplace to produce job-ready graduates. On the other hand, the study findings highly recommend on-the-job training and continuous professional development as important elements to bridge the gap between education and practice.

6.4.2. Possible ways to overcome encountered challenges

The study has noted several challenges facing employed LIS graduates in the areas of their competencies and everyday duties. Considering the noted challenges, the present study suggests that the duration of experiential learning should be longer than it is at the moment and service learning should be encouraged through voluntarism. The study also recommends that employment of staff without tertiary qualification in LIS in public libraries requires a review by LIASA and other stakeholders involved. This could be possibly achieved through proper communication between LIS schools and libraries throughout the province. The study further recommends development and promotion of continuing education through job

training, short courses and workshops to fill the knowledge and skills gap. The collaboration between DAC and library managers could play a crucial role in providing funding for some training programmes that could help meet the conditions of employment of staff in public libraries. Furthermore, municipalities and SALGA as employer bodies, are responsible for some roles and functions in libraries such co-ordinating the delivery of services.

6.4.3. Recommendations for further research

As was earlier highlighted in chapter one of the dissertation that there are about 1800 public libraries in the country, so it could have been difficult to sample them all along with their employed LIS professionals. Therefore, the researcher only studied the KwaZulu-Natal provincial public libraries which may not give the overall picture that including all the nine provinces in the country could have. Given that the research was limited only to KZN province, it is recommended that further research be extensive and cover all nine provinces throughout the country with larger population size, such as including the representatives of different stakeholders involved in libraries like LIASA and DAC. Further research should also extend beyond a retrospective scanning of newspapers to include other media for advertising, like online websites, in order to get a complete picture of the employment requirements as far as public libraries are concerned. Investigation on practical skills development programmes for libraries in the country could be more significant for training the LIS professionals. Future research on LIS curricula offered in LIS schools is of great importance for curricula development and core competencies acquisition by LIS professionals. Based on the data obtained from three data sets represented in chapter four of the study, the study recommends the public library competency checklist as provided in appendix F. The proposed checklist can be used for self-evaluation, recruitment and research purposes.

The originality and novelty of this study emanates from its scope, subject matter and the application. Therefore, this study provides theoretical background for the development of research in the domain of LIS. Public libraries and LIS professionals may use this research report to better understand possible employability skills. LIS curriculum developers are likely to use the outcomes of this study to understand what is expected from LIS graduates/professionals after graduation in terms of the training needs in relation to knowledge, skills and abilities needed in the public libraries and the entire LIS market.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letter of request to public libraries and regional library depots

To The Head: Arts and Culture-Mr NP Chonco

RE: Introducing Mthembu Mpilo Siphamandla (201256633) – Masters Student at the University of Zululand

This letter serves to confirm that Mr Mthembu Mpilo Siphamandla is registered for a Masters in Library and Information Science qualification in the Department of Information Studies at the University of Zululand. The title of his research is **Job requirements and challenges of LIS graduates in public libraries in KwaZulu-Natal province (KZN), South Africa**. We note that such an investigation has implications on many stakeholders, a few being the public libraries themselves, the LIS graduates, Library schools and LIS curriculum developers.

As part of the requirements for the award of a Master's degree, the researcher is expected to undertake original research in an environment and place of his choice. The UNIZULU ethical compliance regulations require him to provide proof (letter or email) that the relevant authority where the research is to be undertaken has given approval. We thus request you as his chosen organisation to grant him the required permission to conduct his research.

We appreciate your support and understanding in this regard. Should you need any further clarification, do not hesitate to contact me.

Thanks,



Prof. D.N. Ocholla

Supervisor,

Deputy Dean Research and Internationalization, FA

Appendix B: Research Synopsis

Research synopsis

TITLE: Job requirements and challenges of LIS graduates in public libraries in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

STUDENT: Mpilo S Mthembu

DEGREE: Master of Information Science (AMAS13)

SUPERVISOR: Prof. Dennis N. Ocholla, University of Zululand

RESEARCH PROBLEM:

As one of the biggest employers of LIS professionals/graduates in South Africa, it is imperative that employment trends, job functions, requirements and challenges of public libraries by LIS graduates be investigated. Such an investigation has implications on many stakeholders, a few being the public libraries themselves, the LIS graduates and LIS curriculum developers. Although there are several studies (e.g., Bothma and Ocholla, 2007; Ndwandwe and Onyancha, 2012; Ndlangamandla and Ocholla, 2012; Ocholla and Shongwe, 2013 and Shongwe, 2014) on LIS education in South Africa in general, there is no in-depth study focusing on public library job requirements and challenges facing LIS professionals exclusively.

