

**THE IMPACT OF REDUCED HOURS ON
PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES IN CAPE
TOWN: THE CASE OF EERSTERIVIER
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

A RESEARCH PROJECT

By

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DECLARATION

“I declare that THE IMPACT OF REDUCED HOURS ON PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES IN CAPE TOWN: THE CASE OF EERSTERIVIER PUBLIC LIBRARY is my own work and that all the sources I have quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references”

Signature.....

Date.....



ABSTRACT

The purpose of my study is to investigate the impact of reduced hours on public library services in Cape Town through taking my own library, Eersterivier Library, as a case study. The research problem comes from the author's personal experience as a librarian in the City of Cape Town whose library's usage seems to have increased since the reductions in hours in two neighbouring libraries, Melton Rose and Kuils River. The reductions in their hours are due to libraries losing staff and not being replaced. Libraries should be accessible in terms of location and open hours, especially in disadvantaged communities such as those served by the three libraries.

The study sets out to investigate why registered members of the other two libraries might be using my library and if it could be because of the reduced hours. It is a small scale study which includes both qualitative and quantitative methods. The study comprises an analysis of circulation statistics of the three libraries, a survey of users at Eersterivier Library that are members of the two adjacent libraries and interviews with librarians in charge of the two libraries. The study sets out to answer the following questions:

- Does the reduction of open hours contribute to reduced accessibility of library and information service to the public?
- Are the increases of usage at Eersterivier Public Library from members of other libraries the result of the reduced hours of the adjacent libraries?
- Do library users prefer to use a library facility nearest to them?

The study finds that indeed the change in hours seems to have affected circulation figures in the three libraries and that patrons' reading and library behaviours are affected. The study might suggest that it is possible that members of the two libraries just do not use a library anymore.

The findings are empirical evidence of the negative impact of recent trends in the management of Cape Town's libraries on communities. I hope therefore that it might contribute to management decisions in the resourcing of community libraries whose mission is to provide a safe harbour for citizens.

CONTENTS

Declaration Statement	i
Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iv
List of tables	v
List of Figures	vi
CHAPTER 1	1
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background to research project	2
1.3 Social role of public libraries	3
1.4 Statement of the research problem	4
1.5 Significance and limitations	5
1.6 Ethics statement	5
1.7 Outline of chapters	5
CHAPTER 2	6
LITERATURE REVIEW	6
2.1 Introduction	6
2.2 Public Library Services in South Africa since 1994	6
2.3 Research in public library closures in United Kingdom	7
2.4 Conclusion	9
CHAPTER 3	11
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	11
3.1 Introduction	11
3.2 Research Problem	11
3.3 Research Questions	11
3.4 Design and Methodology	12
3.4.1 Monthly Circulation Statistics	12
3.4.2 The Survey	13
3.4.3 Interviews with Librarians	14
3.5 Conclusion	14



CHAPTER 4	15
SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS	15
4.1 Introduction	15
4.2 Analysis of circulation statistics	15
4.3 User Questionnaire: summary and analysis	17
4.3.1 Questions 1-4 & 10: Biographical Information	17
4.3.2 Question 5 & 6: Eersterivier Library usage	20
4.3.3 Knowledge of reduced hours	20
4.3.4 Question 7, 8 & 9: Impact of reduced hours	20
4.4 Interviews with Librarians in charge of Melton Rose and Kuils River Libraries	22
4.4.1 Impact of changes in the City of Cape Town Library and Information Services	22
4.4.2 Librarians' perceptions about the reduction of open hours	23
4.4.3 The impact of reduced hours on the quality of service Melton Rose and Kuils River Libraries	24
4.4.4 Perceptions about the future of Library and Information Services in the City of Cape Town.	24
4.5 Conclusion	24
CHAPTER 5	28
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	28
5.1 Introduction	28
5.2 Findings on research questions	28
5.3 Conclusion	31
5.4 Recommendations	32
REFERENCES	34
APPENDICES	
A. Survey questionnaire	36
B. Interview Protocol	38
C. Letter of permission	39
D. Map of suburbs	40
E. Interviews with Librarians in Charge	41

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Home library membership: Question 1	17
Table 2 The age of the respondents: Question 2	18
Table 3 Occupation of respondents: Question 4	18
Table 4 Respondents home suburbs: Question 10	19
Table 5 Reason for using Eersterivier Library: Question 5	20
Table 6 Chief reason for using Eersterivier Library: Question 6	21
Table 7 Awareness of closure of registered Library: Question 7	21
Table 8 Responses to Question 6 (chief reason) and Question 7	22
Table 9 Chi-squared tests for 1 st or 2 nd choices	23
Table 10 Indication if reduction affected respondent: question 8	23
Table 11 Effects causes by reduced hours: Question 9	23



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Melton Rose Library circulation February 2003 – August 2003	15
Figure 2 Kuils River Library circulation August 2003 – February 2004	16
Figure 3 Eersterivier Public Library circulation	17
Figure 4 Respondents Gender: Question 3	18
Figure 5 Reason for using Eersterivier Library	21



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the study is to investigate the impact of reductions in library open hours on Eersterivier Library, one of eight public libraries in the Oostenberg region in the City of Cape Town. I, as the Librarian-in-charge at Eersterivier, Library wish to understand the increase in use which we seem to have experienced since last year when the two sister libraries in the nearby communities were compelled to reduce their hours.

My belief is that libraries are an integral and important part of any community and play a vital role in promoting empowerment of those communities. Libraries also serve as a centre of community activities. Libraries should be accessible and available to the community they serve. A major change to Oostenberg libraries is that since 2005 they all resort under the branch Library and Information Services within the Department of Social Development in the City of Cape Town. Before that, some fell under Provincial Library Services and some under the Regional Service Council system. Accessibility and provision of a service to the community are set out in the vision and mission statement of the City of Cape Town under which the three libraries operate. The vision of the City of Cape Town Library and Information Service (CoCTLIS) is to empower the citizens of Cape Town through access to the services and resources required for their informational, cultural and recreational needs (City of Cape Town Library Information Service Vision & Mission Statement, 2004). The mission is committed to providing a free public library service to all its citizens. The mission is in line with the UNESCO Public Library Manifesto of 1994. The library service thus aims for excellence in providing a highly professional and cost effective lending, reference and community information service (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, 2001:8). Despite this idealistic statement of the vision and mission of the City, the reality is that in the recent year public libraries in the City have had to cut back their services and opening hours.

The Oostenberg administration is one structure out of seven administrations of the City of Cape Town. The findings of the Demarcation Board when boundaries of six metropolitan substructures were finalised in 1995 indicated that the eastern metropolitan substructure had the lowest per capita income in the Metropole (Roode, 2004). The Demarcation Board was of the opinion, at the time, that the Oostenberg region would require continuous financial support because of this factor. Although the economic conditions in the region improved over the years, the status of the region as the poorest in the Metropolitan area still holds true.

Oostenberg has eight autonomous public libraries, all of which fall under the control of the Social Development Department in the Library and Information Services Branch. Each public library builds its own membership files. Membership cards may be used at any library of the City of Cape Town. According to Tommy Roode, the then coordinator of the Oostenberg libraries, library management has the challenge of:

- Compiling a comprehensive development plan, incorporating service and facility policies, strategies and standards
- Unifying a fragmented diverse inherited system and services
- Moulding a single management structure to facilitate a stable administration
- Attracting and recruiting competent service-orientated staff
- Rehabilitating of staff morale, attitude and trust (Roode, 2004).

1.2 Background to Research project

Over the last few years, the employees of The City of Cape Town have been involved in the process of creating a single, integrated organisation, the City of Cape Town. The old arrangement of 19 separate municipal administrations, based on the Group Areas Act, changed in 1996 into six local councils: Cape Town, Tygerberg, South Peninsula, Blaauwberg, Oostenberg and Helderberg with the Cape Metropolitan Council the overall co-coordinating body (Anderson, 2005). Before the local government elections in Cape Town in May 1996, many employees came from different administrations and all had to grapple with the challenges and uncertainty of the unbundling and amalgamations. This involved the unbundling of assets, the transfer and placement of staff and the launch of the new administration in July 2000.

Any restructuring of local government has to impact on public libraries. For example, the breaking up of counties in the United Kingdom in the 1990's severely affected public libraries in that country (Fry & Wallis, 2000). Between 1996 and 1998 the administrations were in processes of continuous change. The span of control grew bigger and led to more staff restructuring. Organisational structures had to be redesigned. This has been a slow exercise and issues such as powers and duties caused great uncertainty and insecurity amongst library staff. Powers, such as management of libraries and reporting lines, were unclear to staff. For example, each administration had a library manager with his or her own working style. This situation of uncertainty led to some resignations. Those posts, as well as those of the people who reached retirement, were frozen. Management was not willing to fill the empty posts until the whole placement process was completed. Libraries therefore become short-staffed for indefinite periods. With the trend of not filling vacancies, the reality of closing down libraries stared us in the face. After many discussions with management, the way

of dealing with the challenge of staff shortages, was the reduction of library open hours. The result has been that libraries have had to reduce their opening hours.

According to the CoCTLIS annual report of 2004 the Oostenberg region, which includes rapidly growing settlements such as Blue Downs, Happy Valley and West Bank, population growth increased roughly by 120000 since 1999, yet the number of library posts has dropped from 75 to 66 since 1996. Since 2000 more library posts were frozen because of the City's policy to reduce staff (Roode, 2004).

1.3 Social Role of Public Libraries

Gerard (1978, 1) believes that the evolution of libraries forms part of the mainstream of social history in western society and the middle part of the 20th century. Although much has been written about the decline of public libraries in the late 20th century, the service continues to be an integral feature of western society (Martin, 1990:11). The IFLA/UNESCO library Manifesto of 1994 describes public libraries as: "the local gateway to knowledge provides a basic condition for lifelong learning, independent decision-making and cultural development of the individual and social groups". Batt (1997: 200) describes a public library as a building, which is visited to borrow books, to study, to rest or shelter from the rain. It is a place to meet people or a place to display artistic talent. He calls libraries anchors for neighborhoods and for communities. Cape Town's Integrated Development Plan (City of Cape Town, 2004) identifies libraries as "special collective places of the city" in close contact with society.