This study stems from identified gaps from the literature. One identified gap is in line with the skills shortage: “Inappropriately skilled people are being appointed to professional posts in some areas. There is a national vacancy rate of 30% in professional positions, a situation which has a deleterious effect on service delivery” (The Department of Arts and Culture, 2009: 162). The Department of Arts and Culture (2009) in the LIS charter further states that “the librarians/information professionals in the evolving knowledge society in the 21st century requires an expanding set of discipline specific as well as generic knowledge, skills and attitudes for the changing environment and mission of the library service”.

The other gap roots from LIS job profile: there are drastically emerging professions in the entire LIS sector which sometimes require LIS curricula re-orientation. Given that the

required skills and knowledge are ever changing; LIS schools need to keep up with those changes in order to equip LIS graduates with necessary skills for the job market, public libraries per se. It is of paramount importance that a workplace recruits workforces that have requisite skills to offer a professional service in keeping with the demands and challenges of the unfolding knowledge society. Ocholla and Shongwe (2013: 3) pointed out that there are some emerging professions in the LIS market; therefore those emerging professions require certain skills from individuals to fit in all sectors or categories of the LIS market including public libraries. Shongwe (2014) highlights that, in the information and knowledge economy we are living in, Information Technology (IT) has changed the LIS market and the library operations. In this sense, there are some skills needed from the LIS graduates to fit and adapt in the digital environment. The issue regarding emerging LIS professions is extensively discussed in chapter 2 (section 2.5).

Even though the Department of Arts and Culture (2009) in the LIS charter revealed some gaps in public libraries, but there is still no in-depth investigation conducted with respect to LIS graduates and their job requirements in their main employer (public library) in the country. Therefore, this study seeks to ascertain the job requirements and challenges of LIS graduates in public libraries in KwaZulu Natal province through scanning LIS related job adverts from the Sunday Times; Ilanga; Mail and Guardian; and Sunday Tribune newspapers covering a three year period starting from January 2015 to December 2017; interviewing assistant directors from the regional library depots; and distributing questionnaires to LIS graduates.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

- To determine the job functions and requirements of the public libraries focusing on qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes of LIS graduates in public libraries through newspaper scanning.
- To find out the perceptions of employers and LIS graduates on job requirements of the sector.
- To find out the perceptions of employers and LIS graduates about the LIS curriculum.
- To determine the challenges facing LIS graduates regarding their functions/duties in the work place.

RESEARCH POPULATION:

- Newspapers (Sunday Times; Ilanga; Mail and Guardian and Sunday Tribune).

- Assistant directors from regional library depots.
- LIS graduates

Appendix C: Newspaper scanning guide

The newspaper scanning guide

Details of the advertisement	
1. Year:	
2. Date and page:	
3. Closing date:	
4. Reference number	
Employer	
5. Name:	
6. Postal address:	
7. Telephone:	
8. Fax:	
9. Email:	
Job details	
10. Job title:	
11. Job description/ duties:	
12. Salary:	
13. Other benefits	
Job requirements	
14. Qualification:	
15. Experience:	
16. Knowledge:	

17. Skills	
18. Attitudes	
19. Additional information	

Appendix D: Interview schedule for assistant directors

University of Zululand



Faculty of Arts

Department of Information Studies

**TOPIC: JOB REQUIREMENTS AND CHALLENGES OF LIS GRADUATES IN
PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA**

Interview schedule for Assistant Directors

Dear respondent

I am Mthembu Mpilo Siphamandla, a Masters student in Library and Information Science degree in the Department of Information Studies (DIS) at the University of Zululand. I am conducting a study on **Job requirements and challenges of LIS graduates in public libraries in KwaZulu-Natal province (KZN), South Africa**. The study is aimed at investigating job requirements and challenges of LIS graduates in public libraries in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) province. As part of the requirements for the fulfilment of the Master's degree, I kindly ask for your participation in my research project by taking part in this interview. Be assured that all information provided will be used for research purposes only. Anonymity and confidentiality will be observed. I humbly request that you take part in this study. Your contribution will be greatly valued and look I forward to sharing the results of the study with you.

For any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us:

1. **Researcher:** Mthembu Mpilo Siphamandla
Email: mpilomthembu55@gmail.com
Cell: 0711702832
2. **Supervisor:** Prof Dennis Ngong Ocholla
Email: OchollaD@unizulu.ac.za
Cell: 0823724638

Thank you

This interview has four (4) sections (biographical data; perceptions on job functions and requirements; perceptions on the LIS curricula; and challenges regarding job requirements in relation to graduates 'experiences, qualifications, skills and attitudes) and should take about 20 minutes.

BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS (RO 2)

Work details:

1. Municipality: _____
2. Region: _____
3. What is your current position?
4. How long have you been working in your position?
5. Have you worked for the same institution in other position(s)/job title(s)?
 - a. If yes, what position(s) did you hold?

Educational qualifications:

6. What is your highest academic qualification?
7. What other qualifications do you have both academic and professional?
8. What fundamental skills are needed to perform your current job?

PERCEPTIONS ON JOB FUNCTIONS AND REQUIREMENTS OF EMPLOYED LIS GRADUATES (RO 2)

9. What positions in the library do you think can be filled by those with LIS degree?
10. What is the minimal experience required for the holders of the LIS degree?
11. Have you ever noticed any mismatch in knowledge and skills between what the job requires in the library and what the LIS graduates know?
 - a. If yes, please elaborate on the mismatch
12. Do you think LIS professionals need some new knowledge, skills and attitudes to perform their job functions satisfactorily?
 - b. If Yes, what new knowledge, skills and attitudes can you suggest as needed by LIS professionals/graduates?
13. How can those knowledge, skills and attitudes be acquired?

PERCEPTIONS REGARDING LIS CURRICULA OFFERED BY SA LIS SCHOOLS (RO 3)

14. Looking at the competencies (experiences, qualifications, skills, knowledge and attitudes) required from graduates can you say the LIS curricula provided by LIS schools is sufficient to meet the demands of their everyday duties in your workplace?
 - c. If No, where is the curriculum inadequate?
 - d. What do you think can be done to the LIS curricula to rectify the noted inadequacies?

PERCEPTIONS ON THE CHALLENGES FACING EMPLOYED GRADUATES

**WITH RESPECT TO THEIR SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE ATTITUDES,
EXPERIENCES, QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS (RO 4)**

15. According to your knowledge and experience, what challenges do you think are faced by your employed graduates with regards to their skills, knowledge, attitudes, experiences and qualifications (competencies)?
16. How can we overcome the challenges?

I appreciate the time you took for this interview. Is there anything else you think would be helpful for me to know that would be potentially useful in this study?

Please provide your details for follow up questions:

E-mail: _____

Cell: _____

Office number: _____

Thanks again.

Appendix E: Questionnaire for LIS graduates

University of Zululand



Faculty of Arts

Department of Information Studies

Research Questionnaire

<p>TOPIC: JOB REQUIREMENTS AND CHALLENGES OF LIS GRADUATES IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA</p>

Dear respondent

I am Mthembu Mpilo Siphamandla, a Master of Arts student in Library and Information Science degree in the Department of Information Studies (DIS) at the University of Zululand. I am conducting a study on **Job requirements and challenges of LIS graduates in public libraries in KwaZulu-Natal province (KZN)**. It is noted that such an investigation has implications on many stakeholders, a few being the public libraries themselves, the LIS graduates, Library schools and LIS curriculum developers.

As part of the requirements for the fulfilment of the Master's degree, I kindly ask for your participation in my research project by completing this questionnaire. Be assured that all information provided will be used for research purposes only. Anonymity and confidentiality will be observed. Your contribution will be greatly valued and looking forward to sharing the results of the study with you.

For any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us:

- 1. Researcher:** Mthembu Mpilo Siphamandla
Email: mpilomthembu55@gmail.com
Cell: 071 170 2832
- 2. Supervisor:** Prof Dennis Ngong Ocholla
Email: OchollaD@unizulu.ac.za
Cell: 082 372 4638

Thank you

Instructions

This document is divided into four (4) sections:

SECTION A: Biographical data

SECTION B: Job requirements and perceptions (in relation to qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes)

SECTION C: Perceptions on the LIS curricula offered by LIS schools and institutions

SECTION D: Challenges (on qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes)

- Please go through the questions and where relevant, mark your choice with an “X” or a “tick.”
- Please note that some questions require a single response while others may require more than one response.
- The information you provide will be treated confidentially and only be used for the completion of the afore-mentioned qualification.