The following key missions are set out in the UNESCO Public Library Manifesto:

- Creating and strengthening reading habits in children from an early age
- Supporting both individual and self conducted education at all levels
- Providing opportunities for personal creative development
- Stimulating the imagination and creativity of children and young people
- Promoting awareness of cultural heritage, appreciation of the arts, scientific achievements and innovations
- Providing access to cultural expressions of all performing arts
- Fostering inter-cultural dialogue and favouring cultural diversity
- Supporting the oral tradition
- Ensuring access for citizens to all sorts of community information
- Providing adequate information services to local enterprises, associations and interests groups
- Facilitating the development of information and computer literacy skills

- Supporting and participating in literacy activities and programmes for all age groups, and initiating such activities if necessary (International Federation of Library Associations, 2001:87).

South African public libraries face particular challenges:

- Libraries are poorly distributed (Van Helden & Lor, 2002)
- Seen as soft targets for budget cuts (Lor,1998)
- It is in a desperate situation with huge staff shortages(Anderson,2005)
- The quality of services declines (Most T'kei public libraries closed, 1998)
- The shortages of school libraries together with the introduction of the new curriculum, has led to a huge increase in use by school learners(Hart,2004:112)
Only eight million learners out of 12 million nation-wide have access to school libraries, according to the School Register of Needs survey in 1997 (South Africa. Department of Education, 1997)
- The national emphasis on life-long learning and basic education means that public libraries are impelled to play a strong role in formal and informal education (Nassimbeni, 2001:32).

According to Ngubeni (2004: 46) public libraries in South Africa focused on improving the conditions of poor white people in the 1930s and 1940s and earlier. Anderson (2005: 21) points out that the Group Areas Act and the removal of the so-called Black, Coloured and Indian people from "White" areas means that there are large well-stocked libraries in affluent suburbs but poorly stocked small libraries for other racial groups. Libraries for some South African black people are virtually non-existent and there is a lack of relevant reading material for the poor and marginalized masses (Ngubeni, 2004: 46).

1.4 Statement of the research problem

My research problem comes from my experience as librarian at Eersterivier Public Library. Two of the adjacent libraries, Melton Rose and Kuils River Public libraries, lost staff and their library opening hours were reduced in May 2003 and November 2003 respectively. My purpose is to investigate whether the reduction of the libraries hours has affected the use of Eersterivier Public Library. It also investigates the reaction of library patrons and library staff to the reduction in hours

The problem statement leads to three research questions which my study sets out to explore:

- Does the reduction of open hours contribute to reduced accessibility of library and information service to the public?

- Are the increases of usage at Eersterivier Public Library from members of other libraries the result of the reduced hours of the adjacent libraries?
- Do library users prefer to use a library facility nearest to them?

The questions will be expanded in Chapter 3.

1.5 Significance and limitations of study

Since the project was completed, news has come that the Department of Arts and Culture has allocated over a billion rand for South African Public Libraries. The allocation will be based on an investigation in 2006 & 2007 into the present situation of libraries and their potential role in the social plan.

There is much unease about reduced library services in Cape Town as shown in several newspaper articles since the late 1990s. An article in the Cape Librarian of November 2000 raised concerns about reduced hours of libraries Adams (2000: 17). It points out that greater accessibility to libraries is needed, especially in the poorer communities.

My project provides some empirical evidence on the impact of reduction in hours. The study hopes to help library management and policy makers to make informed decisions in the governance and operation of libraries in Cape Town. However this is only a limited study and covers only three libraries.

1.6 Ethics statement

The researcher got permission from management of library services to collect the statistical information from the libraries and have interviews with librarians. Permission was asked from all the subjects that were interviewed for the completion of the questionnaires. Approval was obtained from interviewees to use the names of their libraries. The whole research process was explained to the respondents.

1.7 Outline of chapters

Chapter 1 gives the background and the research framework of the study. It also looks briefly at the history and philosophy of public libraries in South Africa.

Chapter 2 is the literature review which aims to look at the impact of reduced operating hours in libraries both nationally and outside of South Africa.

Chapter 3 discusses the research methodology and Chapter 4 is the analysis of the data gathered.

Chapter 5 is an interpretation of the findings. It concludes the research and gives some recommendations for the future.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter begins with a discussion of the situation of public library service in South Africa since 1994. I will then focus on existing research in the United Kingdom in the closing down of libraries and the reduction of their opening hours. The emphasis of my study is on the reduction of hours, since there are a number of similarities in existing research to my study.

A search of the literature revealed no research on the impact of reduced public library open hours on library users in South Africa. There have been some writings in newspapers, professional journals and corporate reports on the situation of South African public library and information services.

2.2 Public Library Service in South Africa since 1994

In 1998 Lor (1998), then Director of the State Library raised concerns about the situation in library services in South Africa to the Portfolio Committee on Arts, Culture and Languages, Science and Technology and mentioned the following issues:

- The deterioration of public library services in South Africa
- The disruption caused by the reorganization of the provinces and how public libraries have been badly affected by it
- No access to school library facilities for 8 million learners out of 12 million learners nation-wide according to a School register of Needs Survey for study material
- Provincial library services cannot support library services in newly established provinces
- Cash-strapped local authorities are cutting back on library services.

An example of this cutting of library service was published in the Daily Dispatch of 27 May 1998, when Quandi Malotana, the chairperson of the Eastern Cape division of the Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA), reported on the desperate situation of the 180 public libraries in the Eastern Province. They had to close 22 libraries out of 28 libraries in Transkei since 1994 because of huge staff shortages and few books being purchased (Most T'kei public libraries closed, 1998).

Leach (1998) investigated Lor's observations and confirmed that:

- Rationalization (also known as downsizing, amalgamation, transformation, restructuring, etc.) has played a major role for the negativity in libraries

- The decreases in funding and budget cuts have numerous effects on library services such as staff shortages, book purchases and material delivery
- De-motivated personnel in many instances have caused a low staff morale
- Greater emphasis is being placed on education with more study materials and study space required.

Overall he concludes that the three most important problems facing the public library sector in South Africa are:

- lack of funding
- the low level of library awareness especially by politicians
- low staff morale.

The low staff morale is perhaps caused in part by the gap in the South African Constitution. The 1996 Constitution gives the mandate for public libraries to the Provinces and does not mention the longstanding responsibility of local authorities for library staff or buildings. This has led to uncertainties on the function of public libraries in South Africa since the local authorities and provinces claim to have inadequate funds (The Print Industries Cluster Council Working Group on Libraries, 2005).

Cape Town libraries have been part of the national library crisis. A concern on the state of public libraries was raised in a report to the Sub Council 2 meeting held on 13 February 2004. Tommy Roode, the Library Coordinator for the Oostenberg Administration, argued that, if the current trend continued and no vacancies were filled as and when they occurred the reality of closing library facilities stared us in the face. He stated that the only sensible way of dealing with this challenge, is the reduction of open hours to the public. He argued that this alternative would at least ensure that some level of the service be maintained.

In the Sunday Times of 22 June 2003 Heinrich Heymann, then head of Library Services in the Cape Town administration, elaborated on how staff shortages have caused the reduction of library open hours in libraries in Cape Town. His main concern is that the quality of service has declined. This article also reported on two new library buildings that were built with no staff to manage them (Van Der Merwe, 2003).

2.3 Research in Public Library closures in The United Kingdom

Research has also been done in British libraries on the closure of libraries and the reduction of library hours. In 1995 Proctor, Usherwood and Sobczyk (1996) investigated the impact of temporary closures of public library services and how they affected user behaviour and attitudes. This research followed an eight week strike action by the staff of Sheffield Library Services. The research aimed to increase the

knowledge of library managers and professionals about user behaviour and attitudes as a result of service closure. The research used a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with library users, staff at libraries and library managers. The findings of the user survey demonstrated that libraries play an important role in the lives of users. The user survey also identified distinctive changes that took place in the behaviour and habits of library users during the reduction of library hours. The loss of the library service was replaced with similar resources or services e.g. using another library, finding another source of information. The findings also showed that due to reduced hours employed people have limited access to library services. The research also suggested that the library may be particularly significant as a community resource in communities where unemployment is high and access to other resources is limited.

Another study by Proctor, Lee and Reilly (1998) investigated access to public libraries and the impact of opening hours' reductions and closures 1986-1997 with respect to public library services in England and Wales. The purpose of their research was to provide library authorities and managers with the criteria on which to base future decisions on opening hours' reduction and library closures. The objectives of their research were to identify

- The impact of public library service point closure on the library user
- The impact of opening hours reductions on the library user
- The relative impact of closure and opening hours reductions on the use of services.

A statistical analysis of management data in a sample of authorities was carried out, in order to determine whether a correlation between reduced opening hours and loss of use could be found. They gathered information on:

- Number of service point closed
- Number of service points with reduced opening hours
- Future expectations of losses
- Availability of management information/research on the impact of service loss.

The study revealed both the extent and impact of closures and opening hours reductions over the period from 1986 to 1997.

Proctor and Simmons's aim with their postal questionnaires to all the library authorities in England and Wales (2000), in 2000 was to investigate the ways authorities had approached closure decisions and the issues arising from their implementation. The intention of their research was to help library managers and policy makers make more informed decisions. They wanted to know:

- What circumstances made service point closure a preferred option?

- What criteria did authorities use to determine which libraries to close?
- How was any conflict with staff, elected members and users handled?
- What was the most effective way of consulting the public?
- What influence could managers and the public have on decisions?
- In what circumstances might closure benefit the service?

The questionnaire covered both opening hours' cuts and library closures. Authorities had to give reasons on closure and reduction of hours. Proctor and Simmons conducted follow up interviews with the 20 authorities which responded. The study reveals a number of important issues which should be addressed by library authorities and management when closing down libraries and reducing hours for example:

- forward planning
- criteria for closures and ,very importantly,
- consultation with users.