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

1. Name of library: _____
2. Municipality: _____
3. Regional depot: _____

Please indicate your respective region library depot with a cross or a tick below:

Regional library depots	
Dundee Depot	
Coastal Depot	
South Coast Depot	
Midlands Depot	
Mbazwana Depot	

4. What is your current position/ job title?

SECTION B: PERCEPTIONS AND JOB REQUIREMENTS

Qualifications

5. Please indicate your highest academic qualification(s) from the following:

Grade 12 (Matric)	
Post matric/ undergraduate	
• Certificate	
• Diploma	
Junior / undergraduate Degree	

Post graduate	
• Certificate	
• Diploma	
Honours	
Masters	
Doctorate	
Other.....	

6. Have you ever noticed a gap between your current job and your qualification?

Yes	
No	

7. If yes, what was the gap?

Over- qualification	
Under- qualification	
Both	

Work experience

8. How long have you been working in your current position?

less than 1 year	1-3 years	3-5 years	5-7 years	7+ years

Knowledge

9. What knowledge do you have as identified by IFLA (2001)?

Knowledge	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
Knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity				
Knowledge of the material that forms the library's collection and how to access it				
Knowledge of information and communications technology				
An understanding of and sympathy with the principles of public service				

10. How did you acquire the knowledge you have?

While pursuing your studies	
In the work place	
Both	

11. What knowledge did you acquire while pursuing your studies?

12. What knowledge have you acquired from your current work place?

13. Apart from the identified knowledge, what other knowledge do you have?

Skills

14. Of the skills identified by IFLA (2001) below, which one(s) do you possess?

Skills	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
The ability to communicate positively with people				
The ability to understand the needs of users				
The ability to co-operate with individuals and groups in the community				
The ability to work with others in providing an effective library service				
Organisational skills, with the flexibility to identify and implement changes				
Imagination, vision and openness to new ideas and practice				
Readiness to change methods of working to meet new situations				

15. How did you acquire those skills?

While pursuing your studies	
In the work place	
Both	

16. Which skills did you acquire while pursuing your studies?

17. What skills have you acquired from your current work place?

18. Apart from the identified skills, what other skills do you possess?

19. Do you think you need new skills from your current position?

Yes	
No	

a) If yes, please identify those skills

b) If No, please proceed to question 20.

c) How can those skills be acquired?

Training	
Workshops	
Mentorship	
Contacts	
Other.....	

20. Who is responsible for addressing those skills? -

21. Have you ever noticed any skills gap/mismatch from your library in relation to your duties and skills you possess?

Yes	
No	

a) If yes, what was the mismatch?

Over- skilled	
Under- skilled	
Both	

Attitudes

22. What attitudes do you have in some of the identified below?

Attitudes	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
Work under pressure				
Working independently				

Working extended hours e.g. weekends and evenings				
Team work				
Accuracy				
Creativity				
Innovativeness				
Confidence				
Energetic				
Loyalty				
Well organized				
Passion for development				
Self-managing				
Disciplined				

a) How did you acquire those attitudes?

While pursuing your studies	
In the work place	
Both	

b) Which attitudes did you acquire while pursuing your studies?

c) Which attitudes did you acquire from your current work place?

d) Apart from the identified attitudes, what other attitudes do you hold?

e) Do you think you need new attitudes from your current position?

Yes	
No	

SECTION C: PERCEPTIONS ON THE LIS CURRICULLA

23. Do you think the theory and practice offered during your degree has empowered you to execute your functions/ duties effectively?

Yes	
No	

Sometimes	
-----------	--

- a) If yes, please continue to question b.
b) If No, what do you think can be done to balance theory and practice?

24. Referring to the demands of your everyday duties, do you think there is any need for the revision of the curriculum from your previous institution of learning?

Yes	
No	
Not sure	

- a) If yes, what changes could be done to help curriculum development?

- b) If No, please continue to section D

SECTION D: CHALLENGES OF LIS GRADUATES WITH RESPECT TO THEIR QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE, KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ATTITUDES.
--

25. What challenges do you have in relation to your academic qualification?

26. What problems do you encounter as lack of your work experience?

27. What difficulties normally arise in relation to your knowledge?

28. What complications do you face through skills mismatch?

29. What challenges do you face in line with the attitudes you possess?

30. What do you think could be done to overcome the challenges (qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and attitudes) you are facing?