Following Proctor and Simmons's study of library authorities, Loynes (2000) did a statistical analysis of monthly issue statistics over a three to four year period for 26 libraries in four Public Library Authorities (Sheffield, Ealing, Hereford, and Worcester) using graphic analysis and time series modeling. The analysis was done to measure the effect of reductions in opening hours on book issues of Public Library Authorities. Interviews with library staff enable Loynes to identify a number of variables:

- the impact on changes in material spending. Reducing choice on the shelves is likely to affect the number of items borrowed
- the characteristics of the community using the library
- cumulative impact of any previous reductions
- the pattern of reductions
- the availability of alternative libraries nearby with more convenient opening hours.

Findings were that there is only a thin relationship between reductions in opening hours and subsequent levels of issues over 12 to 18 months. Some results show a rise in issues follow a reduction in opening hours and are very difficult to explain. The data also show no obvious difference between the result for libraries whose opening hours were cut and those libraries whose hours remain the same. However data suggest that over a longer period, a reduction in issues might be discernible.

2.4 Conclusion

The literature, reviewed in this chapter, clearly shows a great concern about the impact of closures and reduced library hours. The research in United Kingdom has focused on issues as:

- accessibility,
- staff morale,
- user satisfaction.

These are the issues that my study on Eersterivier Public Library must concentrate on. The main purpose of this research paper is to establish how the reductions in hours at the two nearby libraries, Melton Rose and Kuils River, have affected the use of Eersterivier Public Library. Issues arise from the literature study such as staff motivation and how management makes decisions.



CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the design and methodologies of the research. The research problem is briefly discussed as well as the research questions. My study is a small scale case study. It uses quantitative and qualitative methods as appropriate as will be shown below. These methods were used because quantitative methods involve counting and measuring and qualitative methods focus on the kind of evidence that will enable a researcher to understand the meaning of what's going on (Gilham, 2000).

3.2 Research Problem

As suggested in Chapter 1, the definition of the research problem comes from concern over the quality of library and information service to citizens of the City of Cape Town.

The research problem comes from experiences as Librarian at Eersterivier Public Library. The two adjacent public libraries lost staff and their open hours were reduced. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the usage of Eersterivier Library seems to be increased since the reduction of open hours of the two adjacent libraries. My purpose is to verify whether the reduction of the adjacent libraries' open hours has affected the use of Eersterivier Public Library and to examine user views on the reduction of hours.

3.3 Research Questions

The research problem, as well as the readings of the existing research, covered in Chapter 2, leads to certain research questions:

- Has Eersterivier library's circulation increased since the reduction of the open hours and has circulation decreased at the adjacent libraries?
- Does the reduction of open hours in the adjacent libraries contribute to a decrease in quality of service to the public?
- Do library users prefer to use a library facility nearest to them?

These three fundamental questions give rise to the following research questions similar to those in Proctor, Usherwood and Sobczyk's study (1996):

- Why do users who are official members of adjacent libraries use Eersterivier library?
- Would the members of adjacent libraries prefer to use the nearest library to their home, work or school?
- Is Eersterivier library closest to their home, work or school?
- What are the views of members of the two adjacent libraries on the reduction of their library's hours?
- How has the reduction in open hours affected reading and library use behaviour of the users of adjacent libraries?
- How did the staff at the adjacent libraries perceive the impact of the reduction in open hours?

3.4 Design and Methodology

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used as will be shown below. The research methodology was conducted in three parts:

- Monthly circulation statistics of Eersterivier and the two adjacent libraries were compared to establish any significant changes in circulation totals after the hours were reduced
- A survey of users of Eersterivier Library was undertaken to establish whether the evident increase in usage at Eersterivier library was because of the reduction of open hours of the adjacent libraries
- The librarians in charge of the two sister libraries were interviewed to gather information on their perceptions of reduced open hours and its impact on the quality of services in the libraries.

3.4.1 Monthly Circulation Statistics

Information of the circulation statistics of Eersterivier and the two adjacent libraries was gathered from the monthly reports that are prepared for the Western Cape Provincial Library Service, in the form of an Excel spreadsheet. The spreadsheet data were needed to generate the graphs and analysis that are produced in Chapter 4. Statistical information gathered on library use before and after the reduction of hours was measured.

The monthly statistics of the two adjacent libraries were collated for differences in monthly circulation. The purpose was to see if the figures changed after the reduction in hours at the two libraries.

3.4.2 The Survey

Semi structured questionnaires were completed by members of the neighbouring libraries who came into Eersterivier Library from 1 to 8 November 2005. Fifty library users of Eersterivier library that are registered members of other libraries were interviewed as they came to the circulation desk. A research assistant helped with the administering of questionnaires. The assistant helped the respondents through the questionnaire. The questionnaire is in English and many respondents needed translation in Afrikaans. The questionnaire is provided in Appendix A.

Before administering the final questionnaire, a small pilot study was conducted at Scotsdene Public Library from 15 to 19 October 2005. This was done to test the clarity of the questionnaire. In the pilot study 27 users were chosen to complete the questionnaires and make some comments. This pilot study was useful as it generated useful comments which allowed for improvement of the original questionnaire.

The final questionnaire has 10 questions – mostly closed. The open questions serve to allow respondents to elaborate on their answers to the closed categories. The questionnaire is structured as follows:

- The first three questions and the last question gather personal information on respondents' gender, age, workplace and home address
- The next two questions ask why respondents are using Eersterivier Library
- The other questions explore what impact, if any, the reduced hours of the adjacent libraries had on their users.

Question 5 asks respondent to say why they are using Eersterivier Library that day. Ten categories such as, returning and borrowing books, photocopying, finding information or reading magazines are given. Question 6 asks the respondents to say why they are using Eersterivier Library and not their own registered libraries. It gives three possible reasons:

- Eersterivier Public Library offers a better service
- Eersterivier Public Library is closer to my work place or school
- My own library is closed at this time of day.

It asks respondents to rank the three reasons or to provide other reasons.

Question 7 finds out how many are aware of the closure of their registered libraries. Question 8 asks those who knew about the closures if it affected them. And Question 9 gives the respondents a chance to explain how the reduction has affected them. The data gathered were put on an Excel spreadsheet. The data were reviewed and summarized for meaning and interpretation.

3.4.3 Interviews with Librarians

The two librarians in charge of the two adjacent libraries, given the pseudonyms Mrs. Kuils River and Mrs. Melton Rose, were interviewed on 10 October 2005 and 20 January 2006. Regretfully there was a gap between the first and second interview because of the changing of management structure. Permission from the new Library Manager had to be obtained.

Interviews were chosen as a method of collecting data because of the small number and the personal contact of the interview helps to encourage persons to respond according to Powell (1986:111) and Gillham (2000:62).

The purpose of the interviews with the librarians in charge of adjacent libraries was to examine their views of the changes in the City of Cape Town's Library and Information Service department and the impact of reduced hours on the libraries. It also includes a more general question on their opinion of the recent changes in the City of Cape Town's Library and Information Services. The interview protocol is provided in Appendix B. It has six questions which are:

1. How have you experienced the recent changes in the City of Cape Town?
2. Why were your library's hours reduced?
3. Has the reduction affected the library? Please explain.
4. Do you think that the reduction of hours affected library use?
5. Do you think that the reduction of hours affected the quality of service?
6. What is your opinion of the future of Library Services?

A list of the questions was sent to the librarians before the interview so that they had time to make notes of their experience of the reduction of open hours at their library. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. The transcriptions were then analysed and tabulated according to their common units of meaning (Gillham 2000:72).

3.5 Conclusion

Chapter 4 will report on findings on the data collected.

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study. Data gathered are summarised, analysed and efforts made to interpret the results. As described in previous chapters the following methods were used to collect data for the research:

- Collecting and analysing circulation statistics of the three libraries and comparing the circulation statistics to establish the pattern of increases or decreases before and after the reduction
- Administering a survey with 50 users of Eersterivier library who are registered members of the other two libraries and
- Conducting interviews with the librarians in charge of Melton Rose and Kuils River libraries.

4.2 Analysis of circulation statistics

Figures 1 to 3 give a summary of the circulation statistics of Kuils River, Melton Rose and Eersterivier Libraries for three months before and three months after the reduction in open hours. The drop in November 2003 circulation statistics in Kuils River and May 2003 Melton Rose libraries coincides with reduced hours. It seems possible that the drop in issues statistics is because of the reduced open hours.

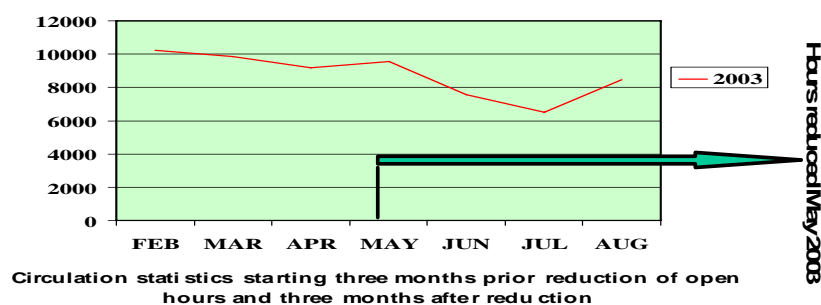


Figure 1: Melton Rose Library Circulation February 2003- August 2003

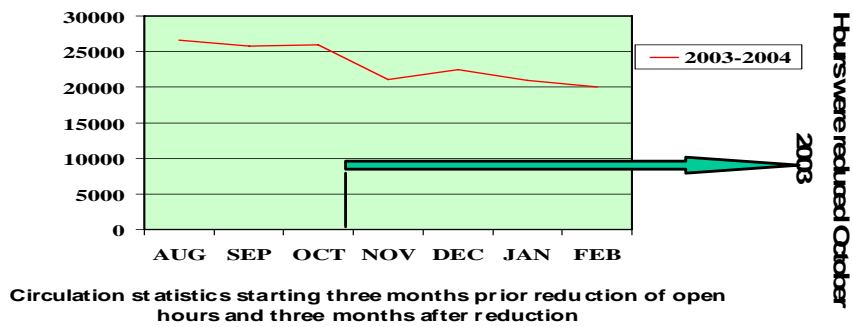


Figure 2: Kuils River Library circulation August 2003-February 2004

My further analysis of the two libraries' circulation statistics show that Melton Rose Library circulation for 2004 is 104912 and 93106 for 2005, Kuils River Library for 2004 is 268927 and 237165 for 2005. Melton Rose Library shows an 11.25% (11806) and Kuils River Library shows an 11.81% (31762) drop in circulation. It is possible to accept that the drop in circulation and reduced open hours affected library use.

Certain attributes of the two libraries need to be considered about circulation, for example:

- Kuils River Library has a number of services to old age homes. Books are taken to the homes. These services are unaffected by the reduced hours.
- Melton Rose Library is closer to Eersterivier Public Library, perhaps making it easier for its members to use Eersterivier Public Library.

This possible explanation is supported by data gathered in the questionnaire survey. Responses to Question 1 suggest that more members of Melton Rose Library are using Eersterivier Public Library than Kuils River Library. Moreover, answers to Question 5 will suggest more reasons.

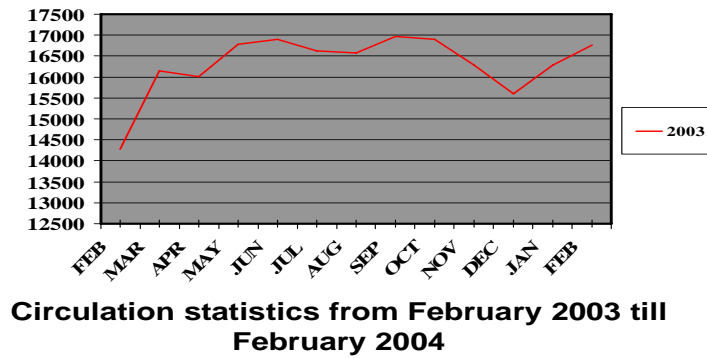


Figure 3
Eersterivier Library Circulation

Figure 3 shows Eersterivier Library circulation statistics for 2004 are 164408 and 174134 for 2005. The circulation statistics of Eersterivier library show a 5.92 % increase in circulation for the two years.

4.3 User questionnaire: summary and analysis

Users of Eersterivier Library that are registered members of other libraries were identified as they came into the library and asked to complete the questionnaire. The survey was administered from 1 to 8 November 2005. Fifty respondents completed the questionnaires. They were assisted by a research assistant to help them through the questionnaire, especially with the translation from English to Afrikaans. The majority of the respondents have Afrikaans as their mother-tongue language. The assistant was informed about research ethics and how respondents should be approached. Ten questions were asked. The questionnaire is provided in Appendix A.

4.3.1. Questions 1-4 & 10: Biographical Information

Questions 1-4 gathers data on respondents' home library, gender, age and occupation and Question 10 asks for respondents' residential addresses. The following tables and figures summarise the data gathered.

LIBRARY	TOTAL RESPONDENTS
KUILS RIVER	13
MELTON ROSE	37

Table 1: Home library membership: Question 1

The difference in numbers cannot be given statistical significance; however Melton Rose library's geographical position, closer to Eersterivier Library, might be a factor why its members choose to use Eersterivier Library.

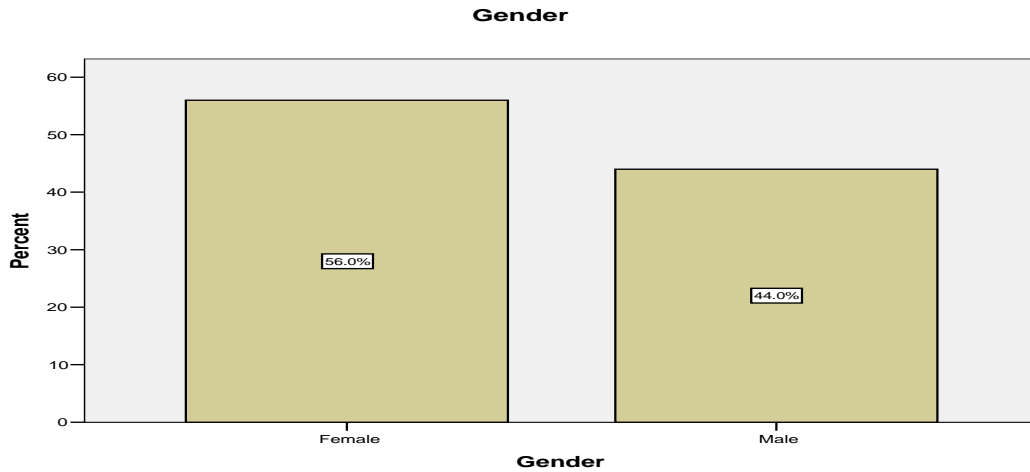


Figure 4: Respondents Gender: Question 2

Figure 4 indicates that 29 of the respondents were female and 21 were male.

The respondents' ages ranged from 9 years old to 60 years old and older, as presented in Table 2.

AGE	
9-14	3
15-19	11
20-25	6
26-60	30
>60	0

Table 2: The Age of the respondents: Question 3

Table 3 shows that 7 %of the respondents were between the age group 9-14, 21.5% between age group 15-19, 11.5% between age group 20-25 and 60% in the age group 26-60.

OCCUPATION	
School learner	10
Tertiary student	6
Housewife	4
Employed	24
Retired	2
Unemployed	3
Other	1

Table 3: Occupation of respondents: Question 4

Table 3 gives the different occupation categories of respondents. This table shows that of the 50 respondents 48% were employed. The possible interest in the figures is the high number of adult visitors rather than children. The largest user group at Eersterivier Public Library is school learners. It could be that parents from outside the immediate areas are not letting their children walk alone to Eersterivier Library because of the high crime rates.

Question 10 focuses on the distance between Eersterivier Public Library and the respondents' homes. The following suburbs were indicated by 46 respondents who answered the question about their home address.

Local Suburbs	Respondents	Distance from Eersterivier Library
Kleinvlei	12	9km
Hillcrest	1	8km
Stratford	4	2km
Blackheath	4	12km
Forest Village	2	6km
Forest Heights	4	6km
Malibu Village	5	11km
Electric City	1	2.5km
Perm Gardens	1	8km
Forest Glade	2	7km
Rosedale	2	6km
Somerset Heights	1	10km
Tuscany Glen	3	11km
Pine Place	1	7km
Stratford Green	1	4km
Devon Park	2	300m

Table 4 Respondents home suburbs: Question 10

The distance from and to Eersterivier Library and the suburbs is given to the nearest kilometer.

A map of the suburbs is included as Appendix D to indicate the distance to Eersterivier Library, especially for those people who has to walk. The IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto (2004:87) states:

Services have to be physically accessible and in well situated library buildings with the maximum convenience for the residents of the community. It should have good reading and study facilities, as well as relevant technologies and sufficient opening hours convenient to the users. Libraries should be near the centre of transport networks and close areas of community activities, it should be visible and easily reached by foot, public transport, where available, or by private vehicle and the journey should be about 15 minutes to a library.

Table 4 shows how far Cape Town is far from the UNESCO ideal. The library users in communities like Kuils River, Melton Rose and Eersterivier are not likely to have cars. The respondents indicated in Question 9 that they had to walk far distances to

Eersterivier Library. It might be that a journey with public transport to Eersterivier Library will take more than 15 minutes for those who do not have private transport.

4.3.2 Question 5 & 6: Eersterivier Library usage

Question 5 & 6 asks about respondents' use of Eersterivier Public Library. Users could tick off more than one reason, if necessary. Table 5 categorises responses according to importance and lists them then in order of frequency.

REASON FOR USING EERSTERIVIER LIBRARY	
Return and borrow books	40
Use photocopier	28
Read magazines and newspapers	20
Use community information service/notice board	18
Find information for school/university assignment	17
Return and borrow videos	16
Sit and study	14
Meet friends to pass the time	13
Leisure activity in hall	11
Find information for work	10
Other	5

Table 5: Reason for using Eersterivier Library: Question 5

The Table shows that 80% of the respondents were returning and borrowing books although they also used Eersterivier library for other purposes that day, such as visiting the notice boards for community information and using the copier. This shows that people enjoy the experience of going to their library, whether to borrow library material or seek information. The findings support Proctor, Lee & Reilly's (1998) findings that libraries make a significant contribution to people's quality of life, especially in communities with high incidence of economic and educational deprivation.

Question 6 focuses on the possible impact of the reduction of open hours of Kuils River and Melton Rose libraries. It asks respondents why they chose Eersterivier Library on that day as members of Kuils River and Melton Rose library. It gives the respondents three options as well as an open option. Respondents had to rank their responses. The last two options are significant for the study as they refer to issues of accessibility. Table 6 and Figure 5 summarise the responses.

Eersterivier public library offer a better service		
1	2	3
19	11	3
Eersterivier public library is closer to my home /school		
1	2	3
19	8	3
My own library is closed at this time of day		
1	2	3
9	12	0

Table 6: Chief reasons for using Eersterivier Library that day: Question 6

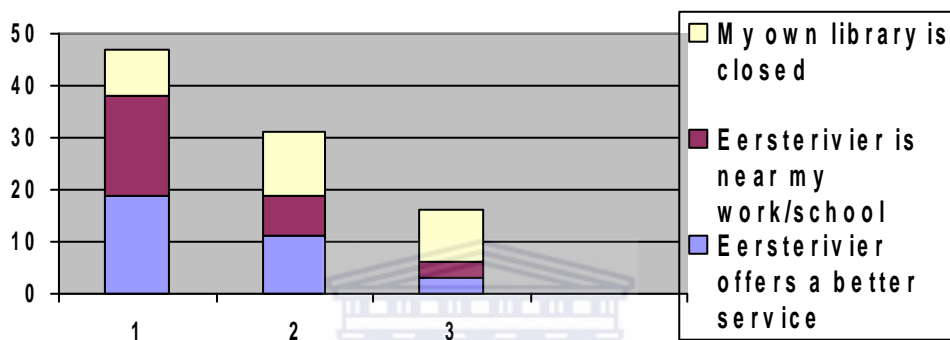


Figure 5: Reason for using Eersterivier Library

The responses show the importance of good service as it is clear that many visitors come to Eersterivier Library as they perceive it to offer a better service than their own libraries. However, for the purposes of my study, the last two options are significant as they refer to issues of accessibility.