Thank you for your time and consideration

Appendix F: Public library competency checklist

A	Knowledge / awareness	1	2	3	4	5
	Please rate your knowledge based on the following knowledge types in relation to public library work place					
	Knowledge of public service legislation and prescripts applicable to Government, including systems and procedures					
	Knowledge of the PFMA					
	Knowledge of integrated electronic library and information systems, reference and other information sources					
	Knowledge of project management, research and policy development					
	Sound knowledge of public library administrative procedures and services					
	Broad knowledge and interest in reading					
	Knowledge and experience of computers, word processing, internet and email					
	Basic understanding of maintaining and troubleshooting windows 7 operating system software, PC and printer hardware (working on window 8.1 will be an advantage)					
	Knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity					
	Knowledge of the material that forms the library's collection and how to access it					
	Knowledge of information and communications technology					
	An understanding of and sympathy with the principles of public service					
	Cataloguing and classification knowledge					
	Knowledge of library promotion					
	Knowledge of collection development					
	Knowledge of managing records (digital and physical)					
	Creating a work-centred environment in order to encourage the open sharing and use of all forms of knowledge					
	Knowledge of Batho Pele principles					
	Library marketing and advocacy					
	Knowledge of literacy					
	Problem solving skills					
	Logical thinking and attention to details					
	Knowledge of trade exhibitions and conferences					
	Systems management (PALS, SLIMS)					
	Knowledge of the business environment					
	Knowledge of managing library staff					
	Importance of social cohesion through libraries					
	Knowledge of work delegation					
	Knowledge of managing library facilities to be available for patrons					
	Performing extensive needs analysis					
	Literacy and access to information					
	Ethical code of information access					
	Sustainable goals development					

	Limitations and advantages in South Africa reading						
	Knowledge of ergonomics (Health, safety awareness, maintenance of building and environment)						
	Promotion of information access act						
	Knowledge of report writing						
B	Skills / personal abilities / expertise						
	How would you rate your skills from the ones listed below regarding public library work environment						
	Good office administration, planning and organisational skills						
	Excellent communication skills (written and verbal)						
	Good interpersonal relations						
	Computer literacy (MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.)						
	Hard/provable/technical and practical skills						
	Information retrieval						
	Management skills						
	Good interpersonal skills						
	Good public relations skills						
	Financial management skills						
	Human resources management skills						
	Presentation skills						
	Report writing						
	Research methods/planning						
	Supervisory skills						
	Customer relations						
	Strategic planning						
	Marketing skills						
	Policy development						
	The ability to understand the needs of users						
	The ability to co-operate with individuals and groups in the community						
	The ability to work with others in providing an effective library service						
	Organisational skills, with the flexibility to identify and implement changes						
	Imagination, vision and openness to new ideas and practice						
	Readiness to change methods of working to meet new situations						
	Cataloguing and classification skills						
	Research skills						
	Problem solving skills						
	Library promotion and marketing						
	Administrative skills						
	Project management						
	Records management skills						
	Time management						
	Using world share system and millennium						
	Interacting with public						
	End-user focused service improvement						
	Skills of implementing work policies and applying rules						
	Skills of managing bibliographic records						

	Ability to multi-task						
	Conservation and preservation skills						
	Sign language skills/Skills for dealing with patrons having special needs like blinds and deaf						
	Event/project management skills						
	Acquisition skills						
	Collection development skills						
	Leadership skills						
	Web and graphic design						
	Digitisation						
	Library outreach ideas						
C	Attitudes / personal traits						
	How do you assess your attitudes from the ones given below in terms of a public library work place						
	Good work ethics						
	Honesty						
	Reliability						
	Team spirit						
	Creative and motivated						
	Positive attitude						
	Self-motivated						
	Willingness to work according to set library hours, including Saturdays						
	Work under pressure						
	Working independently						
	Accuracy						
	Creativity						
	Innovativeness						
	Confidence						
	Energetic						
	Loyalty						
	Well organised						
	Passion for development						
	Self-managing						
	Disciplined						
	Trustworthiness						
	positivity						
	Adaptability						
	Time-management/punctuality						
	Patience						
	Eager to learn						
	Good work ethics						
	Humbleness						
	Considerate and understanding						
	Respect for others						
	Open minded						
	Pro-activeness						

	Considerate						
	Committed						
	Helpfulness						
	Enthusiasm						
	Appreciation/gratefulness						
	Exemplary						
	Acknowledging						
	Initiative						
	Goal oriented						
	Passionate						
	Handle and resolve conflict						
	Professionalism						