4.3.3 Knowledge of reduced hours and possible impact on use of Eersterivier Library: Questions 6 & 7 cross-tabulated

Table 7 shows that 23 respondents knew about the reductions in hours in their libraries – as shown in their answers to Question 7.

Are you aware that your library has reduced their hours?	YES	NO
	23	27

Table 7: Awareness of closure of registered library: Question 7

As shown in the previous section, Question 6 asks respondents to say why they were using Eersterivier Library. It is possible that people who know about the change in hours might be using Eersterivier Library for different reasons from those who did not know.

The association between responses to Question 6 and Question 7 was looked at in two ways.

Question 7: Are you aware that Melton Rose and Kuils River Libraries have reduced their hours?			
Question 6 Chief Reason	Yes	No	Total
Eersterivier offers a better service	11	8	19
<i>% of Row</i>	<i>57.9%</i>	<i>42.1%</i>	<i>100%</i>
Eersterivier library is closer to school/work	5	14	19
<i>% of Row</i>	<i>26.3%</i>	<i>73.7%</i>	<i>100%</i>
My own library is closed	7	2	9
<i>% of Row</i>	<i>77.8%</i>	<i>22.2%</i>	<i>100%</i>
Other		3	3
<i>% of Row</i>	<i>0.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>100%</i>
Grand Total	23	27	50
<i>% of Row</i>	<i>46.0%</i>	<i>54.0%</i>	<i>100%</i>

Table 8 Responses to Question 6 (Chief Reason) and Question 7

Table 8 gives the numbers of respondents giving each option to Question 6 as their chief reason, cross-tabulated against answers to Question 7, and also shown as percentages. It shows that while 73.7% of those who said No to Question 7 gave their reason as the Eersterivier Library being closer, 42.1% saying No gave Service as their reason, and only 22.2% gave their reason as their own library being closed.

Because the level of the data in each question is nominal, a Pearson Chi-squared test is appropriate for testing whether there is a significant association between responses to Question 6 and Question 7. This test is only valid if no Chi-squared expected values are less than 1, and if few are less than 5. To avoid this situation, the category “other” of Question 6 was omitted, and the test runs on the slightly reduced sample of 47. This gives a Chi-squared value of 7.4967 (2 degrees of freedom) with a p-value of 0.0236, indicating significance at the 5% level.

For each option in Question 6 the sample was also split into two groups: those that made that option their 1st or 2nd choice, and the remainder. Using Chi squared tests an association with response to Question 7 was tested for. Results are given in Table 9 (all expected values are greater than 5). These show that a significant association exists between Question 7 and the selection of options 2 and 3, but not option 1. Those giving “Eersterivier is closer” as 1st or 2nd choice tended to say No to Question 7, whereas those giving “Own library closed” tended to say “Yes” to Question 7.

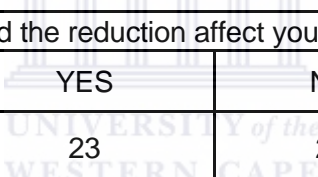
Question 6 Option (1 st or 2 nd choice)	Chi-squared	d.o.f.	p-value	Significant?
1. Eersterivier offers a better service	1.6237	1	0.2026	No
2. Eersterivier is Closer	9.5219	1	0.0020	Yes, at 1%
3. Own library is Closed	9.4251	1	0.0021	Yes, at 1%

Table 9: Chi-squared tests for 1st or 2nd choices

The statistical analysis shows that some people's change in choice of library is due to their own being closed.

4.3.4 Questions 8 & 9: Impact of reduced hours

Questions 8 & 9 continue to explore the possible impact of the libraries' reduced hours on library members of adjacent libraries. It is noteworthy that 27 out of the 50 respondents did not know about their library's reduced hours. How libraries communicate and circulate information to the users is an issue brought up by UK research (Proctor & Simmons, 2000) as mentioned in Chapter 2.



Did the reduction affect you?	
YES	NO
23	27

Table 10: Indication if reduction affected respondent: Question 8

Table 10 lists in order of frequency the responses to open-ended Question 9, where the 23 respondents commented on how the reduction of open hours impacted on their library use.

How has the reduction affected you?	
Eersterivier Library is far away from my home	16
Because my library is closed I have to use another library	16
The hours do not suit me anymore	13
I cannot get book to read	10
If I get to my registered library it's always closed	6
The craft and handwork services in the afternoon stop	2
Not enough time to do school projects	2
I'm not safe to walk	1

Table 11: Effects of reduced hours: Question 9

Accessibility and the walking distance to Eersterivier Library were the area which affected the respondents the most. Distance was expressed by the respondents as:

- “Having to walk a far distance”
- “Must drive to the library”
- “My husband has to take me.”

Other concerns about the reduction of open hours were access to reading matter and information resources for school projects and study spaces. Library extension activities like story hours, creative and art work and other development programmes were also mentioned. Respondents felt that the reduction deprived them of these activities that are part of their recreational and educational development. Another important factor identified is the safety of the respondents if they had to walk to Eersterivier Library.

4.4 Interviews with librarians in charge of Melton Rose and Kuils River Libraries

Interviews were done with the librarians in charge of the two libraries, Melton Rose and Kuils River libraries, in November 2005 and February 2006. The interviews included six open-ended questions.

- How have you experienced the recent changes in the City of Cape Town?
- Why were your library's hours reduced?
- Has the reduction affected the library? Please explain.
- Do you think that the reduction of hours affected library use?
- Do you think that the reduction of hours affected the quality of service?
- What is your opinion of the future of Library Services in the Cape Town?

The librarians' responses were transcribed. The researcher then analyzed the interviews and grouped the themes. From the data gathered emerged some concerns of the librarians in charge like the impact of change, the reduced hours, the impact on quality of service for the librarians and doubts over the future of libraries in Cape Town. In the beginning of the interview the librarians had different views about the change but as the interview progressed their concerns sounded similar.

4.4.1. Impact of changes in the City of Cape Town Library and Information Services

As mentioned in Chapter 1 seven municipalities were integrated into one single organization the City of Cape Town in 2000. This change evidently brought a lot of personal insecurities and uncertainties about the right procedures. The two librarians brought up the following changes:

- The change of municipal structures
- The change of management staff
- Loss of staff due to the freezing of posts

- Procedural changes.

As the Librarian in Charge of Kuils River library said:

“Changes brought a lot of insecurity” p 1.

They revealed strong feelings about the change. The Melton Rose librarian was more positive than the Kuils River librarian at the beginning of the interview, saying, for example, that the fact a library manager had been appointed was good. She also welcomed the restructuring:

“Change with the integration of districts was acceptable and the integration of districts is wonderful.”

But she then said that the change had brought a lot of stress:

“A very frustrating, a very stressful time” (M/ R, p1).

And as the interview went on she revealed more negative feelings towards the current situation:

“The workload was too much and it cause a lot of stress because you have to do three people’s jobs.”

4.4.2 Librarians’ perceptions about the reduction in open hours

Both librarians brought up the following:

- Both librarians had to reduce open hours because of staff shortages which were caused by retirement, resignations and secondments to other departments. Only one staff member was left at Melton Rose Library out of eight full-time staff members. Kuils River Library had lost four full-time staff members. This staff loss had forced reduced hours despite user needs for longer open hours
- This also led to loss of qualified or experienced staff members and prevented transfer of skills to other new staff
- The loss of key staff had also forced the suspension of some services in libraries i.e. certain children’s and outreach activities
- They were frustrated about the increased workload of staff. One person had to do three people’s work
- They felt the situation caused a lot of stress for staff.

The librarian of Melton Rose Library was troubled by the fact that librarians are not recognised as professionals and that there is a lack of knowledge about the work librarians do and their professional role in the City of Cape Town as shown by the failure to appoint staff where needed (M/ R, p4).

The Librarian of Kuils River Library felt the reduction in open hours was detrimental for library users especially for the working group:

“The hours we run are for people who do not work they can use the library but the workforce out there for them the hours are difficult because when they go to work we still close when they come back from work we already close again” (K/ R p5).

This librarian added that it is the City’s responsibility to provide a service for the working group because they are the ones who carry the city:

“I feel your service should focus on the working people because they are the people who carry the city they are the rate payers” (K/ R, p5).

4.4.3 The impact of reduced hours on the quality of service at Melton Rose and Kuils River Libraries

Both Librarians felt that the reduction of library hours had impacted on the service delivery in libraries to the communities. The fact that learners of more than 12 schools are using Melton Rose library is a burning point for the librarian. She mentioned the fact that learners have less time to do research work because of the limited access (M/R,p3). The two librarians were concerned about the drop in circulation statistics and the fact that libraries are short of morning and evening hours (K/ R, p4).

The librarian of Kuils River library mentioned that users plan their daily shopping and library schedule for the morning and they are very upset if the library is still closed at that time (K/ R, p3). She also felt that the change in open hours has a good side because it gives them a chance to do all their maintenance and administrative work, time to return library materials to the shelves so that users don’t have to wait before items are available. She said for her, (Kuils River p 2) that is a quality service but the users see the reduced hours as an inferior quality of the service.

The City of Cape Town promotes itself as a dignified city, an accessible city and a competent city to its communities (City of Cape Town Library and Information Service, 2005). The librarians stressed the fact that users therefore expect libraries to render a quality service as they did in the past (M/ R, p4). The librarian of Kuils River said that:

“The quality of service also means inconvenience for a person who came early and that frustrate the users” (K/ R, p4).

4.4.4 Perceptions about the future of library and information services in the City of Cape Town.

The librarians were not optimistic about the City of Cape Town as they felt the City lacks a strong infrastructure. The librarians felt that unless staff problems are sorted out the future of Library and Information Services in the City of Cape Town is doomed:

“It seems that there’s a down side where service is concern” “I feel disgusted in the city” (M/ R, p4),

4.5 Conclusion

The investigation into circulation statistics showed that there was an increase of circulation at Eersterivier Library and there was a decrease in circulation of Melton Rose and Kuils River Libraries.

Data for the survey were only gathered in one week. The questionnaires were completed by 50 registered members of Melton Rose and Kuils River libraries. The findings summarised in this chapter show that indeed the reduction of open hours of Melton Rose and Kuils River Libraries had an impact on people’s using libraries.

Responses to the questionnaire confirm the information recorded on the importance of accessibility as Rutherford (2002) and (Proctor, Lee & Reilly, 1998) reiterated that libraries have a distinctive value to a community to foster a sense of cohesion and identity that cannot be replaced by a mobile library or an alternative branch in another neighbourhood. This project only interviewed 50 respondents. However, it does not indicate how many people no longer use a library because of the reduced hours.

The interviews with librarians in charge of Melton Rose and Kuils River Libraries give a better understanding of the situation in Library and Information Services of the City of Cape Town. Other Librarians in charge should also be interviewed.

Chapter 5 will use the findings presented in this chapter to answer the research questions listed in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 tries to provide answers to the research questions identified in Chapter 3 and to draw conclusions and recommendations. This research looks at the effect of reduced open hours in two adjacent to Eersterivier Library, and the impact of the reduction on circulation statistics and on the accessibility of library services..

This was a small-scale project and only three libraries were involved. The limitations of the study, due to the time span of one week only were acknowledged in Chapter 1; therefore data collected do not give a wholly accurate reflection of the condition of library and information services in the City of Cape Town. The reduction of open hours and staff shortages is a city-wide phenomenon, which affects the quality of service and circulation statistics. A recent staff audit revealed that library services in the City have had approximately 40% staff losses which have resulted in a reduction of almost 300 service hours to the City (City of Cape Town Library and Information Services, 2005).

This research was an opportunity to investigate the effects of reduced open hours of libraries and what impact it has on libraries with normal open hours. This was not covered in previous research in South Africa. The intention is that this research will have some practical value, in it that it will help professionals, management and policy makers to understand the impact of reduced open hours and staff shortages on the future use of public libraries.

5.2 Findings on research questions

Chapter 3 listed the questions coming from the research problem. This section uses the findings summarized in Chapter 4 to answer these questions and add some comment.

Question 1: Has Eersterivier Library's circulation increased since the reduction of the open hours in the two adjacent libraries and has circulation decreased at the adjacent libraries?

The data (Table 1-3) shows differences between the circulation results for libraries whose hours were cut and that of Eersterivier library. Table 3 shows that there was an increase in circulation for the 2004 and 2005. Breslin and McMenemy (2006) regard library opening hours as a factor in the decline in circulation of library materials. However an increase and decrease in circulation issues might be more discernible statistically over a longer period, three or more years, after reduction of open hours, as Loynes's (2000) study recommends.

As a librarian the researcher feels that circulation statistics are not a true reflection on why people use the library. The data gathered only focus on membership of the two adjacent libraries but many non members of the suburbs near the other two libraries use Eersterivier Library for other purposes than the circulation of library material.

Question 2: Does the reduction in open hours in the adjacent libraries contribute to a decrease in quality of service to the public?

Another question raised in Chapter 3 was whether the reduction of open hours in the adjacent libraries contributes to a decrease in quality of service to the public. The data collected at interviews with librarians in charge reveal that they believe that staff shortages caused changes in quality of service. The survey data confirms this finding, revealing concerns such as:

- Limited access to information resources for projects and books to read
- Not enough time to do research for school projects
- Reduced service to a photocopier to record information for school projects
- Limited time for youth and children's activities.

The above are services that libraries provide to support their formal and informal educational role mentioned in Chapter 1. "Quality of services" for the author means a well-resourced library that is accessible to everybody when needed especially for those who cannot find access elsewhere.

Question 3: Do library users prefer to use a library facility nearest to them?

The results of the survey in Chapter 4, (Table 6) show that 19 respondents use the library because it is nearer to their home, school or workplace. This indicates that library users might prefer to use a library facility nearest to them. It will also be of particular value to users to use a facility nearer to their home, work or school. In the user survey (Table 10) 16 respondents identified that Eersterivier Library is a far

distance from their home and 16 respondents said that they must use another library than their membership libraries.

Accessible libraries are relevant to communities' people like to go to libraries on their own without the fear of strange elements and unfamiliar surroundings this is visible in the following responses:

- They cannot go to the library independently
- Eersterivier library is a far distance from their home
- They have to walk further
- They are nervous about their safety.

The author believes that, in disadvantaged communities, the library is not only a building with books in it but also a safe harbour, a place to study, a place where there is always something to do to keep our children from the street. Therefore libraries should be in walking distance from their home.

Question 4: How has the reduction in open hours affected reading and library use behaviour of the users of adjacent libraries?

Responses like, "reduced hours causes me to read less" were given in the user survey by users of the two adjacent libraries.

The Western Cape Department of Culture and Sport (Western Cape Department of Culture and Sport, 2003) reported in the document *Framework for the Future: Libraries, Learning and Information in the Next Decade* that in the 21st century reading is becoming more important than ever. If libraries are not accessible and if people cannot buy books, how can people become active citizens? The librarian of Melton Rose Library says the users were disappointed about the decisions that were made to reduce library hours they place great value on the service they get from the libraries. Proctor, Usherwood & Sobczyk (1996) found if people are deprived of a library they will simply stop reading. This research study also finds that respondents read less because of the reduced library open hours. Also there is the question whether some people just stop using a library altogether. Further research is needed to find out how many Melton Rose and Kuils River members have just stopped using any library. The promotion of reading is the chief responsibility of libraries and librarians and if people are deprived of access to a library it may contribute to greater illiteracy levels.

Question 5: How do the staffs at the adjacent libraries perceive the impact of the reduction in open hours?

The two librarians are concerned about the future of libraries and believe that the filling of posts will ensure the existence of library and information services in the City of Cape Town. But librarians' biggest challenge in the City of Cape Town is that management do not acknowledge the vital role librarians play in our communities. The Laser Foundation (2001) envisaged library staff in 2015 to be more able to work different patterns of hours including national holidays, and perhaps starting at 6 am or working until midnight as part of normal working hours. With reduced hours and decreased accessibility, libraries in Cape Town seem to be moving in the opposite direction.

5.3 Conclusion

Since the project was completed, I took part in a task team to investigate staffing standards in Cape Town libraries. The Task Team reported to the Manager of Library and Information Services Department as follows:

- Staff losses have forced reduced hours despite user needs for more convenient access
- Remaining hours are inadequate to provide free access and optimum use of resources to the majority
- There has been a loss of qualified and experienced staff and skills
- Staff with low capacity in terms of skills and motivation become insecure and demoralized, providing lower levels of service
- The loss of key staff has forced the suspension of some services, like children's programmes, holiday programmes, service to old age homes, in affected libraries
- Some libraries have been operating for considerable time supervised by staff in acting positions
- Overall there has been a passive denial of access to information and services for users (City of Cape Town Library & Information Services. Task Team on Staffing Standards, 2006).

This report was sent to the Mayor of the City of Cape Town. My project provides empirical evidence to support its claims.

A separate research project should be done to establish how many non members, living nearer to the adjacent libraries, use Eersterivier Library. Quality library service for some people is just to have the opportunity to use a library that is conveniently near their home and accessible. Many schools don't have a school library therefore the public library has to supply reading matter. The future

of our nation's educational development is partly the responsibility of libraries, which are the responsibility of the body that governs it, in this case the City of Cape Town supported by Provincial Library Services.

5.4 Recommendations

Libraries are important for South African democracy. Bundy sees libraries as test beds for civic values and citizenship (1998). They give a community a sense of place. My study came out of concern over the increasing lack of staff and funds for libraries and concern over the lack of local, provincial and national cooperation. The researcher makes the following recommendations.

For future research:

- A research project should be undertaken to establish why people use the library but do not become a member especially school learners
- A study is needed to examine why people stop using a library
- Research is needed to investigate why there is no development of school libraries

Library Practice:

- As the Constitution has libraries as a provincial competence is it vital that it be changed by means of political intervention so that local government, the City of Cape Town, can retain its leadership role with regard to libraries
- There should be better consultation and communication with users about any change in libraries
- City Management needs to be more in touch with libraries' social function.
- Staff must be appointed at libraries that are open for less than the recommended number of hours per week
- That staff must be appointed according to the interim standards agreed on by the Library and Information Services' Task Team
- Vacancies must be filled as they occur so that libraries can maintain acceptable services.

The ideal situation will be that every community has its own public or community library in accessible reach.

According to Brown (2004), denying access to information contributes to poverty, violence, crime and general societal detriment. Factors like understaffed facilities will subsequently lead to the closing down of libraries throughout the City. Furthermore closed facilities will not support the three strategic focus areas of the integrated development plan (City of Cape Town, 2004) namely:

- a dignified city
- an accessible city and
- a competent city.

Libraries have a critical role in helping promote greater equality of access and capability in using information, engaging in learning and acquiring knowledge. Libraries and their staff act as gateways to knowledge for learners, students and the working force of our communities.



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APPENDIX A


User Survey

UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE
DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARY & INFORMATION SCIENCE
MBIBL RESEARCH PROJECT
IMPACT OF REDUCED LIBRARY HOURS

INTERVIEW/QUESTIONNAIRE FOR USERS OF EERSTERIVIER LIBRARY WHO
ARE REGISTERED MEMBERS OF OTHER LIBRARIES
01 - 08 November 2005

ALL ANSWERS WILL REMAIN ANONYMOUS & CONFIDENTIAL.

1 Registered Library	I believe that you are a registered member of another library. Which library?			
2 Gender	Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Age				
	A: 9-14			
	B: 15-19			
	C: 20-25			
	D: 26-60			
	E: 60+			
4 Occupation	Tick as many as apply			
	A: School learner			
	B: Tertiary student			
	C: Housewife			
	D: Employed			
	E: Retired			
	F: Unemployed			
	G: Other (Please specify)			
5	Why are you using Eersterivier Library today? (Tick as many as apply)			
	A: Return & borrow books			
	B: Return or borrow videos			
	C: Read magazines & newspapers			
	D: Find information for work			
	E: Find information for school/university assignment			
	F: Use photocopier			
	G: Sit & study			
	H: Use community information service /notice boards			
	I: Leisure activity in hall			
	J: Meet friends to pass the time			
	K: Other (Please specify)			
6	As you know, you are registered as a member of another library. Please indicate why you are using Eersterivier Public Library today. Put 1 down for your reason or your chief reason. If you have another reason as well indicate that with a 2 (and 3 as needed).			

	A: Eersterivier Public Library offers a better service		
	B: Eersterivier Public Library is closer to my work place or school		
	C: My own library is closed at this time of day		
	D: Other (please specify)		
7 For Melton Rose & Kuils River members	Are you aware that Melton Rose & Kuils River Libraries have reduced their public hours?	Yes	No
8	If you answered yes to Question 7, has the reduction in hours affected you?	Yes	No
9	Please comment on your answer to Question 8 – for example, explain how the reduction in hours has affected how you use libraries.		
10 Home address (for research purposes only)			

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!

***L Thomas
UWC MBib1 Student***

APPENDIX B

Interview Protocol

Interviews with Librarians- in- Charge

1. How have you experienced the recent changes in the City of Cape Town?
2. Why was your library's hours reduced?
3. Has the reduction affected the library? Please explain.
4. Do you think that the reduction of hours affected library use?
5. Do you think that the reduction of hours affected the quality of service?
6. What is your opinion of the future of Library Services?



APPENDIX C
Permission letter to have interviews with Librarians in charge

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN CAPE
LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT

20 September 2005

Management Team
City of Cape Town
Social Development Directorate

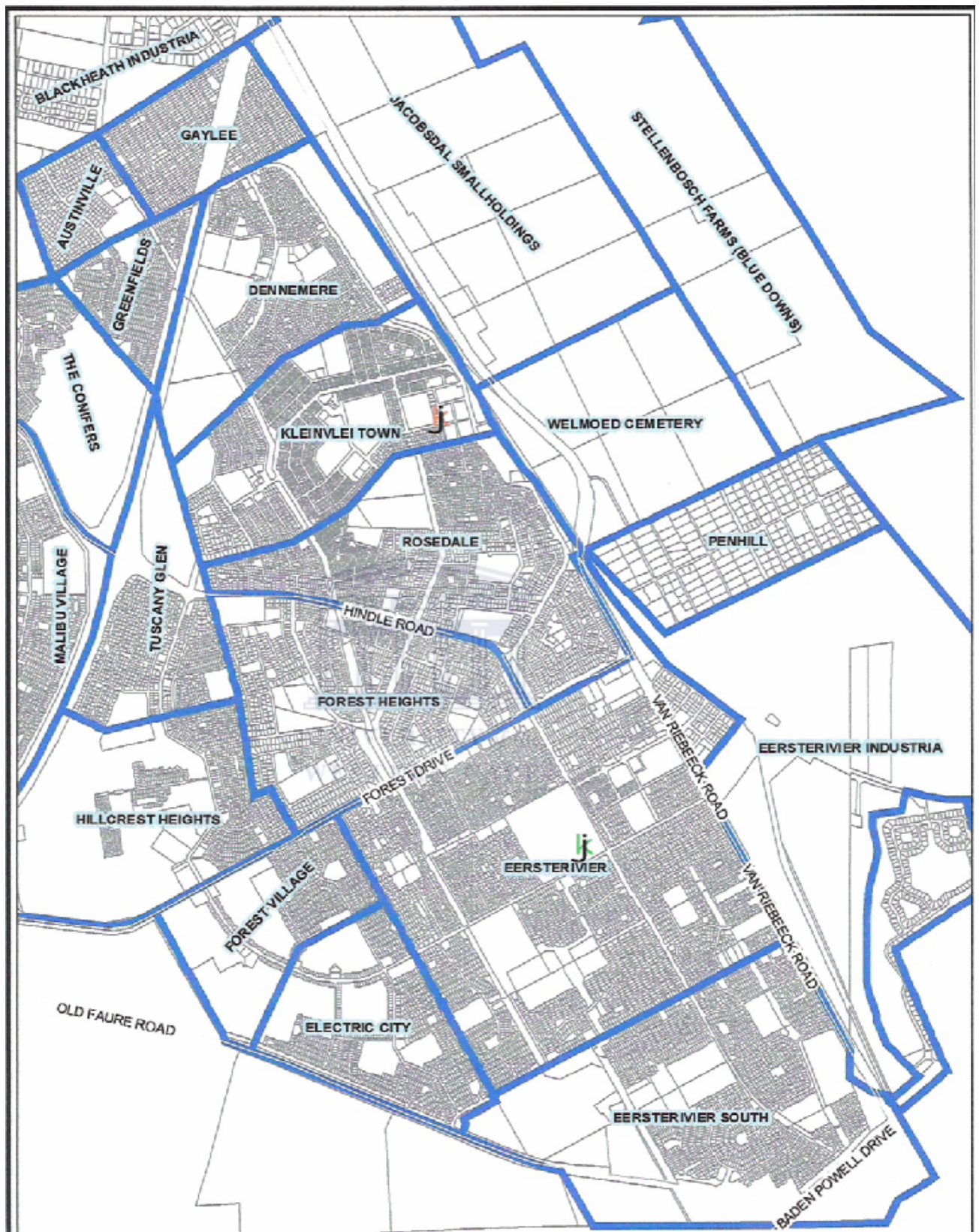
Dear Sir/Madam

As you know by now I am busy with my Masters Degree in Library and Information Science. My research project is an investigation on the impact of limited accessibility, of the neighbouring libraries, on Eersterivier Public Library. I need to obtain circulation statistics and interview library staff from the surrounding libraries in the Oostenberg Administration.

I hope that you will assist me with the availability of the information required. If you need any further information you can contact my supervisor Ms Genevieve Hart at 959 3651 Senior Lecturer at UWC

Sincerely yours,
Lorensia Thomas
Librarian (Eersterivier Public
Library)


Appendix D Map



Scale: 1:25000

EERSTE RIVER SUBURBS

MAP COMPILED BY: CHANTAL DAVIDS

-  Eerste River Library
-  Melton Rose Library

Addendum E

Transcription of the interview with Miss Melton Rose 8 February 2006

Question1: How have you experienced the recent changes in the City of Cape Town?

Well I think changes can be for the better or the worse depending on how it affects us in the libraries

The recent changes we were integrated in districts I think that is wonderful because now we have our own district manager and we have someone that you can report to - someone that can definitely do something about your situation -the fact that we do have a library manager now is also new to us and- it also I think would definitely be of some help to public libraries because we have someone now that knows what's going on in libraries with the expertise and the knowledge so what ever problems we have in libraries and we reported it to our district manager that person can then give the library manager more detail regarding the problems. I think in that sense to me that change it is acceptable and I don't have a problem with that I am happy with the changes.

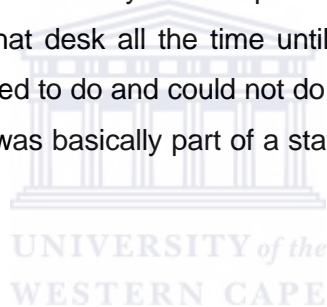
In Oostenberg

That was a very frustrating a very stressful time because we did not have a library manager and it was difficult to discuss any library problem or a problem related to libraries or staff concerning libraries in general - in order for that person to have an understanding what you talking about -how to deal with your problem you know - something can be - it might seem small to another person- but in libraries that small problem can become a big problem- you know -because you have to look at the bigger picture- it was frustrating for me - in that sense- because we did not have a library manager someone with the expertise and the knowledge- who could not understand and relate to your problem so it was always difficult- because there were always miscommunication or misunderstandings and it just seems when you inform them about a problem it seems that you are stirring up things or you difficult -but what you are actually trying to do is just doing your job to the best of your ability- because you are running a library - and you know what the impact can be if you don't deal with a problems- say -regarding your staff shortages- you know for sure what is going on in your library- what those people- what their responsibilities are - you know- and the fact that if you had like ten people in the library and its reduced to three people -you have to do all those people that resigned, you have to their jobs - so in other words you have to do 3 or 4 people's jobs - and they couldn't understand if you tell them about your problem- because you experienced stress---- your staff experienced stress -- the public is difficult because they don't understand what is going on with library services in Oostenberg-- but have to you explain to that people what's going on -- and its difficult

and frustrating if that person could not understand what you are trying to tell him or her-- so that was for me really a very difficult time to deal with in Oostenberg

Question 2: Why was the library hours reduced?

Well it was obvious that the hours should reduce when staff resigned one after the other-- people resigned because of-- they were interested in other jobs with more benefits, better working conditions-- you also have staff that was fed up because they have to do more than one person's work-- the work load was too much for them to cope with and it was causing a lot of stress and so in order for us to cope our so-called library manager at that time gave us the option or told us that was the only option to reduce the hours in order for us to cope-- but that was not the solution-- because the work still was outstanding- - you still have to do the job and -- to reduce the hours it only for me it only-- put more pressure on me-- because you got only that hour or two to do all the things that you are supposed to do and you can't deal with it not in an hour or two-- because there your admin work there's your shelving-- you had to follow up problems at the desk-- you need to do weeding -- and you have to do all the general things that you had to do-- and when you are open to the public there are no time because you have to be at that desk all the time until the library closes and there's certain things that you also need to do and could not do it so they gave as a solution to reduce the hours--- so that was basically part of a staff that resigning ---shortages of staff--



Question 3: Has the reduction affected the library? Please explain.

They definitely--- Let me start by ---let me just see---it did affect the library---as you know this is a very big library--- we serve a very big community--I first have to go with the staff members because it says affected the library--- if we don't have staff to maintain the library to its full potential--- the library or there will be a part of the service that will not be covered--- you cannot do that---so I will say yes--- let me just see what I said here --where the service are concerned--- due to the fact that you had to reduce your hours--it means less open time to the public--- so it's less for the staff to do their work properly as they should-- it means less time to the pupils -- because we have I think 11 or 12 schools in the whole Eersterivier-- right-- so the schools who are nearest to this library it also affected them--- so the reduction in library hours isn't that we wanted as staff and I'm sure this is not what the public should have wanted in the first place because less hours for them to come to the library less hours for the children to come and do their homework--less hours for them to come and do research because we have to take in consideration where do these people live where do they come from some of them don't even have transport they have to walk and if we are closing at a

certain time and it not efficient enough for them to come to the library they will find a library close so it is a problem --- so it definitely affected the library

(3+4)

Question 4: Do you think that the reduction of hours affected the quality of the service?

Yes-- because first of all that is why we have a public library in our community to render a service-- and at this point we are not rendering that service like we suppose to do --basically-- let me just --- yes I will say so --because the community was so use to the type of service that we've rendered we were there for them -- we were open 55 hours at a stage --so you can what ever they need-- we could have given them that service that they required-- but now everything is--you just have to do something very quickly or you have to cut back on your services --things that you normally would not dream of doing but you cannot do all the stuff that is required of us --- I will said that the reduction of hours it had a effect the service as well

Question 5: What is your opinion of the future library services?

Where the City of Cape Town is concern====

I 'm not very optimistic because I've been working for the city now ---this will been my 16th year---and we started where we seen what the city can do for the people--- but it seem that there's a down side where service are concern-- and the fact that we are now so short staffed in libraries and they are doing nothing-in order for staff to cope with that problem or for the community that they suppose to render a service it seems that the city -- their standards had drop drastically--- and for us in libraries-- it is for me a very concerning issue because this is a professional profession that we are doing and it seem that the city is not aware of the work that we do or how we are suppose to do it-- and it seem that they are lack the knowledge of how a library is suppose to run--- so to me it seem like they not actually caring for us as workers --so I feel actually to be honest I feel very disgusting in the city

Interview with Mrs. Kuils River 10-10-05

Question1: How have you experienced the recent changes in the City of Cape Town?

For me personally the many changes brought a lot of insecurity the reason for that being we was not always informed about meetings and it was mainly a question of crime and error finding out what is the right procedure now with the procedure change. I found very.... It made me feel very insecure at times I did not always know how to give guidance to my staff because many times I also or I did not know what guidance especially the situation with the non permanency of staff was a major problem for us.

Question 2: Why was your library's hours reduced?

Hmm Since we became City of Cape Town we lost staff members people went on retirement it was very detrimental what was the fact that we lost two fulltime staff members at the time we were only three fulltime staff members myself my assistant librarian and another library assistant who was also fulltime and besides that we only had a general worker that was a fulltime worker so we lost two of those fulltime people which means a lost of eighty staff hours per week. Hmm... then it affected us because we only had the rest of the staff were only part-time staff library assistants that I was left with in the mean time because of the development the housing development Soneike, the Rouxville, the Haseldal those areas meant the membership and the usage rose and rose. Hmm... there came a time that we cannot really deliver an effective service because there was hardly any time for maintenance work keeping the library at some kind of standard. In the past we only had half an hour in the morning before we open which means we start at eight o'clock or at half past eight and at nine o'clock we had to open the doors

Yes there was more time to do maintenance work

Sometimes I could not really do that to do that anymore the part-timers only had to work five hours a day and I had the problem that I had to have people here early in the morning till seven o'clock at night with so few people to my disposal I could not managed that anymore also we had the problem that if you put to few people on a shift security became a problem because we did not have a security guard it meant that maybe two people on a shift has to not only serve the public but they also have to see to the security of the place ensure that books are not carried out we did not had book security at the time it was not possible to deliver a proper service at all.

Q what was your staff complement at that time?

That is one that I had to look up for you I will tell you I think something like five part-timers then myself full-time and then we had and we made some different request we ask that some part-timers to be made fulltime or to be allowed to work extra hours and then the big concern for us was the fact that we could not maintain the library at any sort of standard anymore we could not properly refiled the books in the morning because the time was to limited we could not do book repairs we could not classify and catalogued anything new that came in because there was just not time you were myself also were at the desk almost all the whole time we could never do any maintenance work to keep the thing running really and we became very concerned because we have that feeling that the place is in a mess we hardly managed to keep everything back in the morning where they should be then the onslaught started then that was that feeling that we were totally over overwhelmed really by what had happened

Question 3: Has the reduction affected the library? Please explain.

OK The way the reduction of open hours affected us was that we now have more time to the maintenance work that we really believe so that was also important We could now allocate time for: for instance for book repairs for properly filing the shelves, for shelf reading, for preparing if the few times that teachers would let us know about projects we would now be able to make a selection of books and keep them out we be able at least see to our pamphlet collection in the morning because we knew already that there were some part of our information that was outdated but there was no time to go through newspapers and do the clippings to add new information and maybe take out outdated information which for us meant we could start doing the cataloguing because the fact that we are able from the year before last to buy our own books for us it was a major adjustment because in the past we did buy books from the little money we get from the friends but it was always manageable now we got a much bigger budget to buy books and we had no time to process the books which was very unsatisfactorily because you knew you had the stuff the stock but you could not use them yet because you may be bought them specifically because you had the need for that then you hardly managed to put them on the shelves so for the staff it meant getting a bit more control of what's happening Being able to deliver maybe on membership applications also faster things like that. From the users side there was major upheaval for them because they are not aware of what it is that we need to do behind the close doors they for them is just important that the books are on the shelves that they neatly there that they can find something on the shelves but they have no idea of what it take to keep everything like that especially with the onslaught that we have in the afternoon with the youngsters using the library the school children

so your ordinary users who come in the morning they were very upset that we are now so late because we centrally situated they planned because they come to do their shopping they were also pop into the library and do other stuff in business centre of Kuils River now they had to sort of replan that because they could just if they come to the library at nine we not opened yet which mean that they either had to do their other things later I don't know how they managed but they were very frustrated about that.

Question 4: Do you think the reduction of hours has affected your library use?

Yes definitely we could also see that of our stats there was a dropped in our stats because look we short on morning hours and on a Thursday and a Friday we also short on the evening hours and afternoon hours

Question 5: Do you think it also affected the use and quality of the service?

That's a difficult one for me I think because of the reasons I gave now the things that we now able to do behind close doors I would think I would hope that the service is a better service because now we not in a position that we have to at the same time as we now help them also do something else because that was what we tried to do in the past we now issue books maybe somebody are also trying to load a few patrons.

Interviewer: you said the staff for the service they give is better but do you think is the same for the users

That is why I'm saying about quality I don't know how to value that or to evaluate it because if I can say to someone look you can come and pick up your library card in two days time in the past I to say in a week,,,, isn't that a better service are you with me isn't that a better quality of service maybe it also means inconvenience for a person who came early but the other person that can go to the shelf and at least find what he's looking for on the shelf-- filed away already-- so if we speak about the quality I feel the quality is better now -- books that went on repairs came out quicker from there back in circulation ===if the schools gave information about the prison --by the time the children come in here the collection is the shelf for them to use--- so its actually very difficult for me to say if the quality down--- for me I would say it is possible that the quality went up because it could now for me and not always be chaos ---the other the scenario they coming now and ask and then you have to go and search for it --there is no time to prepare yourself for people coming into the library and when you open the doors the books are not filed yet but now the people are in the library the books are not filed-- so for me its very difficult to say-- to answer your question about quality -- I can I can give a better service because we have that extra few hours to do what is necessary to maintain the processes in the library -- but people were frustrated because they could not ? Definitely

Question 6: What is your opinion of the future of Library Services?

I think it's very sad actually that we had to reduced hours because what is happening now with the shorter hours-- the hours we run are for people who did not work they can use the library --but the work force out there for them the hours are very difficult because when they go to work we still close when they come back from work we already close again--- and I feel actually your service should focus on the working people because they are the people who carry the city they are the rate payers-- at the moment we don't deliver that service-- why don't we deliver that service now?-- because we have staff shortages-- we are have now staff shortages in a very difficult situation because the staff that we have at the moment can actually allow us to extend our hours again-- but the staff we got are in a position that they can actually been taken away at any given time because they didn't have a contract-- their contract expired in March 2005-- the contract was not been renewed --last week I got an e-mail that said the following people their secondments are confirmed until the end of October-- What does it means--so you've got the people today I don't know for how long we've got them-- it means if now begin to extend the hours with these people you don't know when they taken away and then you have to shorten the hours again--and it take quite some time to get the hours shorten again-- that's why we did not apply or request that the hours should be lengthen again -- but I believe it sad to the detriment of actually of your library users that you have to shorten the hours-- especially for working people -- I don't think that we are serving the public to the best of their expectations with the hours we running at the moment-- but we trying to deliver a service with what we got---

Is there any suggestions of how the library service would be run in the CoCT

I think the one think that needs to be clarified the level of service that we need to deliver because there is no clear guidance of that-- there was never a time that we sat down and we said look xyz are the things that we cannot compromise and these must be done and a b c d are nice to be --but I have a feeling that we don't have that-- because if we had that and it goes for all the libraries then if I do this then I know that's what I suppose to do - that is the service that I must do--which help me when I 'm short staffed I can say leave that because that is not a priority this is what I really have to do and this is what we must do - it will give clarity to users what they can expect of the library and what is over and above the service level-- a library with a few staff members are now compare with a library with a lot of staff members who do all kinds of things and it is this picture that its not unfair -- I think that is actually the first clear-cut level of service that people can get from a library -- I mean people come in here and they have all kind of expectations because a maybe library in a more affluent or a library with more staff members can do xyz -- if you don't have that it make it a bit difficult --- on

the other hand as professionals we will try to do the most-- which make it difficult because we cannot do everything if your infrastructure isn't what it should be --

